



## **The Rainforest comeback: More than 45 thousand trees were planted in Madre de Dios recovering the areas degraded by illegal mining**

- *After 4 years of work, the results of the research carried out on more than 42 hectares were presented, experiments with 74 tree species were accomplished and 45,500 trees were planted.*

**Lima – Peru** The Amazon forest is the world’s largest tropical ecosystem (6.7 million km<sup>2</sup>), home to 34 million inhabitants, and 10% of the known biodiversity. This immense ecosystem covers 8 countries, one of them being Peru, considered the second country in the continent in extension of Amazonian forests (68,577,351 hectares), and home to 50 native towns. The department of Madre de Dios is located in this scenario of great biological diversity, variety of ecosystems and cultures. This territory has its own threats, which generate pressure on the forests, being the alluvial gold mining the one with the greatest impact.

According to the Ministry of Environment, alluvial gold mining is an activity that takes place illegally in several regions of our country, being the department of Madre de Dios one of the most affected. This activity generates negative impacts on the environment, such as the loss of forest mass, modification of the natural landscape, disturbance of wildlife, desertification of the area, destruction of ecosystems, pollution and the obvious social conflicts.

In a context with increasing mining extraction and the need to find alternatives to recover highly damaged land, the initiative “Restoration of degraded areas by gold mining extraction” was created, an experience that has allowed to obtain key results to recover degraded areas in Madre de Dios and return life to arid lands, based on scientific research and articulated work between social state actors.

### **Initiative: Restoration of areas degraded by gold mining**

After 4 years of work, the results of the investigations carried out in more than 42 hectares in Madre de Dios were presented, experiments with 74 tree species were accomplished and 45,500 trees were planted. For thus, the methodology developed by CIN CIA, a key partner of this initiative, includes 4 components: 1) the use of technology (drones) to characterize areas degraded by mining 2) the production and use of biocarbon to improve soil quality in degraded areas due to its ability to increase nutrients and water retention, reduction of acidity and stimulation of soil diversity and microbial functions, 3) the establishment of technical nurseries and plant production, and 4) the installation, management and maintenance of reforestation and ecological restoration, plantations in native communities, specific mining concessions and agricultural properties.

“This initiative has shown surprising results to restore the life of soils that had been completely damaged, as a result of mining activity. It is time to focus not only on the results of the project and on the lessons it has left, but on its continuous monitoring and its potential escalation, said Kurt Holle, Country representative of WWF Peru.

The initiative does not pretend to be another pilot, but seeks to position the methodology used to continue reforesting degraded areas in an effective, innovative and efficient way.



As part of the continuity and escalation of this process, a further step has been taken to build capacity in government officials. For this reason, the “Specialization Program in the Development of Public Investment Projects in environmental matters with a focus on landscape restoration” has been initiated, which will be certified by the Ricardo Palma University and the National School of Business Development (ENADE) and whose main objectives are the training of public officials in the design of public investment projects for the restoration of areas, and the generation of a portfolio of projects to recover the intervened areas such as La Pampa and other highly degraded sectors in Madre de Dios. In this first edition, 35 officials from the 3 provinces of Madre de Dios are participating, this program will culminate in February 2020.

Guillermo Paz Guillén, general director of the General Directorate of Forest Policy and Competitiveness and Wildlife of SERFOR stressed the importance of carrying out the specialization program in Madre de Dios. “This diploma is aimed at training professionals in the formulation of projects that understand a sustainable approach and a proper use of forest and wildlife heritage, in such a way that they contribute to the access of public resources to forestry agencies”.

On the other hand, Paz Guillen announced the design of a new instrument that will contribute to this process. “SERFOR, in coordination with various sectors, has been completing the development of a form that will allow 24 regional governments and more than 1800 local governments to apply for public funds and implement various restoration initiatives, within the framework of a National Restoration Plan of degraded areas”. In that sense, he said that the set of efforts from the State and private institutions or civil society, are guaranteeing the conditions to recover our forests.

The initiative has been promoted by Wake Forest University, CIN CIA, WWF and SZF and has strategic allies: IIAP, UNAMAD, WFU-CEES, the Ministry of Agriculture through SERFOR, the Ministry of Environment and the Regional Government of Madre de Dios.