

Impact Spotlight

Alto Mayo REDD+ Project Q3 2022

**EVER
LAND**

**CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL**





SPOTLIGHT SUMMARY

Conservation Agreements

The Alto Mayo REDD+ Project protects 182,000 hectares of high-elevation rainforest and cloud forest in Peru. Despite its protected status, the threat of deforestation from illegal logging and agricultural encroachment in the Alto Mayo Protected Forest (AMPF) remains. To deter the destruction of the forest and to provide local farmers and families with economic alternatives to deforestation, the project has established voluntary conservation agreements in partnership with communities living in and around the project zone.

Over 1,000 illegal settlers within the Alto Mayo Protected Forest live, and thrive, in the project area through this innovative voluntary conservation agreement mechanism. The model is simple. Families living in the protected area pledge not to cut down trees in return for direct benefits such as agricultural training, improved cookstoves and educational materials. Communities receive training and technical assistance in biodiversity-friendly farming practices, as well as market linkages and capacity building. Perhaps most importantly, through the agreements, families receive formal recognition as “settlers” within the protected area, securing their rights to utilize natural resources and to make a sustainable livelihood.



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH





KEY ACTIVITIES

The project seeks to encourage positive behavior change among local communities settled within the protected area. This change must be genuine to achieve social sustainability. Conservation International Peru adopted its Conservation Agreement Model to the Alto Mayo Protected Forest to be the main instrument for driving this change.

At the time of its development, in 2010, it was the first of its kind among Peruvian systems to have established a formal mechanism of conservation agreements with people living within a national protected area. 12 years later, nearly 1,200 agreements have been signed and implemented between the National Services and local communities, permanently supported by the project team and its allies. Undoubtedly, these agreements have contributed substantially to the success of the REDD+ project.

The conservation agreements are the main vehicle for delivering benefits to the local community living in the AMPF. Settlement within the protected area is forbidden by law, therefore the conservation agreements play a tremendous role in building trusting relationships between communities and SERNANP - Peru's Natural Protected Areas Service. Through these agreements, the project has been able to improve coffee practices and develop a broader economic activities portfolio that improves and diversifies livelihoods that deter deforestation.

The conservation agreements also play a critical role in nurturing the relationship between communities and SERNANP. Through open and transparent communication, the agreements have created opportunities for formalizing activities such as the formation of COOPBAM, the project's certified fair trade and organic coffee cooperative with more than 500 members, its Dragon Fruit Association, and a Women's Association that are all defending the protected area.





MILESTONES



Nearly 1,200 conservation agreements have been signed and implemented since 2011. Undoubtedly, its contribution to avoid the deforestation of 17,000 ha in the AMPF area is monumental as these conservation agreements serve as the basis for designing and implementing a portfolio of sustainable economic alternatives for the communities, including:

- ▼ **COOPBAM** - A cooperative that was established to pool and market the coffee of farmers living within the Alto Mayo Protected Area. The co-op is a key step for ensuring that the high quality, sustainable coffee being produced receives a premium in the market, enabling the farmers of the Alto Mayo to create linkages to specialty markets. Through these specialty markets, farmers receive much higher incomes, a direct linkage between conservation and prosperity. A total of 463 coffee growers are currently in the cooperative, which is organic- and Fair Trade-certified.
- ▼ **ASPROBAM** - A sustainable Dragon Fruit Association providing income for 228 families. The participating subscribers developed the first association of dragon fruit producers in the AMPF, allowing them to directly negotiate with markets and access public funding.
- ▼ **AMEDBAM** - a Women's Association made up of 228 women who make handicrafts inspired by the biodiversity of the protected area, such as the Yellow-tailed Woolly Monkey, the Kovachii Orchid and the Whiskered Owl.



CURRENT NEWS



Most of the agreements have been renewed at the community level, which gives the project the opportunity to develop a life plan for villages, increasing the chance to link them to public funds. In some specific cases, such as in Nueva Zelandia village, the community level agreement created an alternative opportunity to recognize a tourism committee. This has allowed the project to deliver specific tourism benefits such as the Tourist House, an infrastructure that has created the opportunity for Nueva Zelandia to receive local tourism, offering them food, clean toilets and all the products generated under the conservation agreements such as coffee, embroidery, stingless-bee honey, and dragon fruit.

During the reporting period, the most highlighted action is the support the project has given to the Women's Association, AMEDBAM. The project has helped in the registry of the association, the implementation of more than 20 workshops with its committees, and has introduced AMEDBAM to public authorities, working to submit proposals for public funds.



THE FUTURE

The short term goal for the conservation agreements is to implement them at the community level with the development of a life plan, working closely with the project to establish a sustainable plan for the future. In the longer term, the ambition is to link those community level conservation agreements with public and private funds for the implementation of the life plans, to ensure their long term durability.

As a result of the conservation agreements, the project expects to see communities updating and implementing their life plans under a participatory and inclusive approach, with a more diverse economic activities portfolio, and the ability to build and maintain their relationship with SERNANP. Success means the continuous improvement of life for the communities and the protection and conservation of the Alto Mayo Protected Forest.

