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## TOGETHER FOR CONSERVATION

Conservation crimes such as wildlife trafficking, illegal logging and timber trade; illegal, unreported or unregulated fishing; and illegal or unregulated extraction and trade of gold and alluvial minerals constitute a serious threat to the Amazon's biodiversity. Civil society plays a key role in addressing these conservation crimes, whether as an economic agent or exercising civic action.

The United State Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with WCS, strengthens the capacities of civil society to care for biodiversity and prevent environmental crimes, connecting urban and rural areas of the region with the conservation of the Amazon.

### HOW DOES THE ACTIVITY WORK?

The Together for Conservation Project strengthens regional, collaborative civil society networks that connect local experiences of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), private companies, media, journalist networks, and other civil society organizations to develop innovative and effective solutions that can be expanded or replicated beyond the project's direct areas of influence.

### RESULTS ACHIEVED TO DATE

- The Solution Search Contest that seeks to identify best practices to reduce illegal or unsustainable wildlife trade, received more than 30 applications and got 10 finalists by June 2023. We are working

PHOTO: WCS

collaboratively with them to develop and disseminate a toolkit to apply behavioral change sciences to address this challenge.

- The Project is supporting the involvement of IPLCs and private partners in sustainable value chains with a gender focus, for example:
  - In Peru, we conducted a diagnosis of ornamental fisheries in the Tahuayo and Yanayacu rivers, which helped to develop a protocol to monitor the conservation status of ornamental fish and assessed the capacities of six communities to lead sustainable value chains.
  - In Ecuador, we strengthened three indigenous Sequoya and Kichwa business initiatives, and connected them with potential markets for plant-based cosmetics, handicrafts, fish markets, and Amazonian foods.
- We are supporting local and IPLC organizations to demand and/or develop appropriate conditions to increase the supply of legal and sustainable Amazonian goods and services, and thus reduce incentives to engage in environmental crime:
  - In Brazil together with other social and IPLC organizations of the lower Rio Negro and Madeira Purus interfluvial areas, sustainable management measures of river turtles for subsistence consumption were established. In addition, awareness campaigns were carried out to reduce the unsustainable or illegal demand for turtle food products.
  - In Colombia, three Participatory Environmental Observatories were established to address critical environmental problems in their communities and conserve biodiversity in the Municipalities of Orito and Puerto Asis.
- We are strengthening the capacities of journalists and media outlets in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, through training on topics such as: digital security, data and investigative journalism, and content creation, among others, to promote the quality and quantity of coverage on environmental crimes and make possible solutions more visible.

## PROJECT INFORMATION

**IMPLEMENTER:** Wildlife Conservation Society

**PARTNERS:** InterNews, IPAM, ProNaturaleza and Rare

**DURATION:** October 2021 – September 2026

**USAID FUNDING:** \$18.2 million

**LOCATION:** Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru

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