CENTER FOR AMAZONIAN SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION - ALLIANCE FOR SCIENCE AND ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY (CINCIA-ACIERTA)

Large areas of intact rainforest still cover the Amazonian region of Madre de Dios and Loreto, the uncontrolled expansion of alluvial gold mining, often illegal, is affecting human and environmental health.

The expansion of alluvial gold mining has caused the deforestation of over 150,000 hectares of forest in Madre de Dios since the 1980s, while contaminating waterways with mercury, which impacts human and environmental health. In Loreto illegal activities are concentrated in water courses. The goal of the Center for Amazonian Scientific Innovation – Alliance for Science and Ecosystem Recovery (CINCIA-ACIERTA for its Spanish acronym) is to build scientific capacity in the Peruvian Amazon region of Madre de Dios and Loreto to counteract growing environmental threats. CINCIA-ACIERTA leverages alliances with U.S. and Peruvian institutions to develop transformative solutions that promote sustainable development, combat environmental destruction caused by alluvial gold mining, and improve human health in the Peruvian Amazon.

HOW DOES THE ACTIVITY WORK?

CINCIA backs cutting-edge research programs to better understand the breadth and concentration of mercury pollution in Madre de Dios and Loreto, test various and innovative reforestation and restoration methodologies and plant species, and improve geospatial analysis of deforested mining areas using drones. The Center works in partnership with the region's primary research institutions – the National Amazonian University of Madre de Dios, the National University of the Peruvian Amazon and the Peruvian Amazon Research Institute, a public institute with a 35-year history of research in the Amazon. In addition, CINCIA- ACIERTA is collaborating with researchers from over 15 domestic and international institutions and leveraging support from private sector partners including the geospatial mapping and technology companies Esri, SkyTruth and Descartes lab.

WHAT RESULTS ARE EXPECTED?

CINCIA-ACIERTA builds upon 5 years of successful work in Madre de Dios. During the forthcoming period of execution, it aims at strengthening regional science capacity to improve approaches to address the environmental impacts caused by ASGM on biodiversity and Amazonian forests.

CINCIA-ACIERTA will:

- Develop and promote technological innovations to advance new solutions for landscape recovery and sustainability, detection of Artisanal Small scale Gold Mining impacts at early stages, and biodiversity protection.

- Build and expand scientific infrastructure, including a new analytic mercury laboratory in the Peruvian Amazon (Loreto)

- Grow societal awareness and empower forward-looking government action to interrupt the rise of a significant growing threat to biodiversity sustainability in the Peruvian Basin.

PROJECT INFORMATION

IMPLEMENTER: Wake Forest University

PROJECT DURATION: June1, 2021 to May 31, 2026

USAID FUNDING: $8.8 million

LOCATION: Madre de Dios, Loreto and Lima Regions

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