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## PERUVIAN FOREST SECTOR

The Amazon rainforest, the most biodiverse region on Earth, constitutes more than 60 percent of Peru's territory. In recent decades, illegal logging and deforestation has intensified and threatened the future of the Peruvian Amazon. USAID works with the Government of Peru to strengthen its forest sector to combat environmental crimes and related security threats, uphold the bilateral trade agreement, support indigenous peoples and sustainably manage forest resources.

USAID, in partnership with the Government of Peru (GOP), is improving the GOP's ability to implement sustainable forest management policies and practices, and increase efficient use of forest resources by the private sector and civil society. In an effort to better promote growth while reducing carbon emissions, USAID works with indigenous peoples and other forest dwelling communities to support sustainable forest management, reduce deforestation and improve land management – improving conservation of some of the world's most important forests.

PHOTO: NOELIA GUTIERREZ / USAID

## OUR WORK

### STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT FOREST INSTITUTIONS

Strong environment and land management institutions are necessary within the Government of Peru to reduce emissions and promote sustainable forest management. To accomplish this, USAID supported the creation of the National Forest and Wildlife Service (SERFOR), the national entity responsible for forest and wildlife related issues. USAID also works with the Forest and Wildlife Resources Oversight Agency (OSINFOR) to strengthen its technical capacity for oversight of forest concessions, and with the Centers for Forest Technological Innovation (CITE Forestal) of the Ministry of Production (PRODUCE) to promote competitiveness of forestry companies. At the local level, USAID works with the Forest Authorities of Loreto, Madre de Dios and Ucayali, providing technical expertise to these institutions to improve budget management and access additional resources as well as providing additional in-person and virtual capacity building.

USAID works closely with the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) to streamline the increase of the forest authorities' public budget. This assistance has aided SERFOR to increase its budget by 25% between 2015 and 2018; while OSINFOR's budget has increased by 67% between 2015 and 2019. In 2019, MEF also secured an additional \$2.3 million in supplemental funding to assist the regional governments in Loreto, Ucayali and Madre de Dios.

### DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

In addition to strong institutions, Peru needs clear, enforceable laws to protect its forests. USAID provided substantial support for the development of the Forestry and Wildlife Law and Regulations in September 2015. To ensure inclusive development of this law, USAID worked closely with representatives from Peru's 52 indigenous communities living in the Amazon to include their contributions to the law. This landmark legal reform provides authority to SERFOR and local governments to formalize and regulate the timber industry, and to identify and address illegal logging. This reform has been complemented with technical assistance to develop and implement technical norms, and ongoing assessments to ensure effectiveness of the concession model and the timber traceability system in the country.

### STRENGTHENING INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND RESOURCES

At the local level, USAID is working collaboratively with indigenous communities and their representatives in the regions of Ucayali, Loreto and Madre de Dios to scale-up community oversight and monitoring of forest resources while improving forest-based livelihoods by developing Life Plans and sustainable businesses through a community forest management (CFM) model. Life Plans are indigenous development and management plans created for their community as a way of ensuring self-determined development. It is approved by the community and recognized by the authority and the public. CFM is a proven approach that combines sustainable resource management and improved financial security through improved market access. USAID is providing technical assistance to the Technical Unit for CFM of Loreto, Ucayali and Madre de Dios, fostering the coordination of indigenous communities with their representative organizations to increase public and private interest in the implementation of their Life Plans as official instruments of their own community development.

## **IMPROVING TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES**

Protecting Peru's natural resources requires: reliable data to inventory legal sources of forest products; communication with law enforcement; and, assurances from potential buyers that the products adhere to international laws.

To achieve these standards, USAID assisted SERFOR to develop an online forest and fauna information management system. In 2019 SERFOR released the guidelines detailing Peru's timber traceability framework for both the export and domestic markets. Also in 2019, SERFOR completed a comprehensive study of concessions to boost the competitiveness, profitability, and sustainability of timber concessions, thereby promoting a revitalized forest sector and increased tax base for regional forest authorities. As a result of this new information and data, forest authorities of Loreto and Ucayali reclaimed and returned to operation 686,000 hectares of abandoned forest concessions, inactive for more than 15 years and ripe for illegal incursions. Additionally, SERFOR updated the Official Forest Species List to standardize species names - addressing another inconsistency in export reporting that arises when a single product has different names in the different stages of processing.

OSINFOR recently signed agreements with six regional governments to align forest management policies, standardize supervision protocols, optimize financial and logistical resources, and carry out joint visual inspections, including in some cases, of sawmills. This close coordination has contributed to more effective management, better legal planning and land use allocation, economic formalization, increased law enforcement and detection of infractions, and improved prevention activities, according to OSINFOR officials. USAID also supports OSINFOR with the development of an online platform with real-time alerts based on their field supervisions, and will endeavor to improve their remote monitoring capabilities to provide oversight of forest concessions using satellite imagery, –an important capability when field access is limited, which was revealed as essential during the COVID-19 crisis.

## **CONTACTS**

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