



Conservation Agreements **AWAJUN COMMUNITIES, PERU**

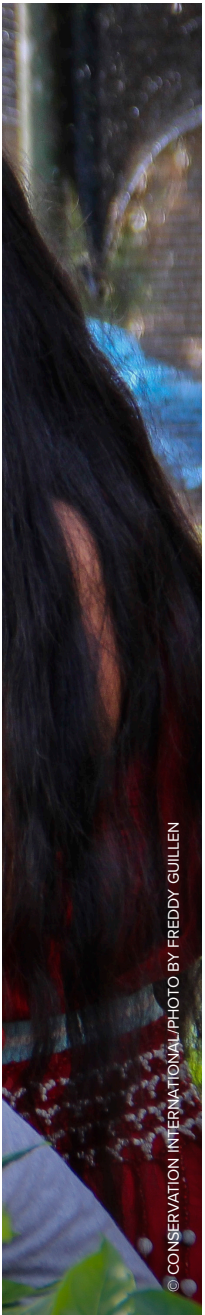
SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS LAND IN PERU

In the Alto Mayo basin—one of Peru’s most deforested areas—nearly 30% of original tropical forest has disappeared.

This rampant deforestation, coupled with increasing pressure from migrants, threatens the Awajun indigenous communities, whose lands comprise nearly 20% of the Alto Mayo basin, a prime biodiversity hotspot and an Alliance Zero Extinction site.

Since 2013, Conservation International (CI) Peru has been working with two Awajun indigenous communities—Shampuyacu and Alto Mayo—in an integrative approach to community-based territorial planning and development. Through the implementation of conservation agreements, following the model developed by CI’s Conservation Stewards Program, this initiative aims to strengthen the Awajun communities’ governance and capacity to sustainably manage their territories, empowering them to act as strategic partners in efforts to reduce drivers of deforestation while improving indigenous peoples’ livelihoods.

This initiative complements CI Peru’s sustainable landscapes approach and additional conservation agreement efforts to introduce economic alternatives to deforestation caused by agricultural encroachment in the Alto Mayo Protected Forest (a 182,000-hectare protected area of the Alto Mayo basin).





Strengthening territorial rights

Over the last 20 years, Awajun communities have rented their land to newcomers interested in agricultural crops, such as coffee, rice and bananas. This increases deforestation and weakens Awajun governance which has impacts on their capacity to manage their land. Awajun communities, as well as their regional federation, require support to strengthen their community governance structure as well as technical capacities to manage their land based on participatory processes and recovering and maintaining their traditional knowledge. In Shampuyacu, existing and proposed benefit sharing efforts have focused on enhancing existing governance structures, promoting equal opportunities, and creating incentives for community members to ecologically manage their land.

Promoting sustainable economic alternatives

The conservation agreements focus on providing economic alternatives to rental of land to migrants, such as the establishment of agroforestry systems linked to markets interested in the communities' products—including coffee and cacao, as well as traditional medicinal plants harvested from forests, agroforestry systems and home gardens. Specifically, in Shampuyacu, enrichment of the communal forest is assigned to women who use non-timber forest products as medicinal plants and materials for handicrafts.

Recovering and maintaining indigenous knowledge

CI Peru's indigenous initiative includes an important component based on the understanding and recognition of the role of women in Awajun community governance and their role in assuring the intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge. Implementation includes supporting activities such as developing territorial management plans, design and implementation of community life plans, and establishing reforestation and agroforestry plots based on indigenous community knowledge prioritizing traditional species for food security, health and cultural values.



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This initiative is part of the conservation agreements platform.

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Contact: Claudio Schneider | cschneider@conservation.org

Margarita Mora | mmora@conservation.org