governance + restoration of riverine vegetation + aquatic resources in the native community of Shampuyacu.

building bridges between indigenous and scientific knowledge to restore key aquatic ecosystem services.

This project is the result of ongoing conversations with indigenous leaders from Awajun communities. These communities, realizing the negative impacts that climate change and unsustainable land use practices are having on their livelihoods, approached Conservation International Peru and expressed their interest in conserving their water sources and restore degraded lands through reforestation programs. CI-Peru is currently developing a pilot project in the Native Community of Shampuyacu, which is composed of approximately 120 families (about 600 people) who live mostly on subsistence agriculture. We envision that this pilot can be scaled-out to any of the other 12 Awajun indigenous communities in the Alto Mayo basin, benefiting approximately 4,600 individuals (880 families).
The degradation of water and aquatic resources in indigenous communities of the Alto Mayo basin, which rely heavily on their natural capital for their livelihoods, has also contributed to increased levels of poverty.

To address this situation, CI emphasizes the need to use traditional knowledge alongside scientific methods to improve restoration practices, while building an institutional framework that can improve community governance of water resources. Therefore, the project is based on an integrated approach, combining the need to share practical techniques that improve ecosystem services flows for human well-being while addressing the social factors that allow this model to be sustainable in the long term, and empowering the actors involved in the development of the model since its design.

This project includes elements that we believe are essential in the design of practical interventions for consolidating a healthy sustainable economy in the region, which can then be scaled up and replicated.

The overall objective of the project is to design a participatory model, based on traditional and scientific knowledge, for the restoration of vegetation cover in the most critical areas of streams and rivers in the Shampuyacu Native Community. Restoring the natural capital is critical for the provision of water, control of erosion and sedimentation, food security enhancement, and mitigating the impacts of climate change through control of flooding, flash floods and landslides. The model will allow scaling-up and scaling-out river vegetation restoration programs that can improve human well-being in indigenous communities and contributing towards a healthy sustainable economy at the basin level.

The project has two specific objectives embedded within CI´s rights-based and gender-based approaches:
- Improve the governance and capacities of Shampuyacu’s leaders to plan, manage, conserve and restore their aquatic resources and riverine areas.

To achieve this, CI implements participatory capacity building workshops in aquatic resource management issues with tools such as participatory maps that have been used to open discussions. Through these activities, CI integrates riverine restoration and promotes the use of traditional knowledge to empower indigenous people in project planning and implementation.

- Restoring, reforesting and protecting critical areas of rivers and streams in the Native Community of Shampuyacu.

Aligning the community’s knowledge and priorities with CI’s scientific expertise, we have designed and implemented a nursery for the production of seedlings to be used in the restoration sites under an adaptive methodology that will enhance restoration methods with tree seedlings in the field. We have given communities materials (seeds, tools) and technical support, and together with the community we have established pilot restoration sites on riverbanks and adjacent lands. A community-based monitoring system will determine survival and growth of planted species throughout the project.

In the future, we hope that this model can also be replicated for other indigenous groups throughout the Andean Amazon, which would benefit from improved water quality and flow, food security, wildlife and fish stocks. Additionally, the communities will be able to diversify their economic alternatives by increasing the stock and access to medicinal trees, timber, and materials for arts and crafts. Finally, they will be better prepared against erosion and the recurrence and intensity of floods.
At the moment we have implemented the following activities:

- Participatory workshops for the identification of the most important species of flora as well as the priority zones for reforestation of riparian vegetation.

- Selection of species for reforestation based on traditional knowledge of vegetation types, forest succession principles and the importance and use of species for livelihoods including housing, timber, food, shelter, artisanal products, medicines, etc.

- Validation of the workshop results: field visits with indigenous peoples to identifying species for reforestation activities in the different riverine habitats in the community. The applied methods include forest vegetation sampling using transects and participant observation. Many of these species have been included in the tree nurseries.

- Community members have contributed labor and time to construct the tree nursery and tend seedlings, and they are currently helping with seedling transportation and establishment in the field.

- Seedlings have been established in pilot restoration sites on riverbanks.

- Encouraging community engagement in the project, especially among women, through their active participation in both workshops and field work (species identification and work in the tree nurseries).

- Signing of a Cooperation Agreement with the Regional Indigenous Federation of the Awajun People of the Alto Mayo, so they can participate in monitoring of project activities, are familiar with the process, and are able to replicate it in the future.

Our Vision
We imagine a healthy, prosperous world in which societies are forever committed to caring for and valuing nature, our global biodiversity, for the long-term benefit of people and all life on Earth.

Our Mission
Building upon a strong foundation of science, partnership and field demonstration, CI empowers societies to responsibly and sustainably care for nature, our global biodiversity, for the well-being of humanity.