

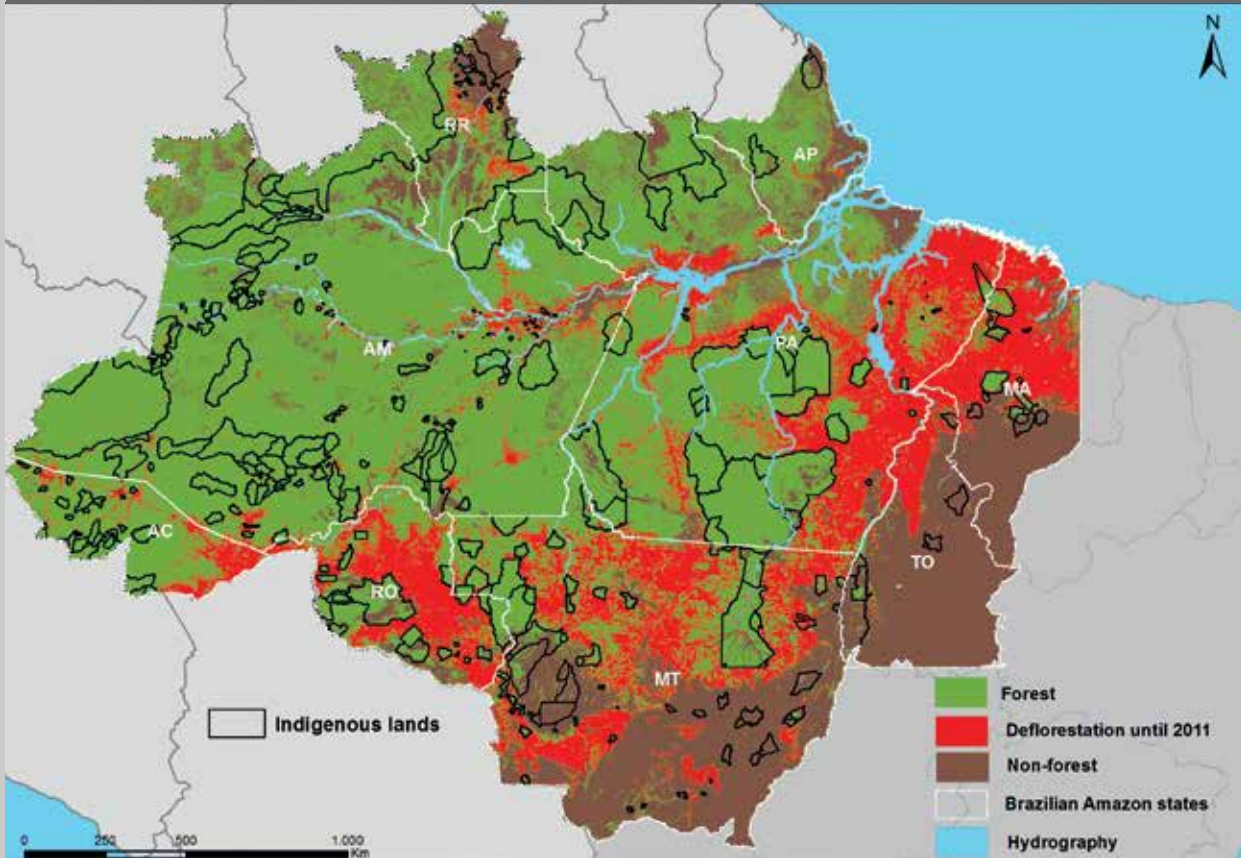
The importance of the Amazon

The Amazon rainforest in Brazil is home to over 25 million people. It is a source of a wide range of environmental services, as well as represents a huge “warehouse” of forest carbon (≈ 60-80 billion tons), that if disturbed by deforestation could appreciably worsen climate change on the planet.



DEFORESTATION IN THE AMAZON

Historically, the Amazon biome has suffered constant threats because of the way it has been occupied. In the last three decades alone, on average, more than 16,000 km² were deforested annually in Brazil (averages varied: 19,000 km² in the 1980s, 16,343 km² in 1990 to 15,830 km² in the 2000s, PRODES, INPE 2012). In this context, **the creation and maintenance of protected areas** in the Amazon have become crucial for reducing the rates of deforestation.



“We see very hot weather. At first we worked, in the fields planting until one o’clock, two o’clock in the afternoon. Today, you have to come early at work. When is nine to ten o’clock your body’s already almost burning hot.”
(Indigenous Representative of Pará)

We have a large amount of carbon on our lands. And why this wealth exists today? Because Indigenous Peoples have a traditional method of survival, land is enough for them to live. This was seen as prejudice, farmers said - “for what they (indigenous peoples) want that much land if they are lazy and do not work? But it was because of those “lazy people” that the forest survived, it was because of this traditional method that we still have this forest that developed countries have lost.” (Indigenous representative of Acre)

“These changes have an impact on our culture because to do Kuarup [traditional ritual], some ethnic groups have to go far to look for fish to have food for ritual. It’s a brutal change: where we fished close to our homes, now you have to take the boat, sail, sometimes gets a day to be able to find fish and go back. So to do Kuarup is now too expensive, we need too much fuel to go much further for the ritual to happen.” (Indigenous representative of Mato Grosso)



The Indigenous Plan for Combatting Climate Change: the Fundamentals

ABOUT COIAB

The Coordination of the Brazilian Amazon Indigenous Organizations (COIAB) was founded in April 1989 and includes 75 organizations, which collectively represent around 160 indigenous communities and an estimated number of 430 thousand people, about 60% of the total indigenous population in Brazil.

ABOUT IPAM

IPAM is a non-governmental and non-profit organization founded in 1995 with the proposal to gather scientists, educators and extension agents in promoting a model for development of Amazon that result in economic growth, social justice and simultaneously maintain the functional integrity of ecosystems of the region. With about 90 employees divided into eight regional offices, the Institute seeks to offer alternatives and scientifically based solutions to help to promote a development under sustainable basis for the Amazon. In this sense, IPAM works to generate information and foster initiatives that can support public policies, local initiatives and international agreements. These activities are carried out with the active participation of multiple stakeholders: farmers, indigenous peoples, traditional communities, Academy members, the private sector and different government sectors at different scales - local, regional, federal and international levels.

PARTNERSHIP



SUPPORTED BY



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The Indigenous Plan for Combatting Climate Change: the Fundamentals

Discussions about climate change have been intensified worldwide. Forecasts indicate significant negative impacts on the lives of the most vulnerable populations, including the change on rainfall’s cycle and hence the reduction in food production.

The Coordination of the Brazilian Amazon Indigenous Organizations (COIAB), the indigenous organization that politically coordinates the actions of the Brazilian Amazon indigenous movement, has been asked to provide a comprehensive response to the challenges that the climate change impose. Although we have not been able to participate fully in international discussions on this subject, we have strived to bring our vision and alternatives to different countries on how to minimize the impacts of future climate change.

We indigenous peoples have a harmonious relationship with nature and this relationship contributes significantly to the balance of the planet’s climate. We are the guardians of tropical forests, a huge pool of carbon stocks and biodiversity which, if disturbed, will worsen climate change.

COIAB intends to intensify the work of disseminating information on climate change, the REDD+ mechanism (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation) and building a plan with indigenous communities to combat climate change.”

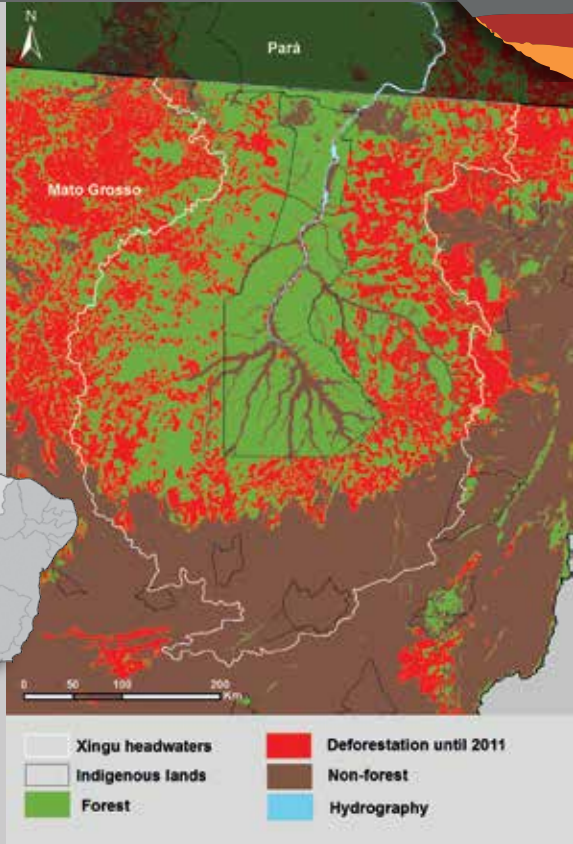
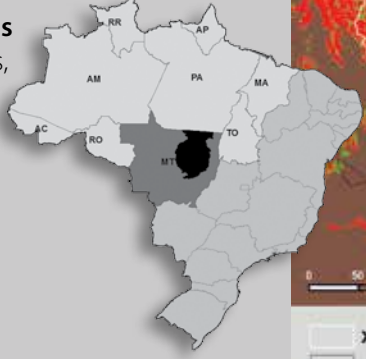
EXECUTIVE COORDINATION OF COIAB



Contribution of Indigenous Territories to Minimizing Deforestation

Among the protected areas, Indigenous Territories (IT) are those which contribute largely in reducing future deforestation (*see maps*). Together, they hold about **13 billion tons of carbon** and **have kept deforestation rates below 2%**, much below what it is found in the regions around these lands (25-30%).

The low rate of deforestation within the IT is related to **the territorial occupation by indigenous peoples, their customs and traditions** which, in most cases, keep the forest standing. Thus, the maintenance of the IT ensures future low levels of deforestation and associated emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.



XINGU AND SURROUNDINGS

Vulnerabilities of the IT

Despite the fact that they are key to protecting forests, indigenous peoples are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, because they live in and depend on the forest for their livelihood. **Human actions that over the centuries have impacted the atmosphere to contribute to climate change also affect these populations and their territories.** For example, the exploitation and burning of fossil fuels, deforestation and burning for agricultural practices and big infrastructure projects endanger the integrity of indigenous territories. Additionally, recent changes in Brazilian legislation (see Box below) and the non-recognition of acquired rights for indigenous peoples, reinforce the vulnerability they are experiencing to address climate change.

Dialogues and Fundamentals for Combatting

In response to this problem, COIAB and the Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM) engaged with indigenous leaders to discuss these issues. During 2012 alone, with support from the Norway Embassy, COIAB and IPAM conducted a series of three meetings entitled **“Intercultural Dialogues for Indigenous peoples Combat Climate Change.”**

These meetings with over 120 indigenous leaders from 43 ethnic groups in the Brazilian Amazon established a dialogue between modern science and traditional indigenous knowledge on the subject of climate change. The dialogues also involved partner institutions such as the Social and Environmental Institute (ISA), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), International Institute for Education in Brazil (IEB), members of the federal government, the National Indigenous peoples Foundation (FUNAI - Brazil's Indigenous Protection service) and the Ministry of Environment.

The indigenous leaders who participated in the Intercultural Dialogues point to a close relationship between human intervention in the environment, climate change, political and economic weakness. The main insights gathered during the Dialogues are presented below:

Considering that Indigenous Peoples articulate the links between climate change and other pressures (political and economic threats) to which they are exposed, **participants raised some fundamentals for combatting climate change**, such as:

GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: Ensure the right of Indigenous Peoples to their traditional territories is obligatory for any life plan regarding lands inhabited by these communities. In Brazil, this is a hot topic in the current political landscape, characterized by land disputes.

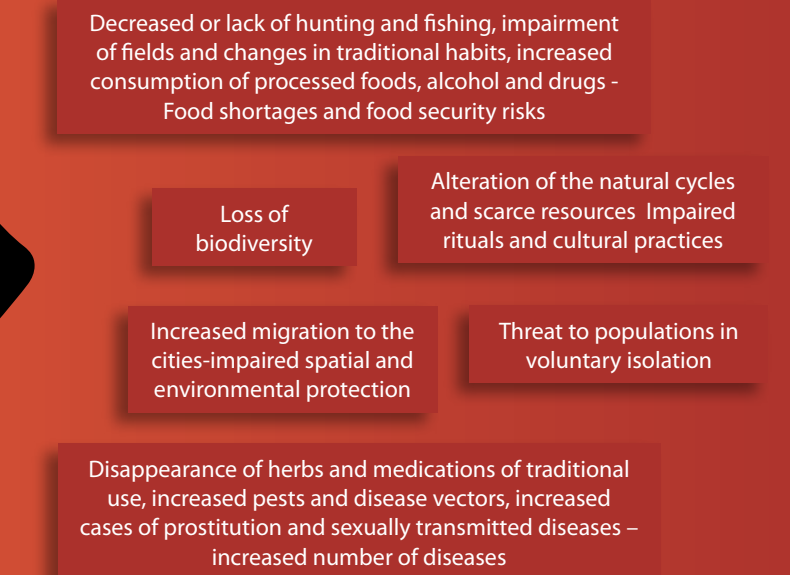
MAN's ACTIONs



CLIMATE CHANGE



SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTs



BRAZILIAN POLITICAL CONTEXT AND THREATS TO IT

The Brazilian political context of recent years presents potential threats to the rights of indigenous peoples, their lands and traditional ways of life. Measures such as the 215 and 038 Proposed Constitutional Amendment, reforms in Brazilian Forest Code and Ordinance 303 of the Attorney General's Office were either approved or are proceeding through the Congress. These measures will impact the demarcation of indigenous lands or favor human actions (such as infrastructure projects) that result in deforestation and degradation close to these lands.



ABOUT THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

In Brazil, there are about 900,000 indigenous, divided by 230 indigenous societies (180 languages), occupying 12% of the country's land. The Brazilian Amazon contains 69% of these lands and 55% of the indigenous population. There are more than 63 references of Indigenous Peoples in isolation in Brazilian Amazon, indicating the existence of a cultural richness yet unknown. The vast experience of indigenous peoples regarding the use of forest resources is a source of valuable potential information for Western science and technology.



LOCAL ADAPTATION MEASUREMENTS ALREADY ADOPTED

Buying food outside the villages, adapting farming practices to fields (artificial irrigation, cultivation at different schedules); improved management of animal husbandry and fisheries, plantation nurseries; sustainable extraction of natural resources; training of firefighters and environmental agents to work on the monitoring of such territories; and reforestation of forest areas.

EMPOWERMENT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: To ensure the participation and influence of Indigenous Peoples in national political processes and international discussions on climate change, it is necessary that indigenous leaders have qualified information on these issues in order to prepare and share their own proposals on for solutions.

PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL IMPACT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: Strengthening leadership and indigenous organizations and improving the relationship between the national and international indigenous movement is crucial. Also the indigenous movement must be assured a role in developing climate change related programs and policies on the national and international level.

VALUING CULTURE AND TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIFE: The cosmology and lifestyle of each indigenous group must be respected and promoted, including the traditional means of avoiding deforestation in their territories. It is necessary to guarantee the rights of Indigenous Peoples over their lands and the promotion of sustainable management of their territories. Indigenous Peoples

have an important role to play in developing national and international policies and programs regarding climate change, their broad participation and consultation should be promoted.

The points highlighted above are crucial for planning adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. Yet further support (institutional and financial) is still necessary to build the basis for an indigenous plan to address climate change that serve as an instrument for the articulation and advocacy of indigenous points of view in different

areas of decision. It is with this intention that COIAB and IPAM seek to promote this debate during the COP, in order to briefly present what has been done and discuss plans and suggestions on how best to move this discussion, with the ultimate goal of build an Indigenous Plan for Combatting Climate Change. This would, in turn, influence the discussions on adaptation under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the actual Green Climate Fund, as well as the adaptation strategies of other leaders of the indigenous movement in the world.

MAIN VULNERABILITIES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON. THE HIGHLIGHTED WORDS ARE THE ONES THAT HAD THE LARGEST NUMBER OF ENTRIES BY THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE MEETINGS.

