



Amazon Conservation Association

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WHO WE ARE

The Amazon Conservation Association (ACA) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization working to conserve the biological diversity of the Amazon basin. Founded in 1999, ACA has brought together an experienced staff of tropical ecologists and conservationists to protect the southwestern Amazon in Peru and Bolivia. ACA's programs are implemented by staff based in Washington and La Paz and through our Peruvian sister organization, Asociación para la Conservación de la Cuenca Amazónica (ACCA), in addition to other local organizations and community groups.



WHERE WE WORK

ACA's work is geographically focused in the headwaters of the Amazon basin, where the Amazon forest meets the Andes range in southeastern Peru and northern Bolivia. This area has long been recognized as one of the most biologically rich regions on earth. Here the Amazon wilderness is still largely intact and extends for thousands of miles without interruption, providing habitat to jaguars, tapirs, giant river otters and many other species facing extinction elsewhere. Protecting the slopes of the eastern Andes provides a safe haven for rare species in times of rapid climate change.

HOW WE WORK

We are asking questions about the future of life on earth and looking for ways that people and nature can not just coexist but benefit from each other. We believe that protecting the world's greatest wilderness requires partnerships at every level of society and that science, careful land protection, and intelligent use of the forest are all part of the solution. Using cutting-edge science and innovative conservation tools, ACA is creating models for others to follow. We established the world's first conservation concession, manage some of the best research stations in the tropics, and are leading the charge to find mechanisms such as the voluntary carbon market and payments for environmental services to make forest conservation financially sustainable.

WHY IT MATTERS

The Amazon rainforest is home to more than a third of the species found on Earth. It is also a vital force shaping the world's weather and climate patterns. Moreover, twenty percent of all fresh water on Earth flows through the basin's rivers, and these forests are the source of countless foods, fibers, and potential new medicines to benefit humankind. Unfortunately, these forests are facing increasing threats from road development, logging, and large-scale agriculture. ACA is working together with local communities and partner organizations throughout the region to protect these precious forests for local inhabitants and future generations.



OUR PROGRAMS

Effective conservation depends on a well-defined and holistic approach. ACA focuses on scientific research, the direct protection of critical habitats, and the sustainable use of natural resources. Our programs include:

Brazil Nut Program

Brazil nuts are a natural forest product whose harvest guarantees income for Amazonian people. ACA's Brazil nut program supports over 500 Brazil nut harvesters to ensure a sustainable livelihood while protecting their forest resource through technical support, training, and certification. Through this program, ACA has ensured the legal protection of nearly a million acres of forest, enabling wildlife to travel safely between protected areas.

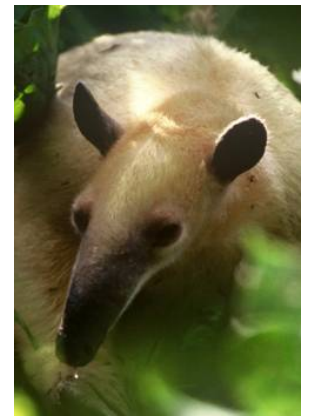


Los Amigos Conservation Concession

In 2001, ACA and ACCA established the world's first private conservation concession in the Los Amigos River watershed. The Los Amigos Conservation Concession covers 360,000 acres of old growth Amazonian forest at the base of the Andes in southeastern Peru. This watershed forms a lowland forest corridor that protects the eastern access of Manu National Park and connects it to the Tambopata National Reserve. Here, the organization focuses on forest protection, research, conservation education, and natural resource management training.

The Los Amigos Biological Station - CICRA

The Los Amigos Biological Station, commonly known as CICRA (Centro de Investigación y Capacitación Río Los Amigos) is located at the confluence of the Madre de Dios and Los Amigos rivers, contiguous to the Los Amigos Conservation Concession. Since 2004, CICRA has been the most active research station in the Amazon Basin, hosting an average of 25 researchers and assistants per day. In its first eight years, it has hosted more than 150 different research projects in tropical ecology and conservation biology, as well as biological inventories of dozens of different taxa.



Wayqecha Cloud Forest Research Station

In 2005, ACA created Peru's only permanent research center focused on Andean cloud forest ecology and management. This 1,450-acre research center, called Wayqecha (meaning "friend" in Quechua) is located in the buffer zone of Manu National Park, in the Kcosñipata Valley of Cusco. ACA provides scholarships to an average of 20 university students from Peru and around the world per year to study local biota, ecosystem interactions, and the impacts of climate change on the forest.

Conserving the Pampas del Heath, Bolivia

Located in northern Bolivia, the Pampas del Heath are among the best-conserved Amazonian savannas. These natural savannas are home to rare and threatened mammals like the maned wolf and the marsh deer, which are vanishing from the surrounding forest. In the Pampas, ACA monitors flora and fauna, studies fire ecology and traditional indigenous management, and works to ensure the long-term survival of savannas in and around Madidi National Park.

Sustainable micro-enterprise development

Building on the success of the Brazil nut program, ACA is working in Cusco and surrounding regions to identify livelihood alternatives for local communities that support land conservation. These projects include the production and marketing of Sacha Inchi (*Plukenetia volubilis*, the Omega 3 oil-rich Incan peanut), production of essential oils and natural dyes from native plants, agroforestry, and textile production. Engineers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's "D-lab" have been working with community groups to make these alternatives feasible and cost-effective.



Education and Training

ACA's experienced staff shares innovative conservation tools and practices with local organizations and communities. Since ACA established the first conservation concession in 2001, there are now more than a dozen such concessions in Peru, conserving over a million acres of forest. ACA is now working with two indigenous groups to establish conservation concessions in their names. Our field stations have become field trip centers for schoolchildren from surrounding communities as well as leading training sites for local and international university groups, offering programs ranging from introductory courses on Amazonia to plant identification and ornithology. This focus on training reflects our conviction that saving the greatest forests on Earth requires supercharging a new generation of South American scientists and conservationists.