



IRI GLOBAL

IRI launches new issue primer on forest restoration as contribution to UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

The IRI partnership has launched a new issue primer for religious leaders and faith communities called, [Forest Restoration: Healing Tropical Forests for Spiritual Renewal](#). The new IRI resource outlines why forest restoration is [an essential complement to forest protection and details how and why faith groups should participate in forest restoration projects](#) that contribute to the UN Decade Ecosystem Restoration. The primer also discusses what forest restoration projects can accomplish for people, nature and communities and reviews the considerations faith groups should keep in mind as they pursue forest restoration projects. Over the coming weeks, Interfaith Rainforest Initiative country programs in Brazil, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia and Peru will all release forest restoration primers for religious leaders and faith communities, creating dedicated resources for action and learning as a contribution to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Download the primer [here](#).



IRI PERU

IRI Peru secures Supreme Decree from government, issues high-level declaration to strengthen protections for indigenous peoples and environmental defenders

In mid-May, [IRI Peru called for an urgent dialogue with indigenous leaders, religious leaders and national authorities to address the grave threats facing indigenous peoples in the country](#). In response, the Minister of Justice, Eduardo Vega, presented the DS N° 004- 2021-JUS, “Intersectoral Mechanism for the protection of human rights defenders”. This first of its kind Supreme Decree commits to work across eight different ministries to strengthen protections for indigenous peoples and environmental defenders. IRI Peru then called for and accompanied a meeting attended by the Ministers of the Interior, Environment and Culture, as well as the presidents of indigenous organizations including AIDSEP, FENACOCA, FECONAU and ORAU. [The meeting produced a commitment to initiate an emergency roundtable discussion on environmental defenders](#) in the city of Pucallpa, Ucayali, which was held on May 14th with the presence of 12 government officials (including the Minister of Justice, Minister of Interior, Minister of Environment and Minister of Women and Vulnerable Populations), 12 indigenous leaders, presidents of indigenous organizations and IRI Ucayali representatives. The Bishop of Pucallpa, Monsignor Martin Quijano, presented the Minister of Justice with an IRI Peru statement titled, “Declaration for Amazonian Indigenous Security” which calls for six security measures to be adopted by the Peruvian government: (i) increase protection measures for environmental defenders and indigenous peoples and provide resources for the Intersectoral Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders to be implemented; double efforts to secure the rights and territories of indigenous peoples by guaranteeing land tenure; (iii) increase measures to halt



illegal logging and deforestation; (iv) obtain informed consent for projects (especially infrastructure plans) directly affecting the lives of indigenous peoples; (v) increase efforts to combat organized crime, drug trafficking and illegal mining in indigenous territories; and (vi) create a permanent working group made up of indigenous organizations, faith communities, civil society and authorities to monitor the security of indigenous peoples and forests. A link to the declaration can be found [here](#).

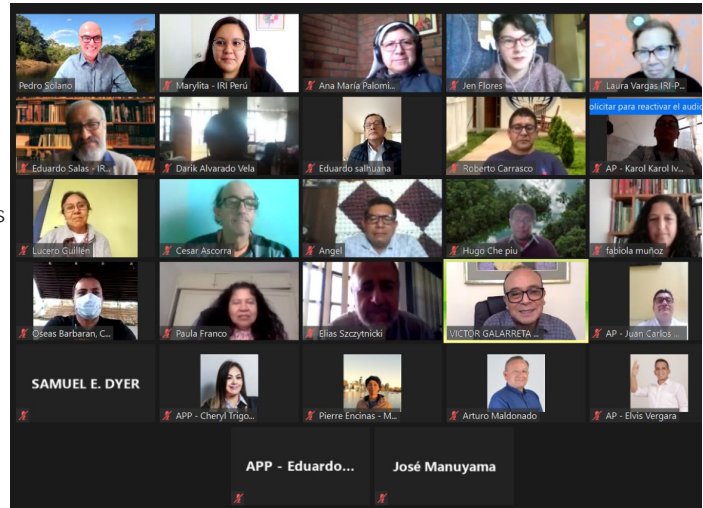
“Sharing a congressional space will help us develop policies that promote sustainable economic development. The parliamentary bloc for the Amazon can help us present joint proposals that contribute to the sustainable development that we dream and yearn for.”

Karol Paredes Fonseca,
congresswoman
in San Martin

IRI Peru establishes Parliamentary block with new members of congress committed to advancing policies that protect the Amazon

On May 12th, **IRI Peru partnered with the Governors Climate and Forest Task Force (GCF) to hold a high-level dialogue with congressmen-elect** from five regions of the Peruvian Amazon as well as representatives from religious communities, indigenous peoples' organizations, civil society and companies. In the framework of the Pact for the Amazon, the congressmen were invited to form a Parliamentary block to enable coordinated legislative action in favor of the Peruvian Amazon. The dialogue included the participation of Luis Hidalgo, President of the Amazon Regional Commonwealth and Governor of Madre de Dios, Samuel Dyer, Proamazonia representative, the indigenous leader Oseas Barbaran, President of CONAP; Sister Ana Maria Palomino, IRI Ucayali representative and Jaime Nalvarte, Coordinator of the Peruvian Committee IUCN Peru. It was also attended by congressmen-elect San Martin Cheryl Trigozo Reátegui and Karol Paredes Fonseca, Rosio Torres Salinas and Juan Carlos Mori from Loreto, Luis Picón Quedo from Huánuco, Elvis Vergara from Ucayali

and Eduardo Salhuana from Madre de Dios (representing two political parties). The congressmen-elect confirmed their interest in being part of the Parliamentary block. **The Parliamentary block is a key element of IRI Peru's on-going political advocacy strategy**, which aims to encourage members of congress to align on agendas, plans and policies in favor of Peru's tropical forests.



“The faith communities convened by IRI Peru reiterate the request that immediate and articulated actions are urgently needed at all levels to defend life in the Amazon.”

Cardinal Barreto in the
editorial 'Peace and
dignity for the Amazon'

Cardinal Pedro Barreto publishes editorial on the moral responsibility to protect indigenous peoples and forest communities in Peru

Cardinal Pedro Barreto, S.J., Archbishop of Huancaayo and President of the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network, published an opinion column in the newspaper El Comercio entitled **“Peace and dignity for the Amazon” in support of IRI Peru advocacy around the rights and protections for indigenous peoples and environmental defenders in the country.**

Cardinal Barreto, one of the most prominent religious leaders in the country, recognized with deep concern the ongoing violence indigenous peoples in Peru face as well as the accelerating deforestation rates during the pandemic. He also highlighted the six measures included in the IRI Peru “Declaration for Amazonian Indigenous Security” and the urgency of its implementation. “This declaration reminds us and invites us to live one of the dreams that Pope Francis shared in “Dear Amazonia”: I dream of an Amazon that fights for the rights of the poorest, of the natives, of the survivors. An Amazon where your voice is heard, and your dignity is promoted.” Click [here](#) to view the editorial in Spanish.



IRI Peru requests special attention on the law declaring a road between Pucallpa and Cruzeiro do Sul

A law declaring the construction of a major road between Pucallpa (Ucayali-Peru) and Cruzeiro do Sul (Acre-Brazil) was recently approved in Congress, despite technical reports provided by the Ministry of Environment and the Ombudsman's office warning of the implications that the road could have on critical forests and indigenous peoples' territories. In response, **IRI Peru issued a statement asking nine ministries and the President of the Council of Ministers to review the law**, the technical and economic statements as well as information provided by indigenous communities on the potential impacts of the road. View the statements [here](#).

IRI Peru convenes Pact for the Amazon partners to review progress and strategy

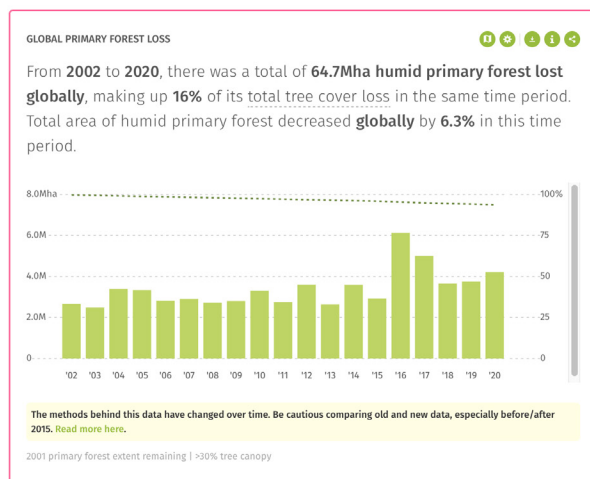
IRI Peru recently held a meeting with the driving group of partners working together on the Pact for the Amazon campaign, including MOCICC, Coalición por una Producción Sostenible, Proyecto Prevenir, AIDER, ACCA, IBC, ProPurús, UNDP, AMPA, IUCN and others to share the progress that has been made within the first quarter of 2021 and to collectively review the strategy and next steps. IRI Peru's strategy is to ensure that the protection and restoration of the Amazon is a central topic for the public and policymakers, notably including the parties and candidates vying for the presidency. Next steps in the campaign include organizing dialogues for the bicentennial of the Independence of Peru and on economic reactivation, all with a focus on protecting forests and the rights of indigenous peoples in the country. During the month of May, IRI Peru also



held several meetings with organizations specialized in forest management and protection to develop joint strategies and increase their impact. IRI Peru met with DAR - Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales and Iris Olivera, Coordinator of the Environmental Rights and Justice program to discuss joint actions in the local chapters of Peru. A working session was also held with Gustavo Suarez de Freitas, coordinator of Earth Innovation Institute in Peru, in order to develop plans and proposals for the sustainable development of the Amazon region.

IRI Peru partners with World Resources Institute to provide religious leaders with training on the Global Forest Watch platform

On May 20th, IRI Peru partnered with World Resources Institute to hold a capacity building workshop on the Global Forest Watch platform, a powerful service that uses satellite technology to allow users to track deforestation in near real-time and to tailor alerts, track deforestation drivers and more. The training run by Global Forest Watch was attended by the IRI Peru country team as well as 31 representatives from Peru's 10 local chapters, equipping religious leaders across the country with a new tool in their efforts to advocate for the protection and restoration of Peru's forests.



IRI COLOMBIA

IRI Colombia launches campaign to promote UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

On the eve of World Environment Day, June 4th, IRI Colombia launched a country-wide campaign as a contribution to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. The campaign, “Sueña un jardín de ideas” (Dream a Garden of Ideas), includes a series of activities to reimagine, recreate and restore the tropical forests of the Colombian Amazon. The campaign aims to raise awareness and encourage people to get actively involved in the protection and restoration of Colombia's forests. One feature of the campaign is a dedicated communications effort that is working through the major TV, radio and print media outlets

in the country with key messages on the urgent need and responsibility to protect and restore Colombia's forests. Beginning on May 31st, radio spots were broadcast in all Amazonian municipalities where IRI Colombia has a presence, calling on religious leaders, social and environmental organizations and elected officials to imagine what a protected and restored Colombian Amazon can look like in the future. IRI Colombia is also organizing workshops in all 36 local chapters where religious leaders and their communities will participate in a collective exercise to imagine what the Amazon Forest will look like in the future.



IRI Colombia holds two virtual events to support UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration campaign

IRI Colombia has held two virtual events to launch their forest restoration campaign. On June 4th, the event “Amazonia ten years ago and ten years later” featured national and international guests who addressed Amazon restoration from different perspectives including armed conflict, food security, indigenous peoples and religious action. Participants in the event, which attracted the participation of over 500 people, included Tim Christophersen, head of UNEP’s Nature for Climate Branch and coordinator of the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration; Juan Bello, head of UNEP in Colombia; Martin Von Hildebrand, founder and director emeritus of Gaia Amazonas; Jorge Reinel Pulecio, director of the Amazon and Life Foundation; Maria Alejandra Chaux, senior natural resources and governance specialist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); and Father Alfredo Ferro S. J., executive secretary of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon. A video of the event can be found [here](#). On June 9th, the event “Faith in service of restoring the Amazon rainforest” highlighted the faith-based actions that religious

communities in Colombia are implementing to raise awareness on the importance of tropical forests, and how others can get involved. This event which attracted the participation of more than 130 people included the participation of Dr. Charles McNeill, Senior Advisor for Forests and Climate at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the religious leaders coordinating IRI Colombia’s 36 local chapters. A video of the event can be found [here](#).

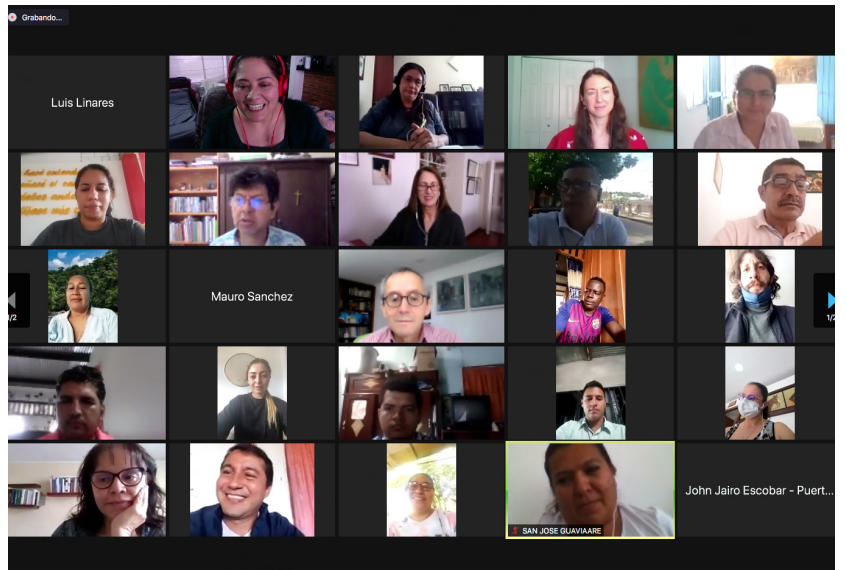
“We need to break the boundaries and rethink the Church’s mission in order to influence politics and generate environmental actions.”

Father Alfredo Ferro S. J., executive secretary of the Ecclesial Conference of the Amazon



IRI Colombia partners with World Resources Institute to provide religious leaders with training on the Global Forest Watch platform

On May 19th, IRI Colombia partnered with World Resources Institute to hold a capacity building workshop on the [Global Forest Watch platform](#), which leverages satellite data, advanced computer algorithms and cloud computing power to allow experts and non-experts, conservation organizations, indigenous communities, policy makers, journalists and companies to collect information about forest changes (tree coverage loss, tree coverage gain, where these changes are occurring, fire alerts, etc.), land activity (infrastructure projects, mining, palm oil, etc.) and much more. The training run by Global Forest Watch was attended by the IRI Colombia country team as well as 38 representatives from all 36 local chapters, equipping religious leaders across the country with a new tool in their efforts to advocate for the protection and restoration of Colombia’s forests.



IRI Colombia launches issue primer on forest restoration for UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

IRI Colombia is the first IRI country program to launch a national issue primer on forest restoration. The primer is a manual intended for religious leaders and faith communities who to be used during the UN decade on Ecosystem Restoration. It provides methodological guidelines to organize restoration activities inspired by faith and spiritual teachings. The primer, which can be found [here](#), includes the latest information, science and data on forest restoration as well as case studies and religious teaching exercises that show in practical terms that the preservation and restoration of landscapes is achievable.

“Forest restoration is a set of actions carried out to restore and improve the condition of degraded forests. It is part of a three-pronged strategy to protect, expand and maintain tropical forests”

Forest Restoration
- Issue primer

IRI INDONESIA

IRI Indonesia prepares to launch new provincial chapter in West Papua

IRI Indonesia is preparing to launch its latest provincial chapter in West Papua on June 22nd. The program sent a delegation of Advisory Council members to the province to meet with forest partners and government representatives to plan the launch event, including Econusa, PGI, KWI and the Governor of West Papua and 52 religious leaders. The Governor was presented with IRI Indonesia brochures and communications materials share background on the program's mission, mandate and activities. The IRI team also met with the Vice Rector of Papua University, the West Papua provincial government and the Head of FKUB (Forum for Religious Communication) to discuss launch plans and agree on the launch event venue to launch the IRI West Papua chapter, the venue and program for the training of local religious leaders, and the experts and professors who would contribute to the launch event and training. In addition, IRI Indonesia is working to bring together significant players in the conservation scene including the Norwegian Embassy, the ambassador of the UK, the Indonesian Vice President, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the Peat and Mangrove Restoration

Agency, to attend the launch and share their viewpoints on climate change and the actions to be taken to ensure that Indonesia takes the necessary steps to halt deforestation. Invitations have been sent out to over 200 individuals and to national TV channels like CNN Indonesia, Kompas TV, Metro TV, Papua TV, and TVMU (Muhammadiyah online TV network).



Local religious leaders committed to launching West Papua chapter



Dr. Hanafi Guciano, IRI Indonesia National Facilitator presenting launch event agenda

IRI Indonesia meets with Vice Minister of Environment and Forestry, Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Cultural Affairs

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) invited IRI Indonesia to participate in a high-level meeting to discuss “social forestry and climate village” – a new program being developed by the Ministry. Several officials attended including Dr. Alue Dohong, Vice Minister; Mrs. Ir. Laksmi Dhewanthi, Director General for Climate Change; Dr. Ir. Bambang Supriyanto, Director General for Social Forestry and Environmental Partnerships; Dr. Ir Ruandha Agung Sugardiman, Director General of Forestry Planning and Environmental Management; Dr. Ir. Agus Justianto, Head of Research and Development and Innovation Agency; and Nunu Anugrah, Head of the Ecoregion Development Control Center. The meeting was an opportunity for IRI Indonesia to present their activities and achievements, the newly developed sermon books and to discuss a possible partnership. The Ministry agreed to share the data they have access to including status on deforestation, ecosystem restoration and conservation areas and involve IRI in their environmental programs to ensure that the religious audience is reached. They also agreed to share their booth and presentation time at the COP 26 Indonesia Pavilion with IRI Indonesia. IRI Indonesia also met in May with the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Cultural Affairs

to discuss a formal launch event for the IRI Indonesia resources guides and religious teaching books. Thomas Siregar, Deputy for Religious Moderation, welcomed the initiative and discussed a future partnership within the religious diversity program to include an environmental curriculum in religious schools.



Meeting with Ministry of Environment and Forestry



Sermon books presented to Ministry of Environment and Forestry

IRI Indonesia meets with Muhammadiyah's TV network to amplify its messaging on forests

IRI Indonesia, the Muhammadiyah Environment Council and the Muhammadiyah online TV network (TVMU) met recently to discuss IRI Indonesia's upcoming activities and programs and how to collaborate on expanding the reach and impact of messaging on the moral imperative of protecting the country's forests and defending the rights of indigenous peoples. IRI Indonesia presented their program, including training for religious leaders on rainforest issues and public outreach and engagement campaigns. Agreement was reached to work together to share IRI Indonesia materials and message with TVMU's audience and networks. Gatot Supangkatm, Director at Majelis Lingkungan Hidup (Environmental Assembly) and member of the IRI Indonesia Advisory Council also discussed possible joint partnerships to increase IRI Indonesia's presence online and on social media, especially through religious channels like TVMU.

IRI DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

IRI DRC delivers training and action planning for local chapters in Mbandaka

From 24-27 May, IRI Equateur held a 3-day training in Mbandaka attended by 12 representatives from religious denominations, 4 representatives from the provincial government, 2 indigenous individuals from the Pygmy community, 2 delegates from civil society organizations, 2 higher education institutions and 2 partners (FAO and the ICCN - the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation). During the training, participants conducted an organizational analysis of the IRI Equateur chapter in order to implement a theory of change based on countering three issues: deforestation and forest degradation, illegal logging, and lack of ethics (corruption) among loggers and decision makers. The theory

of change entitled "Protection of Tropical Forests for the Benefit of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities of Equateur" will work to ensure that local communities and indigenous peoples have sustainable living conditions by 2030 and that (i) the forests of the Equator Province are managed in a participatory and sustainable manner; (ii) the socio-economic and cultural rights of indigenous peoples and local communities are taken into account in any forest projects; and (iii) that the strategic plan is effectively implemented. Participants were also provided with an initial training on Global Forest Watch to equip the local chapters with alerts and near real-time monitoring data on deforestation in the province.



Global Forest Watch training



Action planning session on theory of change

IRI DRC prepares strategy to influence national policies on forests and land use

IRI DRC has convened a team of five experts in collaboration with religious denominations members of the IRI DRC Advisory Council to produce an advocacy document to protect the tropical forests of the country. The team is in the process of identifying sectors that contribute to the protection of forests and analyzing the legal frameworks where IRI DRC can exert influence to address deforestation, land-use planning, and national governance of land and agriculture. The strategy will identify the laws, legislation and policies where the influence and advocacy of religious leaders (working together through IRI DRC) is needed most. The draft political advocacy strategy will be presented to the Advisory Council in their next June meeting.

IRI DRC planning meetings with government leaders, parliamentary groups and religious delegations

During the month of June, Reverend Matthieu, the National Facilitator of IRI DRC will prepare the groundwork to meet with the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, and the Ministers of the Environment and Sustainable Development, of Land Management, of Agriculture, of Planning. He will meet with the Secretary General of Environment on Thursday 10 June to organize meetings with religious delegations and the relevant ministries. Meetings with religious parliamentary groups will also be organized to discuss land use, future climate actions and advocate for a role for IRI DRC in decision-making bodies.