



**AMAZONIA  
FOR LIFE:  
PROTECT  
80% BY  
2025**  
AVERTING THE TIPPING POINT



## Indigenous leaders and researchers publish new report: “A Race Against Time for the Amazon: Where and How to Protect 80% by 2025”, urging world leaders to take urgent measures

This report once again reaffirms the critical role of indigenous peoples in protecting the Amazon and presents new data on deforestation and priority areas with 13 solutions to protect 80% by 2025. The study includes an innovative proposal for debt forgiveness to safeguard 255 million hectares of intact ecosystems that are at imminent risk.

**LIMA, PERU—(September 5, 2022).** At a press conference today, Amazonian indigenous leaders and researchers from nine countries presented new evidence showing that the Amazon is immersed in a crisis or heading towards a point of no return due to the high rates of deforestation and degradation that, combined, already account for 26% of the region; however, the remaining 74% (629 million hectares in priority areas) is still standing and requires immediate protection. Point of no return should be understood as the beginning of metastasis or the irreversible destruction of the ecosystem.

This new analysis that identifies, on the one hand, where degradation and transformation are occurring at the country level and, on the other, the immediate needs and solutions to address the crisis in the Amazon, was presented at the [5th Summit of Amazon Indigenous Peoples](#), organized by the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin (COICA), one year after the approval of Motion 129 of the Congress of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which seeks to avoid the point of no return in the Amazon by protecting 80% of the Amazon by 2025.

The report, presented by COICA in conjunction with coalition of the "Amazonia for Life" Initiative<sup>1</sup>, states that the protection of 80% of the Amazon by 2025 is still feasible and that there is still time to stop the current rate of destruction. The study contemplates solutions to stop the progression towards the point of no return, including the recognition of 100 million hectares of Indigenous Territories, moratoriums to safeguard intact ecosystems with low degradation, an inclusive model of co-governance, and a proposal for the conditional cancellation of the debts of the Amazonian countries.

The authors sounded a strong warning to the international community about the imminent danger faced by hundreds of indigenous peoples living in the 40% of intact ecosystems (255 million hectares) that do not have territorial management regimes that reflect the biocultural diversity of the basin.

“This report compellingly addresses the current state of the Amazon and outlines the symbiosis between threats to ecosystems and indigenous peoples in nine countries. There is a direct correlation between the destruction of our habitat and the assassination of indigenous leaders, defenders of our territories. We have corroborated that the recognition of the rights of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon basin is an urgent solution to safeguard 80% of the Amazon. We must act together, and we must do it before 2025,” said José

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<sup>1</sup> COICA, Stand.earth, RAISG, AVAAZ, Wild Heritage, Amazon Watch, One Earth, and Artists for Amazonia.



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Gregorio Díaz Mirabal, General Coordinator of COICA. “Anything less would be too little too late. We have entered the danger zone,” added the indigenous leader.

This report, prepared by RAISG<sup>2</sup>, is accompanied by a set of new maps based on 36 years of data sequences, which show that 86% of deforestation has taken place in areas that do not have a territorial management regime aimed at conservation. The livestock industry is the major driver of deforestation in the Amazon. Deforestation caused by cattle ranching in the Amazon rainforest accounts for almost 2% of global CO2 emissions annually. 66% of the Amazon is subject to some type of constant or permanent pressure: the oil industry, mining, and over 800 planned and operating hydroelectric plants, among others.

“Preserving 80% of the Amazon by 2025 depends, on the one hand, on the knowledge systems of the indigenous peoples who inhabit the territories and, on the other, on a transformative global financial strategy. The countries of the Amazon rely on the international community to assume its co-responsibility. The drivers of the destruction of the Amazon are principally the supply chains of the industrialized countries. Without knowing it, we eat, transport, and dress ourselves with products that destroy the Amazon. We cannot afford to lose another hectare. The future of the Amazon is everyone’s responsibility,” said Dr. Alicia Guzmán, co-Coordinator of the Stand.earth Initiative.

The study examines the issue at the national level in the nine countries of the basin and shows that 34% of the Brazilian Amazon has entered a process of transformation, as has 24% of the Bolivian Amazon, 16% in Ecuador, 14% in Colombia, and 10% in Peru, which are the countries with the highest rates. Savannization is already a reality in the southeast of the region, mainly in Brazil and Bolivia. The data shows that both countries are responsible for 90% of the deforestation and degradation in the entire region and that they share encroachment as a central cause of deforestation. This issue places states and their legal frameworks at the center of the solutions.

“In Brazil we are witnessing a government with a blatantly anti-indigenous state policy that seeks, in every possible way, to legalize what is illegal. The rampant destruction and greed aimed at our ancestral territories, our Amazon, in the north of the country, is the visible face of the historical violation of rights to which we, the indigenous peoples of Brazil, have been subjected for decades,” said Nara Baré, former Coordinator of COIAB, Brazil.

66% of the Amazon is subject to some type of constant or permanent pressure. Oil blocks, hydroelectric power plants, and mines are planned throughout the Amazon. Current legal frameworks create conditions for states to grant licenses in intact forests or indigenous lands without the freely given prior and informed consent of the people living in the region.

“This report is the product of a methodology that seeks to generate an instrument to guide the public policy of the nine governments that make up the Amazon Basin. The RAISG conceptualizes the Amazon as an integral ecosystem covering a research area of 847 million hectares. One of the main findings is that guaranteeing the rights of indigenous peoples enables progress in the protection and recovery of biodiversity. We have shown that titling indigenous territories and allocating protected areas is a highly

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<sup>2</sup> Study conducted by the Amazon Network of Georeferenced Socio-Environmental Information (RAISG) within the framework of the “Amazonia for Life: 80% by 2025” Initiative and coordinating bodies COICA and Stand.earth.



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V CUMBRE AMAZÓNICA DE PUEBLOS INDÍGENAS  
**SOLUCIONES POR UNA  
AMAZONIA VIVA**  
LIMA - PERÚ 2022



**COORDINADORA DE LAS ORGANIZACIONES  
INDÍGENAS DE LA CUENCA AMAZÓNICA**

successful way to prevent deforestation and rainforest degradation. The climate crisis, however, forces us to think about co-governance management models as planned in the latest IPBES study,” said researcher Marlene Quintanilla, Director of Research and Knowledge Management at Friends of Nature Foundation Bolivia - RAISG.

“Unlike protected areas, indigenous territories do not have Amazonian government budgets or funding mechanisms from the international community, yet they have comparable or even higher levels of conservation than protected areas. Indigenous peoples present an unparalleled opportunity to protect vulnerable wildlife species, as established by United Nations bodies (IPBES, IPCC),” noted Carmen Josse, Director of Ecociencia, Ecuador-RAISG.

The restrictions of national budgets combined with a debt that averages 78% of Latin America’s regional GDP lead governments to overexploit the Amazon’s natural resources. Total debt service alone represents 59% of their exports of goods and services.

“The foreign debt of Amazonian countries must be understood as a systemic driver and fuel for extractive activities throughout the region. As a coalition, we propose the cancellation of this debt as an immediate protective measure to alleviate the economic challenges facing our countries. This cancellation would be conditioned to the protection of 80 percent of the Amazon. Industrialized countries and international financial institutions would assume responsibility for safeguarding the planet, mitigating climate change, and alleviating pressure on the Amazon with the leadership of the Amazonian countries,” explained Tuntiak Katán, Vice Coordinator of COICA.

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