

CORDILLERA AZUL

Forest Conservation and Sustainable Development

Cordillera Azul: Transforming communities, forests and land use in Peru

The beautiful Cordillera Azul (Spanish for ‘Blue Mountains’) is located in Peru’s high forest between the Andes and the Amazon Basin. Its stunning mountains, sparkling blue lagoons, rich biodiversity, and multicultural population have rightly earned this area the name the ‘jewel of the Peruvian Amazon’. **And we want to help keep it that way.**



Our Cordillera Azul project joins sustainable economic development with environmental conservation in a landscape of 3.7 million hectares including the protection of 1.5 million hectares of threatened forest in Cordillera Azul National Park and its buffer zone. We are proud to have helped create real, positive change to the area’s indigenous and local communities. Our work has helped to improve the wildlife population and habitat, which have all helped to improve the global climate.

Project Benefits: Nature

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

Cordillera Azul National Park is threatened by illegal logging, cattle ranching, ‘slash and burn’ agriculture, illicit agriculture, and infrastructure development. Forests are really efficient at absorbing and storing massive amounts of carbon from the atmosphere — until they’re burned or processed. This then creates carbon

dioxide emissions, the most abundant greenhouse gas causing climate change. Which means that protecting our forests, such the one in Cordillera Azul National Park, is critical to managing global climate change. By effectively putting a value on the carbon that the park stores in its forest, Cordillera Azul will reduce global emissions by **20.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2021**—equivalent to taking 4.4 million cars off the road for a year.

PROJECT STANDARDS

But can just one area in one part of the world really have an effect on our global climate? Two independent, transparent, and globally recognized standards firmly believe it can. The Climate, Community, and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) verifies the Benefits of the project to local communities, wildlife and biodiversity, and the climate. And the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) ensures the quality and accuracy of the accounting

PROJECT BENEFITS SUMMARY

440 communities living in the project zone, including **30** indigenous communities

27 sustainable enterprises supported

730 jobs supported, 30% held by women

28 High Conservation Value Species protected

45 watersheds protected

TOTAL EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

20.6m tonnes CO₂

Data represents targets for 2021

methodology used to measure the project’s climactic benefits. As a result, we’re proud to say that Cordillera Azul has earned Gold distinction for biodiversity under the CCBA standard.





CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE

The Cordillera Azul project stretches from the Andes to the Amazon Basin. This vast area supports and strengthens the resilience of diverse ecosystems including mountain forest, hill forest, alluvial forest, and wetlands, which all help to support the local communities capacity adapt to a rapidly changing climate. The Park is also the source of 45 watersheds that feed two of the Amazon’s major tributaries. These watersheds provide key ecosystem services such as flood and soil erosion protection to the surrounding areas, in addition to supporting local agriculture.



SPECIES PROTECTION

Cordillera Azul protects 28 High Conservation Value (HCV) species, including the spectacled bear, the jaguar, and the harpy eagle. HCV species are outstandingly significant or critically important at national, regional, or global level.

Project Benefits: People

LIVELIHOODS

Cordillera Azul has become renowned for its rich, distinctive cultural diversity. And the local and indigenous communities play a pivotal role in maintaining the integrity of the project. They are drivers of their own transformation and in ensuring the global climate impact of what they do. Approximately 250,000 people in over 440 communities live here, and by 2021 the project will have engaged 34 communities and supported around 730 jobs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is integral to ensuring our project is socially inclusive. Our NGO partner on the ground, CIMA, has been working in the Cordillera Azul area since 2002 to strengthen local communities, build their capacity, and develop economic and well-being strategies called Quality of Life Plans. All of

these plans help to improve access to basic services and establish sustainable economic opportunities. In the area surrounding the Park, CIMA helps local farmers integrate sustainability into their work and partners with nearby coffee and cacao cooperatives to advance commercially viable production.

Project Benefits: Economic Development

SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISE

Small enterprises are absolutely vital in creating positive change in rural communities, but many of them lack sufficient capacity or market connections to succeed without external support. So to help truly achieve scale, the Cordillera Azul project prioritizes working with local enterprises by focusing on effective management, profitability, solvency, and access to finance. To date, the project has supported 27 enterprises.

GREEN COMMODITIES

The Cordillera Azul project integrates conservation and sustainable approaches to productive land use. Coffee and cacao are grown in the production area surrounding the national park (the ‘buffer zone’) with the ultimate goal of achieving commercial scale.

FAIR ECONOMIC RETURN

The Cordillera Azul project is not intended to be a charity, but it is designed to transform the local communities and ecosystems. Project revenue from carbon credits will help drive the development of alternative livelihoods and climate friendly productive activities such as agriculture, textiles, and crafts. Cordillera Azul demonstrates the financial viability and sustainability of aligning economy and ecology.



The Cordillera Azul project advances many Sustainable Development Goals