

# TARAPOTO, Peru



Supporting the natural regeneration of the Amazon rainforest.

## — PROJECT OVERVIEW

Launched in 2015



### FIELD PARTNER

Centro Urku



### OBJECTIVES

Promoting the natural regeneration of the Amazon, slowing down forest degradation, contributing to the economic development of the Amazon region.



### ACTIONS IN THE FIELD

Forest protection measures, economic incentives, monitoring, support for the creation of small businesses and environmental awareness raising.

## MAIN SPECIES

- Matico (*Piper elongatum*)
- Mocambo tree
- Calathea lutea
- False cedar

# — OUR PARTNER IN THE FIELD



## Centro Urku

Founded in 2004, the Urku Centre, located in Tarapoto, carries out activities to develop Amazonian biodiversity and raise awareness among local communities. Composed of a multidisciplinary team that combines traditional and scientific knowledge of biodiversity and Amazonian culture, the Urku Centre monitors the production of seedlings in several nurseries, as well as the logistics of the planting activities thanks to Reforest'Action funds. The Centre's team provides farmers with the seedlings, who then plant them on their land or directly within the Amazonian rainforest, using their ancestral knowledge. Alongside local cooperatives, including the *Mushuk Runa cooperative*, the Urku Centre also ensures the recovery and growth of the trees.





# — ACTIONS ON THE SPOT

## LOCAL CONTEXT

Initiated 8 years ago, the project now encompasses three northeastern regions in Peru: San Martín, Loreto and Ucayali. The Upper Amazon was originally covered by tropical forests and wetlands. Since the late 20th century, the expansion of agricultural programs for the cultivation of coffee, cocoa, bananas, maize and manioc, as well as the construction of road infrastructure and illegal logging have led to the massive deforestation of primary forests. The families of the *Shawi*, *Awajun* and *Quechua* ethnic groups are increasingly suffering from the disappearance of natural ecosystems: changes in the rainy season, prolonged droughts and lack of water are becoming commonplace.

**Initiated in 2015, it is the first project financed by Reforest'Action at the very heart of the Amazon forest. If the early years were focused on the development of agroforestry, these last seasons are defined by the natural regeneration of a great number of native species, in a continued effort to restore and conserve the Amazon rainforest.**

## PROMOTING THE NATURAL REGENERATION OF THE AMAZON

Since 2022, the *Urku Centre* has been working hand in hand with the *Shiwa* people to fight deforestation and restore degraded ecosystems, without planting. With funding from Reforest'Action, our partner is developing and promoting a range of economic incentives to discourage farming families from further damaging their land through conventional practices. Local people are supported in protecting their plots, in particular through preventive measures against pests and fire.

**Contributing to the conservation of the Amazon through natural regeneration helps to raise awareness about the importance of forest cover among beneficiaries, and to show them that achieving a better quality of life through the valorization of the Amazon rainforest is possible.**







## PRESERVING THE ENDEMIC BIODIVERSITY OF THE AMAZON

Biodiversity conservation is one of the main purposes of the project. The wide variety of endemic species protected as part of the project contributes to the conservation of plant biodiversity in the Amazon and to the preservation of endangered animal species. Besides, the Centre's activities include the rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration of wild animals captured for illegal trade. Since 2006, more than a thousand animals belonging to 61 different species have been rescued thanks to these actions.

The multitude of species planted since the beginning of the project in 2015 has enabled the accumulation of botanical and scientific knowledge on each of them. This invaluable expertise is helping to strengthen the forest's regeneration capacity and promote recognition and use of its economic value at local level.



## DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES

Natural regeneration and economic alternatives are closely linked. Indeed, it is necessary to convince producers that the trees they are protecting have economic value. To this end, the *Urku Centre* encourages the population to develop a number of income-generating activities over the long term, and to revive the ancestral know-how of the Peruvian Amazon.

The beneficiaries thus manage to diversify the local economy by capitalizing on the ecosystem services provided by the trees. A variety of lucrative initiatives have already emerged, such as beekeeping, sale of lemons from agroforestry, manufacture of cosmetics based on essential oils, production of chocolate and cocoa distillate, medicinal tourism and shamanism based on sacred plants.



# — PHOTO GALLERY





# — POSITIVE IMPACTS



## CLIMATE IMPACT

Preserved trees act as carbon sinks by storing CO<sub>2</sub> and are valuable allies in the fight against climate change. Natural regeneration of the Amazon thus increases the carbon storage capacity of both above-ground and below-ground biomass (all organic plant matter) and soil.



## SOIL & WATER IMPACT

Indigenous trees help restore soil fertility and prevent soil erosion. They protect the land from extreme weather events, retain rainwater on the soil surface and help filter it before it enters the water table. Forest cover also regulates the water cycle, helping to preserve the planet's water resources.



## BIODIVERSITY IMPACT

Promoting the natural regeneration of forest patches helps to develop the degraded plant and animal biodiversity of the Upper Amazon. In particular, butterflies, monkeys, frogs and turtles will once again find shelter in these ecosystems. Micro-organisms, flora and fauna all play their part in restoring an ecological network between ecosystems.



## COMMUNITY IMPACT

Trees enable beneficiary households to harvest non-timber products and thus improve their food security, or to earn additional income through the development of sustainable economic activities. Local populations are made aware of the need to protect forest ecosystems. This approach aims to initiate sustainable farming practices and maintain the benefits of planted trees on the quality of life of local communities.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This project contributes directly to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, which set the course for a better, more sustainable future for all.



The project supports indigenous communities of the *Shiwa* ethnic group in implementing economic activities that respect the Amazon rainforest.



Natural regeneration of the Amazon enables the development of carbon sinks and CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration, which contributes to mitigating climate change on a local and global scale.



The preservation of endemic Amazonian plant and animal species promotes the development of biodiversity and increases soil biodiversity and soil micro-organisms (bacteria, fungi, etc.).

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