



THE EMERGENCY AMAZON FIRE FUND

JANUARY 2019 - DECEMBER 2021

FINAL REPORT



THE AMAZON ON FIRE

The intense 2019 wildfire season in the Amazon captured the world's attention. At their peak, the number of recorded fire outbreaks was three times the number in 2018. Fueled by a surge in deforestation and illegal burning, combined with drought and warmer temperatures from climate change, the fires led to a regional crisis as the flames devastated the ecosystem. **By the end of the season, more than 12 million hectares were burned between Brazil and Bolivia.**

In 2019, WWF formed the Emergency Amazon Fire Fund to drive critical resources to the people at the frontlines fighting the fires. Through your support, we partnered with local civil society organizations that represent and work with Indigenous peoples and local communities to protect the Amazon.

Thanks to your generous donations, we raised nearly **\$2 million** in the US for fire response and recovery. This is our fourth and final report summarizing the impact of your support, including stories from the field, and what's next for WWF in the Amazon.





Conserving the Amazon, and other areas like it, is essential to conserving our planet. As one of the world's most iconic forests burns, it's absolutely critical to consider how we are using this valuable resource and work to prevent the kind of disaster we are seeing today. **That means deliberate conservation strategies that end deforestation and mitigate and adapt to climate change.**

Kerry Cesareo
Senior Vice President, Forests, WWF-US



THE EMERGENCY AMAZON FIRE FUND

We established the Emergency Amazon Fire Fund to drive critical resources to the people at the front lines of the dramatic fires, specifically to local civil society organizations that represent and work with Indigenous peoples and local communities to protect the Amazon. Every dollar you donated went directly to partners on the ground to support fire response and recovery in the Earth's largest rain forest.

Thanks to your generosity – and so many others – **\$1,750,113** was raised and allocated to our partners in Bolivia and Brazil through the Emergency Amazon Fire Fund. Through the fund, we were able to provide equipment to volunteers fighting these fires, and desperately needed water, food, and medical supplies.

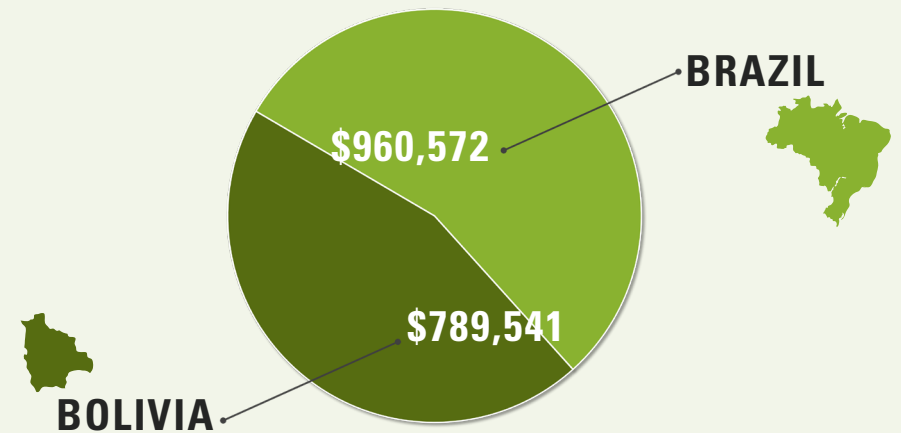
Your support helped families who lost their homes and livelihoods. In the face of this devastating ecological crisis, your gift also offered hope.

The Emergency Amazon Fire Fund received donations from:






3,300+ individuals and private foundations

30+ companies through direct gifts or employee-giving programs

FUNDS ALLOCATED THROUGH THE WWF EMERGENCY AMAZON FIRE FUND



The Emergency Amazon Fire Fund was established to drive critical resources to the front lines of the fires. The fund helped provide:

-  More than 6,000 pieces of firefighting equipment, including gloves, protective goggles, pumps, machetes, chainsaws, water pumps, and hoses
-  Food, water, and medical supplies for impacted communities
-  Communication radios and GPS equipment
-  Car rentals and fuel to deliver supplies to remote areas
-  Equipment and training to monitor ongoing fires and provide alerts to those at risk

THANKS TO THE EMERGENCY AMAZON FIRE FUND, WE ...



FROM ASHES TO SOAP

PARTNERSHIPS THAT EMPOWER WOMEN & COMMUNITIES

In 2019, Bolivia experienced a record-breaking fire year, with devastating impacts to remote communities throughout the Amazon. The Indigenous communities of Río Blanco and Palmarito de la Frontera, located in the Chiquitano Dry Forest region, were hit particularly hard by the fires. Dozens of families were forced to evacuate as the air quality deteriorated. The devastation of the fires was extensive, with significant damage to their local cusi plantations.

The cusi palm is native to the Amazon rain forest. Its seeds produce a valuable edible oil with medicinal properties, called cusi or babassu oil. For generations, knowledge of how to use the cusi oil as a natural medicine to cure their ailments was passed. Many women in this region are dedicated to the production of cosmetics and medicinal oils from the fruits they collect. Cusi oil is harvested sustainably without having to cut the trees down. In this way, the trees are protected for future generations.

Through the Emergency Amazon Fire Fund, we were able to help women of the Chiquitano Dry Forest region form a partnership with Activa – a Bolivian-based, woman-owned natural cosmetics



TOP IMAGE:

*Gloria Roman Mengari holds burned nuts from the cusi palm (*Attalea speciosa*).*

Photo Credit: © Marizilda Cruppe / WWF-UK

BOTTOM IMAGE:

Polonia Supepi, President of the Association of Women Producers of Copaibo Oil Río Blanco Community, collecting oil from a Copaiba tree. Once a month, she walks through the forest to gather about one liter of oil from forty trees.

Photo Credit: © Marizilda Cruppe / WWF-UK



company. As part of the partnership with Activa, women from Chiquitano produce soaps using locally sourced ingredients to produce high-quality products.

In four communities, we have set up laboratories complete with solar panels and other inputs to optimize production. Your support also helped supply the facilities with water access and restrooms. Together, with the local civil association Apoyo para el Campesino-Indígena del Oriente Boliviano (APCOB), we have developed a protocol to ensure consumers know their products help support the conservation of the Amazon and the empowerment of women.

The investment in cusi oil products has opened a new opportunity for the women of the Chiquitano Dry Forest region. Now they hope to expand their range of products, incorporating the natural resources available from the forest. As the Amazon continues to recover from the devastating fires, we look to the future with innovative ways to conserve nature and support local communities.

“I WANT TO FIGHT FOR THE FOREST BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE WE LIVE, AND MORE THAN EVERYTHING FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN, MORE THAN EVERYTHING.”

- Gloria Roman Mengari

Member of the Palmarito de la Frontera Indigenous Community



TOP IMAGE:

All natural cosmetic products from the Association of Women Producers of Copaibo Oil Río Blanco Community. In laboratories supported by the Emergency Amazon Fire Fund, goods are processed, packaged, and distributed to drugstores and other local markets in Bolivia.

Photo Credit: © Marizilda Cruppe / WWF-UK

BOTTOM IMAGE:

A portrait of Gloria Roman Mengari, a member of the Palmarito de la Frontera Indigenous community.

Photo Credit: © Marizilda Cruppe / WWF-UK

THANKS TO YOU FIRE-FIGHTING SUPPLIES PROVIDED BY THE EMERGENCY AMAZON FIRE FUND

One of the greatest challenges in the Brazilian Amazon for decades has been equipping groups of volunteers and preparing them to fight forest fires. After the record numbers of fires seen in 2019, this demand became even more urgent and necessary.

Data from Brazil's National Institute for Space Research showed that in July 2020, 6,803 fires were detected in the Amazon, that is 28% more than the same period in 2019. This growth occurred despite the presence of the Army stationed in the region to monitor for forest fires, and a federal decree banning the use of fire in the biome for four months. The fires—fueled by an uptick in deforestation and illegal burning combined with dry weather conditions— have caused serious social, economic, and public health problems for many of the Amazon's inhabitants.

Thanks to your help, WWF donated more than 1,400 pieces of fire-fighting equipment to its partner, The Amazonas State Environmental Department (SEMA-AM), in the State of Amazonas to combat the fires across 20 different Conservation Areas. The donation included crucial fire-fighting equipment such as: gloves, glasses, helmets, hoes, boots, and shovels.



TOP IMAGE:
WWF and SEMA staff gather with donated fire-fighting equipment provided through the Emergency Amazon Fire Fund. Together, they discussed the destination of the equipment and how they can help fight the fires in Amazonas.
Photo Credit: © Michael Dantas / WWF-Brazil (March 2020)

BOTTOM IMAGE:
Staff member with donated fire-fighting equipment
Photo Credit: © Nathalie Brasil / WWF-UK (March 2020)



FIRE MONITORING IN THE AMAZON HOW USING DRONES HELPS PROTECT REMOTE AREAS

As deforestation and fire rates have soared in the Brazilian Amazon, drones have become a key tool to help monitor protected areas, and detect deforestation, fire breakouts, and land grabbing. Soaring hundreds of feet above treetops, with a range of about fifteen miles, drones allow us to study the forest biome from a distance.

Thanks to the Emergency Amazon Fire Fund, we were able to provide 18 drones to seventeen organizations in the Amazon. With the support of the Kanindé Ethno-Environmental Defense Association, we were able to conduct a drone-piloting training course for a group of 55 Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who protect the Amazon.

“WITH THE ARRIVAL OF DRONES, THE JOB OF MONITORING OUR REGION HAS BECOME MUCH EASIER. THE FIRST TIME WE USED THE DRONE ON OUR OWN, WE FOUND A HUGE, DEFORESTED AREA, VERY CLOSE TO THE ROUTES WE USED WITHIN THE INDIGENOUS TERRITORY, WHICH WE NEVER IMAGINED WOULD BE AFFECTED BY INVASIONS AND DEFORESTATION. BY LAND, WE DON’T THINK THE WAY WE DO WITH A DRONE.”

- Bitaté Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau
President, The Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau Indigenous People’s Association

TOP IMAGE:
WWF providing drone training to people from the Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau territory. Porto Velho, Rondônia, Brazil.
Photo Credit: © Marizilda Cruppe / WWF-UK (December 2019)

BOTTOM IMAGE:
View of an area of illegal deforestation found in the indigenous Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau territory during drone surveillance.
Photo Credit: © Marizilda Cruppe / WWF-UK (December 2019)





PEOPLE OF THE AMAZON

Polonia Supepí, the President of the Association of Women Producers of Copaibo Oil Río Blanco Community, leans next to a Copaiba tree. Once a month, Polonia walks through the forest to collect oil from about forty Copaibo trees, resulting in a liter of oil.

During the fires, she was one of the few women who stayed in the community, even after all of the women, children, and elders were evacuated. She decided to stay to support the individuals who were fighting the fires.



PEOPLE OF THE AMAZON

Jesus Ribera Supoyabe has lived in Palmarito de la Frontera, an Indigenous community located in the Chiquitano Dry Forest region, for the last thirty years. In the second half of 2019, the area was heavily affected by forest fires that spread throughout the region.

“We have everything from the forest, clean air, we have the resources, we have the material to improve our houses. The forest gives us everything and that is why we are very distressed in defending our forest from the harm it has been suffering.” - Jesus Ribera Supoyabe



WWF IN THE AMAZON

Safeguarding the Amazon is a complicated and involved undertaking, but WWF is making strides with support from generous donors like you. We envision an ecologically healthy Amazon biome that maintains its environmental and cultural contribution to local peoples, the countries of the region, and the world—all within a framework of social equity, inclusive economic development, and global responsibility.

To achieve this vision, we are focused on safeguarding protected and conserved areas, helping Indigenous and traditional peoples to defend their lands and resources, halting forest conversion for agriculture and ranching, and promoting sustainable infrastructure.

PROJECTS FOR PERMANENCE IN THE AMAZON

WWF supports the effective management and long-term financial sustainability of protected areas encompassing 12% of the Amazon using the Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) approach. WWF also partners with Indigenous peoples to use technology for territorial protection and to develop Indigenous enterprises based on the sustainable use of natural resources. We work with government agencies and standard-setting organizations on guidelines for “greening” infrastructure and with corporate partners, traders, and investors on eliminating deforestation and conversion of habitats from supply chains of companies that buy or invest in beef and soy in Brazil’s Amazon.





© Luis Barreto / WWF-UK



© Rodrigo Mazzola / WWF-Brazil

THANK YOU

We are profoundly grateful for your generosity. Thanks to you, we were able to raise funds for urgent fire response and recovery in the Amazon. Together, we are protecting the remarkable Amazon ecosystem that supports millions of people who live in the region and, ultimately, life around the world.

For more information, visit worldwildlife.org/AmazonFireFund

WWF would like to thank the Kanindé Ethno-Environmental Defense Association and The Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau Indigenous People's Association. Without these partners, this work would not have been possible. This work was carried out with the consent and collaboration of the Indigenous people and Fundação Nacional do Índio - FUNAI.