



HOLISTIC AGREEMENTS FOR A FULL LIFE

Executive Summary

“We firmly believe that science and the knowledge found within indigenous communities are key in guaranteeing our work, and within this framework the inclusion of initiatives for indigenous women and youth are fundamental. This is an initiative that is born from the territory, from the feelings of a leader, a woman or a young person who has not been listened to for centuries. This initiative arises from the struggles and sacrifices of our leaders.”

TUNTIK KATAN,
Vice General Coordinator, COICA



Scope

More than 200 million hectares of tropical forests and ecosystems are protected by three million people belonging to more than 500 indigenous communities of the Amazon. These ancestral custodians are key players in strategizing to fight the climate crisis, pollution, the destruction of the biome and the loss of our planet's biodiversity.

In fact, at least 25% of the Amazon is under indigenous title. And yet, on a global level, these indigenous communities are the most vulnerable and least served. Their traditional knowledge and ideas of development based on the fullness of life are threatened by increased deforestation, fires, massive infrastructure projects, usurpation of their lands, drug trafficking, illegal mining, expansion of livestock, the absence of alternative initiatives, forest carbon piracy and, as if that were not enough, a new enemy: Covid-19.

While the value of indigenous peoples in climate stability, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services is widely recognized by academic studies and international conventions, the challenge remains to put discourses into practice through simple mechanisms that recognize and reinforce the importance of indigenous peoples in maintaining territorial integrity in the short and long term.

In this context, the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin (COICA), in conjunction with Conservation International (CI) have designed the “Holistic Agreements for a Full Life” Program.

It is an incentive-enabling mechanism based on the integration of factors such as territorial defense, the holistic, the Amazonian indigenous culture, social inclusion and reciprocity—all this to contribute to the conservation of the traditional systems of territorial management and the integral development of the Amazonian populations.

COICA has the firm intention that the program “Holistic Agreements for a Full Life” will be the integrating mechanism for the indigenous development of the Amazon during the next 30 years. The objective of the program is:

“Reinforce good practices of the Amazonian peoples through an incentive system to conserve, restore and manage indigenous territories, recognizing the care, good use and protection of nature in their ancestral lands while promoting the full development of their economy, culture and society.”



Holistic Agreements: Inspired By Indigenous Knowledge And The Power Of Alliances

Based on the knowledge of the Amazonian indigenous peoples that COICA and allied institutions have, the program will follow the following key criteria:

- **Prior consultation with the communities** is a central and indispensable part of implementing the program.
- The gateway to the program is **indigenous territory**, understood as a holistic space of cultural production and reproduction. Likewise, it is a means of inclusion in modernity. This process will be carried out through national indigenous organizations affiliated with COICA.
- The focus of the program is oriented towards **strengthening the community, the representative organization and future generations**. The end goal is the generation of well-being, promotion of the indigenous economy and conservation of the Amazon biome.
- The consolidation of **initiatives with women and indigenous youth** are key to generating economic resources. The agreements emphasize the integral economic development of these groups.
- The **life plan** is a foundational aspect for beginning any type of process in indigenous territories, and the holistic agreements for a full life are instrumental for their implementation.
- The program promotes and facilitates **agreements between the community and its territory**. The program acts to establish the appropriate conditions in order to come to an agreement.
- The agreements must be made **according to the territory and not only according to a communal area**. They focus on a holistic view in which community priorities are prone to significant change over time. The agreements should respond in an adaptive manner to these conditions.
- **Articulation of actors** is fundamental for the greater scope, including that of the State, private sectors and civil society.

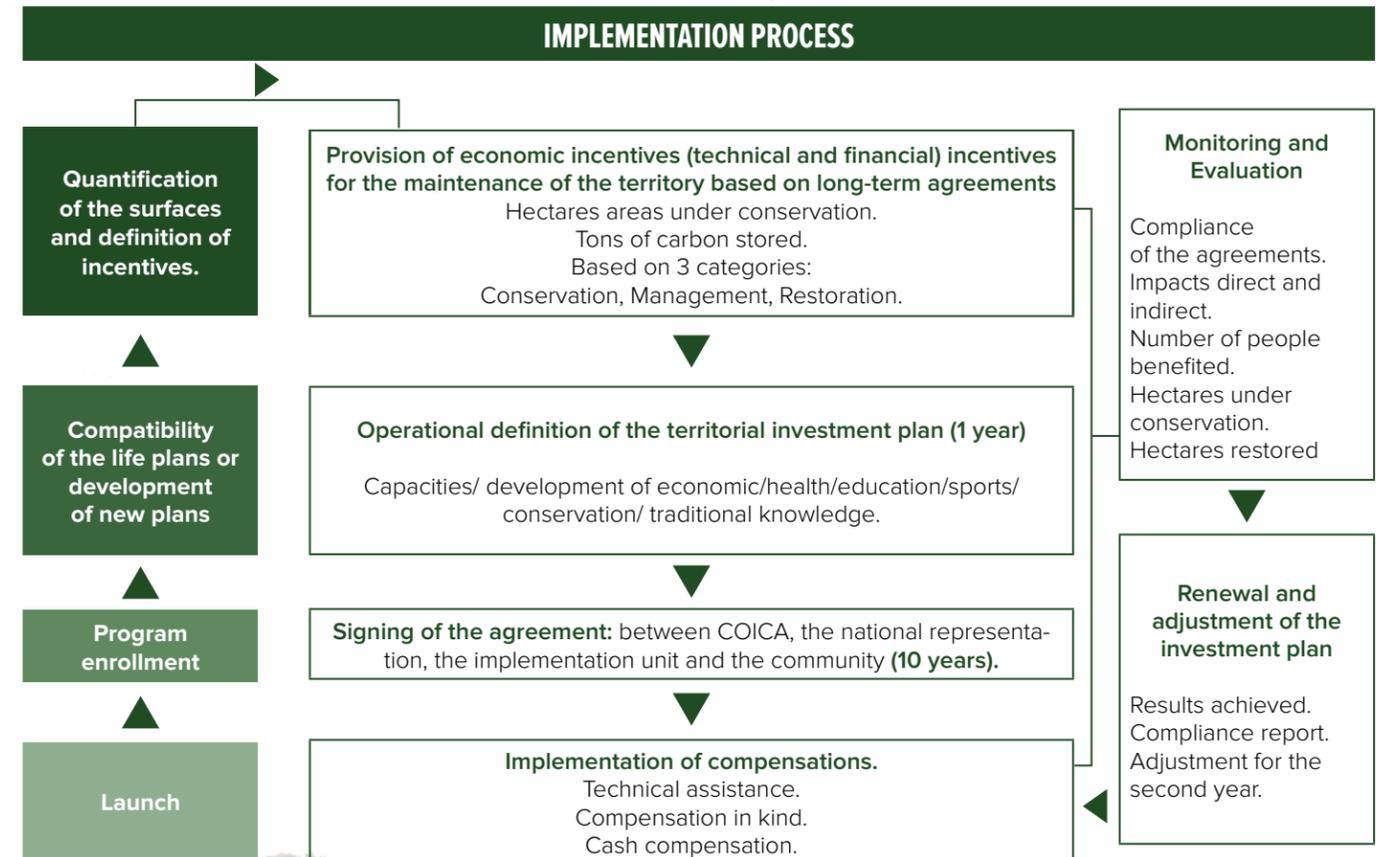
- The continued **technical assistance** of COICA, together with allied organizations, is of high importance to the program in order to achieve and demonstrate the impact, internally as well as externally.



Implementation Process

- **Launch of program**
The program will organize an official launch to share the objectives, mechanisms, monitoring scheme and other details of the program. This activity will be aimed at partner organizations, governments, multilateral mechanisms, investors, etc.
- **Program affiliation**
Indigenous organizations interested in joining the program can request affiliation through a mechanism designed by COICA and its members. This will be the responsibility of the indigenous territory, requiring the identification of conservation and restoration areas as well as sustainable management. The entire community must support the assignment of the territory to the program.
- **Compatibility of life plans or elaboration of new life plans**
The program will support the compatibility of the zoning of existing life plans in three categories: areas of conservation, restoration and sustainable management.
In the case of territories that do not have life plans or that have not been developed in a participatory manner, the program will elaborate them through a participatory process that will take as a basis the vision and traditional ways of life of indigenous peoples.
- **Quantification of areas and definition of incentives**
The areas will be quantified and goals will be defined for each participating territory. Each category will have a package of technical, financial or in-kind incentives. The identification of incentives will be consolidated in an annual communal plan approved by the general assembly. The program will emphasize creating culturally relevant incentives that strengthen the indigenous economy. Initiatives that include the participation of women and youth will be prioritized.
- **Provision of economic incentives (technical and financial) for the maintenance of the territory based on long-term agreements**

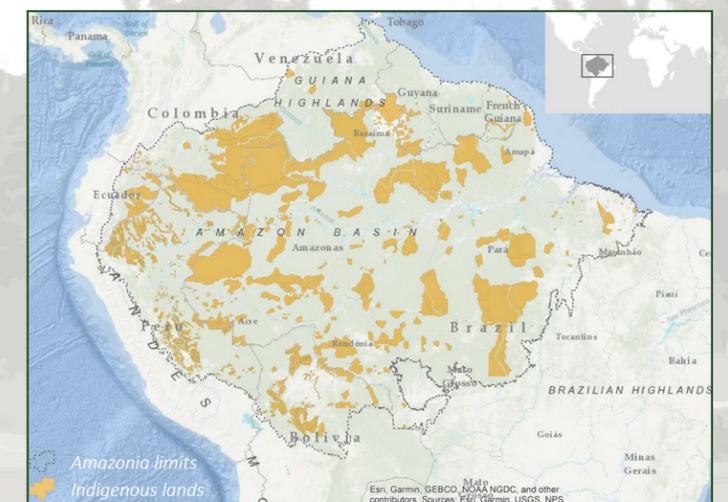
One part of the incentives will be delivered with the signing of the agreement; however, the most significant portion will be delivered upon verified results, achieved each semester. The program may provide additional incentives to territories that have significant or outstanding results or performances. The incentives will be focused on the need for learning and entrepreneurship of local communities.



Monitoring Progress and Impacts

The program will monitor the zoning according to the life plans. In the case of conservation areas, maintenance of forest cover and the addition of assisted restoration areas will be verified. Finally, the different ways of enabling sustainable management areas and their impact on strengthening both the indigenous economy and local governance will be monitored.

Other measurements that may be required for a particular agreement, and for which the technical unit does not have capacity, may be supported by allies or hired out according to need. For example: monitoring of carbon, hot spots or regional fires.



Map 1. Indigenous communities, in orange, make up 25% of the Amazon territory. Source Amazon Geo-Referenced Socio-Environmental Information Network. (Spanish acronym RAISIG).



This publication contains the text of the program “Holistic Agreements for a Full Life”, an incentive and enabling mechanism based on the integration of these factors; territorial defense, holistic view of the territory, Amazonian Indigenous culture, social inclusion, and reciprocity. This mechanism should contribute to the conservation of the traditional systems of territorial management and the integral development of the Amazonian populations.

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