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THE CAQUETÁ CLIMATE CHANGE SUB-NODE: LOCAL SOLUTIONS FOR GLOBAL CHALLENGES

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The Amazon is an important strategic asset for humanity representing the largest territorial carbon reserve in the world, with approximately 123 billion tons of carbon, and the greatest biodiversity on the planet, just to mention a few. In Colombia, the Amazon is home to a substantial part of the country's cultural diversity and natural resources. Still, the Colombian Amazon faces big challenges, including deforestation caused by illegal extractive activities, the expansion of the agricultural frontier, extensive cattle ranching, and the planting of illicit crops.

No one is better positioned to protect this resource than its inhabitants, the people who depend on the forests for their survival and can plan their activities in synergy with forest conservation. These people are also the ones living with the impacts of climate change in the region. The Caquetá Climate Change Sub-node emerged from these circumstances to become a force for good in the area.

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Photo by Olber Llanos

What is the Caquetá Climate Change Sub-node? It is a multi-stakeholder space where public and private institutions, academia, non-governmental organizations, and rural and ethnic community organizations, and other actors, work together on the formulation, development, and monitoring of

strategies, policies, plans, programs, projects, regulations and goals for adaptation and mitigation of forest conservation and climate change in Caquetá.

This important space was created under a national guideline to strengthen regional governance, bring climate change policy to the territories, and integrate responses from all different levels. In the Amazon, the Amazon Regional Climate Change Node, known by the acronym NORCCA, comprises the departments of Caquetá, Amazonas, Guainía, Guaviare, Vaupés, and Putumayo.

The Caquetá Departmental Climate Change Sub-node was derived from this administrative instance in February 2017. Through this multi-stakeholder space in Caquetá, the long-term structuring of the **Integrated Territorial Climate Change Management Plan** was completed **in 2021**, with support from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, SINCHI Institute, and the United Nations Development Program. The **Plan's** implementation period is 2020-2050.

Likewise, the Caquetá Climate Change Sub-Node has facilitated the design of a **Low Emissions Rural Development Strategy** for the department, supported by the government of Caquetá through the Departmental Decree 1355 of 2019. This Strategy has clear goals to address climate challenges for the period 2020-2035, with the objective of "promoting the reduction of rural poverty, to contribute to the consolidation of the Amazonian identity, the increase of opportunities, the sustainability of the territory and improvement of the quality of life of the rural population" as described in the purpose of the department's Public Policy Guidelines.

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Photo by Tathiana Bezerra

Currently, the Subnode is managing the implementation of the Low Emissions Rural Strategy with support from Amazonia Connect, a partnership between USAID, Solidaridad Network, Earth Innovation Institute, National Wildlife Federation, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In Colombia, the initiative promotes and scales the adoption of low-carbon agriculture and sustainable production of products, including coffee, milk, and meat.

According to Alexandra Losada Alarcón, the representative of the Environmental and Agriculture Secretariat of Caquetá, some of the most outstanding actions of the Regional Climate Change Sub-Node have been the collective construction of various instruments towards climate change adaptation and mitigation specific to the local context. "This has allowed us to consolidate an appropriate action plan to improve the management capacity, accompaniment, and promotion of the public policies formulated."

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Photo by Karina Fernanda Monroy

The Caquetá Climate Change Sub-node plays an important role in ensuring the participation of key actors from different sectors. It ensures that government strategies reflect the interests of the Caquetá population, ensuring their resilience and the opportunity for a prosperous future in synergy with their splendid surrounding nature.

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Amazonia Connect is a partnership between USAID, Solidaridad, Earth Innovation Institute, National Wildlife Federation, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Together with USAID's Amazon Regional Environment Program, producers, companies, local governments and financial institutions, Amazonia Connect promotes and scales the adoption of low-emission commodity production to improve biodiversity conservation and

climate resilience in Brazil, Colombia, and Peru.

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