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## SUCCESS STORY: BUILDING CAPACITY TO EMPOWER FOREST USERS IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME MONITORING NETWORK



Members of the Madre de Dios Environmental Crime Monitoring Network. Photo: Marcelo Castro.

3 reports on environmental crimes have been submitted by the network for legal assessment

More than 10 members of the network have become licensed drone pilots

42 members of the network were trained in the use of OSINFOR's MiBosque (My Forest) app

The Amazon rainforest is the most biodiverse region on Earth and spans across 60% of Peru's territory. Known as the country's biodiversity hotspot, Madre de Dios harbors a wide array of wildlife, which is key to local people's livelihoods. However, environmental crimes such as illegal logging, illegal mining, and wildlife trafficking put the future of this diverse territory at risk.

In 2021, local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) joined efforts to create the first Environmental Crime Monitoring Network in Madre de Dios. These include the Madre de Dios Association of Forest Concessionaires (ACOMAD), the Association of Brazil Nut Harvesters (RONAP) and the Management Committee of the Tambopata National Reserve and potentially covers an area of over 55,000 hectares of forests.

Since its launch with support from USAID's Prevent Activity, this network coordinates capacity building, monitoring and reporting activities towards the prevention of environmental crimes throughout the forests of Madre de Dios.

Yackxeri Vela, an active member of the network, comes from a family of Brazil nuts harvesters and is one of the leaders of RONAP. This association created in 2003 in Tambopata, Madre de Dios promotes the sustainable harvesting, transformation, and export of organic Brazil nuts. With over 40 associates, its main goal is to conserve nearly 30,000 hectares of forests that sustain the livelihoods of numerous local families.

Network members are continuously being trained on the use of technological tools to perform monitoring activities in their home territories, as well as reporting environmental crimes. These activities include licensed training on drones piloting and the use of the Mi Bosque (My Forest) APP – developed by OSINFOR (Forestry and Wildlife Resource Oversight Agency) and USAID Prevent to support the timely reporting and monitoring of forest resources use. Furthermore, the network has approved internal rules and governance protocols, as well as an annual work plan, developed threat maps, and participated in several field monitoring activities, with technical assistance from Prevent. The network has also exchanged lessons learned and experiences with indigenous organizations and other

cooperation projects to share their best practices in monitoring, reporting, and preventing environmental crimes.

*"Only by working together we can take important steps forward. This network will become a space to report violations and resolve them safely, not only to ensure the conservation of the forests, but also to guarantee their benefits for all Peruvians."*  
— Yackxeri Vela, RONAP's representative.