

## Gone digital: Environmental protection in Colombia's post-conflict areas

Rural communities and representatives of Colombian government entities met virtually to close the project AmPaz (*Ambiente y Paz* as in Environment and Peace in Spanish).

In January, 150 participants attended the virtual event, which offered a space to share and reflect on experiences, achievements and challenges of the work implemented with counterparts and communities of the departments of Meta and Caquetá.

From December 2018 to December 2020, guided by the goal of contributing to building socially, economically and environmentally sustainable peace, the project AmPaz worked with its partners to ensure that territorial planning and development measures in post-conflict regions promote the protection and sustainable use of natural resources and at the same time integrate the needs of population groups most affected by the long-lasting armed conflict.



AmPaz was divided into four fields of activity: Territorial Planning, Green Business Models, Green Financing and Capacity Building.

"Thanks to the program, we managed to implement some pilots that we must now replicate. This work allowed us to obtain better knowledge of the regions, and to make the Territorial Planning Schemes more precise in terms of recognizing the particularities of the territory," said Oswaldo Porras, Director of Territorial Planning of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

Nancy Llante, councilor of the municipality of Albania affirmed, "A very nice learning experience was the participation of women. Usually women abstain from participating in these spaces because there are several difficulties. We learned that we have a very beautiful territory but that we don't know it."



### Green business and financing

Under the premise of ‘producing while conserving and conserving while producing’, producer’s associations of rubber, cocoa and dairy products were able to consolidate green business models. The process was complemented by green financing mechanisms and financial education for small producers.

Erley Montaña, a dairy producer in Meta, assured, “Through the consultancies we realized where we were going wrong, what methodologies we should use to provide a value-added to the market. I thank you for breaking with the paradigm that the peasantry cannot do micro-business, that made the difference for us.”

AmPaz supports the strengthening of capacities of key actors (producers, their organizations and associations, local organizations, among others) in order for them to develop skills for the design and implementation of green businesses as well as capabilities to contribute to the construction of territorial planning.



The project also contributed to the coverage expansion of the Community Reporters Network through the training of people within the rural communities in communication skills (writing, radio, video, and digital marketing). This empowers the communities to tell and visualize their stories of transformation in their territories.

AmPaz worked with the Colombian Presidential Agency for International Cooperation, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, the National Agency of Territorial Renewal as well as local and regional partners.

- Thanks to the participation of local actors, 6 Territorial Planning Schemes with an environmental focus were built.
- In the work carried out with the producer's associations 6 Green Business Models were implemented.
- Thanks to raising awareness for the importance of conserving strategic environmental areas, producer families defined and committed to conserving 1,990 hectares of forest.
- More than 540 people received financial education.
- 60 community reporters from Meta and Caquetá were trained in communication skills.

To learn more about the AmPaz project visit [www.ampazcolombia.org](http://www.ampazcolombia.org)