

INTERFAITH RAINFOREST INITIATIVE

Updates: Second quarter of 2023

BRAZIL

IRI Brazil launches new local chapter in Palmas, prepares for additional launches in coming weeks

IRI Brazil officially launched a new local chapter in Palmas, in the state of Tocantins. The launch event and training was attended by 30 religious leaders from Catholic, Evangelical, and Spiritist backgrounds who serve as representatives of an extensive network of churches and temples spread across the state. Together with the IRI Brazil chapter in Acre, the new Palmas chapter is developing an interfaith campaign aimed at combating fires and deforestation in the states of Acre and Tocantins. This campaign will span five consecutive weeks and encompass various activities, including training sessions for religious leaders, raising awareness within religious communities, disseminating messages on social media platforms, executing local impact initiatives, and fostering dialogue with public authorities. The campaign in Acre took place from July 3 to August 4, 2023, while the campaign in Tocantins will run from August 1 to August 31, 2023.

IRI Brazil facilitates training for Evangelical leaders on tropical forests, climate change and the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities

IRI Brazil facilitated an in-person training event for a group of 35 evangelical leaders from eight out of the nine states of the Legal Amazon. The trainings took place at the National Center for Monitoring and Alerts of Natural Disasters (CEMADEN) and the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) and focused on tropical forests, climate change, and the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. The outcomes of the training were overwhelmingly positive, with participants awarding an average rating of 4.5 on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 being excellent). Additionally, a significant number of participants expressed keen interest in engaging in further activities facilitated by IRI Brazil, including online courses, screening the Amazônia Viva film in their religious institutions, recommending other leaders for future training sessions, and actively participating in IRI Brazil chapters across the Amazon.

IRI Brazil reaches over 1,200 religious leaders through 23 different events and workshops on tropical forests, climate change and the rights of indigenous peoples

IRI Brazil conducted a total of 23 workshops and events aimed at raising awareness among religious leaders about the critical significance of preserving the Amazon rainforest, primarily through the screening of the Amazônia Viva film. Of these events, 35% were conducted in the Legal Amazon region, 35% in the southeast region of the country, 9% in the mid-west region, and 22% took place during international events. The collective outreach resulted in engaging 1,204 religious leaders representing diverse traditions and spiritualities. Conservatively estimated, these leaders collectively reach approximately 120,000 individuals through their respective networks. A significant number of religious leaders engaged expressed a strong interest in extending outreach

initiatives to other religious communities within their sphere of influence and to participate in additional activities organized by IRI Brazil.

IRI Brazil produces educational and teaching materials for religious leaders on tropical forests, climate change, and the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities

IRI Brazil developed and published four educational tools on environmental protection within distinct religious contexts. The religious teaching guides were developed for Spiritism, African Matrix (Umbanda and Candomblé), Islam, and Environmental Diaconia in the evangelical realm. As part of IRI Brazil's ongoing efforts to make the spiritual case for protecting forests and the rights of indigenous peoples, these publications were meticulously edited and made available on the IRI Brazil website for leaders from these four faith traditions. The content of the resource guides can be found here and will be used to develop tailored courses dedicated to each respective religious tradition.

IRI Brazil issues far-reaching open letter to members of Congress, Federal Supreme Court on the defense of the rights of indigenous peoples to their territories

IRI Brazil mobilized extensive networks of religious leaders across the country to sign an Open Letter in Defense of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to Their Territories ([read letter here](#)). The letter was widely distributed to all congressmen and congresswomen, urging them to vote against the approval of Bill 490/2007, which aimed to curtail the rights of indigenous peoples. Prominent signatories of the letter included the National Council of Christian Churches of Brazil (CONIC), encompassing the Alliance of Baptist Churches of Brazil, the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church, the Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil, the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession, and the United Presbyterian Church. Additionally, the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM), comprising Catholic Private Churches, parishes, communities, and various social organizations dedicated to defending the rights of women, men, riverine communities, indigenous peoples, quilombolas, extractivists, fishermen, and other diverse expressions of life in the Amazon, lent their support. Other key signatories included the Brazilian Evangelical Christian Alliance (ACEB), consisting of the National Baptist Convention, the Convention of Independent Baptist Churches, the First Baptist Church of Brasília, the Redemption Baptist Church, the São José dos Campos People's Baptist Church, the Vale da Benção Evangelistic Center Church, Igreja de Jesus Cristo Emanuel do Brasil, Igreja Metodista do Brasil, Igreja Metodista Livre, Igreja Presbiteriana de Curitiba, Igreja Presbiteriana de Viçosa, Igreja Presbiteriana do Lago Norte, Igreja Presbiteriana Independente do Brasil, Ministério Sal da Terra Uberlândia, and the Evangelical Lutheran Parish of Florianópolis. Additionally, the Laudato Si Movement, Religiões Pela Paz Brasil, the Confederação Israelita do Brasil (CONIB), the Rede Cristã de Advocacia Popular (RECAP), the Movimento Evangelico Contra o Marco Temporal, and the United Religions Initiative (URI) all joined in support. IRI Brazil also rallied these same entities to endorse an Open Letter addressed to all the Ministers of the Federal Supreme Court ([read letter here](#)). The letter appealed for the rejection of the Temporal Framework thesis, a matter under consideration concerning the Xokleng Ibirama Laklaño Indigenous Land, which involves the Xokleng, Kaingang, and Guarani peoples and the state of Santa Catarina.

IRI Brazil provides support to Acampamento Terra Livre 2023

IRI Brazil contributed to Acampamento Terra Livre, the largest gathering of indigenous peoples in Brazil. Over the course of a week, approximately 5,000 indigenous peoples came together in the capital city of Brazil to champion respect and preservation of their constitutional rights. IRI Brazil actively participated in the mobilization, showcasing the Amazônia Viva film, and engaging in dialogues with indigenous leaders to gain insights into their crucial work.

IRI Brazil participates in consultation on Amazon Summit, presents initiative at Supreme Court of Justice

IRI Brazil was invited to participate in the event, Sustainable Development in the Amazon, organized by the Brazilian government as an initial step of consultation with civil society regarding proposed topics to be presented and discussed during the Amazon Summit. IRI Brazil also participated in the International Symposium: Indigenous Peoples - Nature and Justice, which was held at the headquarters of the Supreme Court of Justice (STJ). The symposium, organized by the Citizenship Court and the Association of Brazilian Magistrates (AMB), provided an invaluable opportunity for IRI Brazil to present the Amazônia Viva film to national and international attendees, including indigenous leaders, magistrates, and STJ employees. It served as a special occasion to showcase the work of IRI Brazil and explore potential collaborations and partnerships.

IRI Brazil participates in public consultation on deforestation action plan

IRI Brazil actively engaged in the public consultation process for the new Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Deforestation in the Legal Amazon (PPCDAm) and presented a proposal to facilitate the participation of religious leaders in the evaluation and enhancement of the plan, aiming to ensure their insights and perspectives are considered and that IRI Brazil is positioned to accompany and monitor policy development.

Amazônia Viva estimated to reach 1.2 million people through collaboration with influencers

As part of its outreach efforts, the Amazônia Viva film was exclusively showcased to 10 “mega influencers” that collectively command a following of 76 million people. Each influencer shared a dedicated post emphasizing the significance of the Amazon and the urgent need for its preservation. By considering a conservative estimate based on their open data, encompassing interactions and follower count, IRI Brazil anticipates this collaboration reached a projected audience of 1.2 million people.

IRI Brazil screens Amazonia Viva to over 6,400 people, advancing efforts to raise awareness about forests, climate and the rights of indigenous peoples to the general public

IRI Brazil conducted over 65 events aimed at raising awareness among the general population and influential public authorities about the vital significance of preserving the Amazon rainforest. These activities revolved around the screening of the Amazônia Viva film and engaged a total audience of 6,460 individuals. The southeastern region stood out as the primary focus for IRI Brazil’s outreach

activities during this period due to the significant numerous of large-scale events. With 44% of Brazil's population, this region wields significant economic, cultural, and political influence. It contributes to 54% of the national GDP, houses major media outlets and religious institutions, and serves as a crucial hub for socio-environmental discussions. These activities yielded positive outcomes among the targeted segments, with many individuals expressing strong interest in actively contributing to IRI Brazil's ongoing work following the film screenings.

IRI Brazil launches new video to promote nature conservation through Biblical principles for religious audience

A new video has been created by IRI Brazil to address the religious public's role in caring for nature and forests, drawing inspiration from biblical principles. With a specific focus on biodiversity conservation, the IRI Brazil video has been widely shared by religious leaders, influencers, as well as Evangelical, Catholic, and Spiritualist singers associated with IRI Brazil. To watch the video, please access the link here.

IRI Brazil featured in over 40 publications in last year

In the past year, IRI Brazil has been featured in over 40 publications. Notably, one of the morning interviews conducted by IRI Brazil garnered significant attention, accumulating an impressive view count of 64,000. To explore the complete list of publications, please access the link here.

IRI Brazil increases reach, engagement on social media

Through the first two quarters of 2023, IRI Brazil has published 25 posts on various social media platforms, with a specific focus on Instagram. The reach on Instagram alone was to 10,520 accounts, representing a 237% increase compared to the previous year. Instagram remains the primary social media platform for IRI Brazil and has received over 3,000 visits during this period. IRI Brazil gained 500 new followers over this period, an increase of 193%. Focusing specifically on the period from April to June 2023, the reach expanded to 9,000 accounts, of which more than 8,500 accounts belonged to non-followers. This represents a remarkable growth of approximately 400% compared to the previous quarter (January to March), indicating that IRI Brazil's publications are successfully reaching individuals beyond the direct audience who has participated in awareness activities.

COLOMBIA

IRI Colombia installs new local chapters in Curillo, expanding national network to 39

To further IRI Colombia's territorial intervention strategy in Amazonian municipalities most affected or threatened by deforestation, IRI Colombia recently launched three new local chapters: IRI Curillo, IRI Vereda Gallinazo, and IRI Vereda Mayoyoque. Each of the three chapters is a platform for religious leaders, churches and community organizations to work together with indigenous peoples, authorities, scientists, academia and private enterprise to contribute to the protection of

the Amazon rainforest in the municipality. The installation of the chapters was attended by 45 religious leaders who received training on: the theology of creation, a dialogue between faith and science on how to act together on the protection of the Amazon rainforest and on the relationship between pastoral action and protection of the environment; deforestation and social dynamics, with presentations on general trends in deforestation, biodiversity loss and, especially, of the links between deforestation and human rights; and deforestation and climate change, a session that examined the basic scientific links between deforestation, climate change, biodiversity loss, and water and food insecurity. The chapter launch also included a workshop on the development of environmental and pastoral action plans for the chapters, where the group identified priority actions, social mapping and a joint program of work. Curillo is a region of growing deforestation as well as a commercial center for illegally harvested timber.

IRI Colombia contributes to Congressional forum on forests and the National Development Plan

Working with Alianza Escucha la Amazonia, IRI Colombia held the forum "La Amazonia en el plan nacional de desarrollo", an event focused on the need for the national development plan to make visible the diversity of actors and environmental, social, economic and administrative arrangements that converge in the Amazon from the perspective of territorial rights was analyzed, and the importance of the consolidating indigenous territorial entities. The event, which was held in the Congress of the Republic of Colombia and co-organized by IRI Colombia, was divided into two segments. In the first, panelists addressed the need for the National Development Plan to take into account the diversity of actors and environmental, social, economic and administrative arrangements that converge in the Amazon, from the perspective of territorial rights. The second was devoted to a reflection on the importance of consolidating indigenous territorial entities and an analysis of the progress made in this area. "In addition, consideration should be given to the contributions that the territories and indigenous peoples of the Colombian Amazon can make to the national government to help it meet its goals in terms of climate change and biodiversity. climate change and biodiversity," said Harold Rincón Ipuchima, secretary general of the National Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon (OPIAC) and member of the IRI Colombia Advisory Council.

IRI Colombia holds training events for 238 religious leaders in Curillo (department of Caquetá) and Puerto Leguísimo, Puerto Guzmán and Puerto Asís (department of Putumayo)

IRI Colombia held a series of training events for local chapters in the departments of Caquetá and Putumayo. In total, 238 religious leaders participated in the training events. The trainings focused on advancing strategies and pastoral action plans for each chapter that promote the defense of forests and advocate for their restoration, examining the science between deforestation and climate change (and understanding the impacts of climate change on population, biodiversity, the water cycle and food security), and identifying local climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies that can be led by the local chapter members in their communities and regions.

IRI Colombia publishes editorial in El Pais on forests and the National Development Plan

IRI Colombia published an editorial titled, “The Amazon seeks its voice in the new National Development Plan” in the Spanish newspaper, El País. In the text, Reverend Gloria Ulloa, president of the World Council of Churches for Latin America and the Caribbean, an organization that is part of IRI Colombia’s Advisory Council, discusses the work carried out by IRI Colombia as part of the alliance ‘The Voice of the Amazon in the PND 2022-2026’, whose objective was to influence the National Development Plan of the new Colombian government to guarantee the protection of the Amazon region and its forests. The editorial analyzed some of the weaknesses of the national development plan with respect to the protection of the Amazon. "The Interfaith Rainforest Initiative Colombia shares with many environmental and indigenous organizations the conviction that a sustainable Amazonian development process can only be achieved and consolidated with the fulfillment of an indispensable requirement: that the Amazon be incorporated into the NDP roadmap in an integrated and integral manner and not as a simple aggregate of isolated departments." A link to the editorial can be found [here](#).

IRI Colombia supports the development of environmental and pastoral action plans in 14 departments

IRI Colombia completed and expanded the formulation of 14 environmental and pastoral action plans focused on the departments where it operates local chapters. The expansion process was based on inputs obtained in workshops on climate change adaptation and mitigation that were part of a comprehensive series of trainings and workshops focused on developing the capacities and competencies of local chapters. The plans include: (i) actions such as the development environmental regulation manuals, environmental training campaigns in rural areas, school environmental training programs, and training on alternative sustainable agricultural and livestock production models; (ii) actions focused on the reforestation and restoration of degraded forest areas and small watersheds, including the creation of tree nurseries and the development of an ecotourism enterprise that generates resources for the population to finance the reforestation of degraded areas; and (iii) actions to control and prevent deforestation and pollution.

IRI Colombia delivers extensive communications campaign for World Environment Day

IRI Colombia celebrated World Environment Day with an extensive communications campaign that included various activities and a number of graphic and audiovisual pieces. At the regional level, IRI Colombia reached more than 120,000 people in Caquetá, Guaviare and Putumayo as a result of interviews that the coordinators of IRI San José del Guaviare, IRI Puerto Rico, IRI San Vicente del Caguán and IRI Puerto Leguízamo gave to local radio stations, where they spoke about World Environment Day, the urgency of stopping deforestation and protecting the Amazon rainforest, and IRI Colombia’s work in the region. At the national level, IRI Colombia developed a campaign with three influencers, who posted messages on their networks about the work of the program and the protection of tropical forests. These messages reached 47,305 people, had 48,630 impressions and were reproduced 12,619 times. IRI Colombia conducted a strong social media campaign that included the dissemination of a commemorative piece, the dissemination of 10 videos

corresponding to the second awareness campaign, and publications on the interviews of religious leaders and influencers.

IRI Colombia launches pastoral guide for the celebration of World Environment Day

IRI Colombia prepared and launched a guide for World Environment Day that was designed to assist religious leaders working in their 39 local chapters in the planning and implementation of pastoral action plans. The guide provides basic information on the purpose of international days and the objectives of the World Environment Day, and offers recommendations for how to celebrate with congregations and communities of faith. It also provides basic contextual information useful for guiding reflections on forests during the celebration activities.

IRI Colombia continues awareness raising campaigns on social media channels

IRI Colombia continues to work through its social media channels to raise awareness about the importance of tropical forests, the urgency of stopping deforestation and restoring ecosystems, and the need to defend the rights of the indigenous peoples that inhabit them. Each campaign consists of a series of 10 short videos on a specific theme, which are published daily on IRI Colombia's social networks (including to its over 19,000 followers on Instagram). During the first four months of the year, the campaign was dedicated to deforestation and, as part of the celebration of World Environment Day, IRI Colombia launched the second awareness campaign of the year focused on teaching people how they can contribute to the protection of forests. During the April-June quarter IRI Colombia published the videos 271 times through Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, reaching 5,842 people, 12,524 impressions and 1,209 interactions, and have been played 2,675 times.

IRI Colombia publishes three editions of its bulletin and newsletter

In April, May and June, IRI Colombia published three editions of its bulletin, which captures progress of the initiative, priority activities and other key information to the members and networks making up the local chapters, partners and allied organizations. Each of the newsletters were distributed to 1,114 people via email and WhatsApp, and reached more than 400 people through IRI Colombia's social networks. The bulletins can be found [here](#).

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

IRI DRC issues policy positions on regional land-use planning, land tenure to Senate and National Assembly

IRI DRC has prepared two reference documents on priority forest legislation in the country, one for the draft law on regional planning and the other on land tenure ([see here](#)). The presidents of both the Eglise du Christ au Congo (ECC) and the Conférence Episcopale Nationale du Congo (CENCO) sent the two position pieces to the President of the Senate and the President of the National Assembly, copying the parliamentary commissions (including the Political, Administrative and Legal

Commission, the Land Use Planning Commission, and the New Information and Communication Technology Commission). IRI DRC followed up with parliamentary monitoring focused on MPs and the Head of the Administration Division attached to the National Assembly's Political, Administrative and Legal Commission (PAJ), to discuss how to take into account IRI RDC recommendations. The majority of the provisions supported in the IRI DRC land tenure reference framework were accepted and defended by the PAJ Commission when the National Assembly voted on the admissibility of the PAJ commission's report on the draft law amending and supplementing law no. 73-021 of July 20, 1973 on the general property regime, the land and real estate regime and the system of securities, as amended and supplemented by law no. 80-008 of July 18, 1980. At the closing session, Parliament authorized the Government to legislate on certain laws, including the draft law on Regional Planning. A commission was set up to review the text before forwarding it to the Presidency for the enactment of an Ordinance-Law on Regional Planning. Monitoring should continue to ensure that the provisions supported are upheld and that the other recommendations made in the land tenure reference manual are taken into account (e.g. delimitation of the surface area of a certificate of individual customary ownership and consideration of the *suis generis* title of local community forest concessions (CFCL) with a view to avoiding overlapping titles on community land).

IRI DRC delivers awareness raising on forests through national, provincial media

IRI DRC continues its work to raise awareness of the seriousness of deforestation, its effects on climate change, the rights of indigenous peoples. Radio messages on these topics are being broadcast on radio stations throughout the country. At national level, IRI RDC has organized 48 programs, including 24 radio and 24 television broadcasts on the Congolese national radio and television network (RTNC TV), B-ONE television, the radio and television network of the Church of Christ in Congo (RTV ECC), the radio and television network of the Catholic Church CECOS and ENVIRONEWS (see here, for example). At provincial chapter level, IRI RDC organized 36 programs from April to June 2023 (three programs a week), with one program on RTVS 97.5 in Goma by IRI Nord Kivu, and one each on RADIO MWINDA and RADIO BOMOKO in Mbandaka by IRI Equateur).

IRI DRC initiates campaign to make forests priority in upcoming presidential elections

At a recent civil society workshop held by Norad, IRI DRC presented its work plan to Norway-supported partners working on forests and indigenous peoples' rights in the DRC, and initiated a proposal to launch a campaign with like-minded civil society groups to help make the protection and restoration of the DRC's forests a priority issue in the upcoming presidential elections.

IRI DRC participated in Economic and Social Council workshop

IRI RDC participated in a brainstorming workshop organized by the Economic and Social Council of the Democratic Republic of Congo, at its headquarters in Kinshasa. The workshop was regarding the preparation of Climate Mobility in Africa, a project supported by the Union of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions of Africa (UCESA). Four members of the IRI RDC Advisory Council participated, including René NGONGO (from OCEAN), Guy KAJEMBA from the Groupe de travail climat rénové (GTCR-R), Reverend Matthieu YELA (IRI RDC National Facilitator) and Professor

Albert KABASELE YENGA YENGA. IRI DRC coordinated a presentation on the factors of climate change and their effects in driving populations to wander and included a recommendation that the Economic and Social Council work in collaboration with parliament and send elected representatives to the area, so that the Mbororo phenomenon in the context of climate migration is taken seriously.

IRI DRC participates in NDC roadmap workshop

In mid-April, IRI-RDC took part in a validation workshop for the DRC's NDC roadmap. The workshop was organized by the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development with UNDP support. The NDC roadmap was adopted for implementation. It includes actions linked to governance, adaptation to climate change, mitigation of the effects of climate change, monitoring, reporting and verification of the impact of actions against climate change and, finally, the program for mobilizing resources to implement the roadmap. IRI DRC has launched a study on the relationship between political decisions and the capacities of stakeholders in the NDC process to effectively implement the NDC in the DRC. The study's terms of reference and questionnaires, drawn up in April 2023, were adopted in May at a launch workshop held on May 18, 2023 and attended by 25 representatives of civil society, religious denominations, traditional authorities and scientists. NGOs), the private sector and some municipalities (neighborhoods) in Kinshasa. IRI DRC is negotiating with CIFOR to collaborate in the exploitation of the data collected and in the quality review of the study report. A working paper and a synthesis for decision-makers will be produced and shared.

IRI DRC working with leading political parties, presidential candidates on forest policies

IRI-RDC continues to collect the policy platforms of presidential candidates and political party groupings as they are produced in order to promote the inclusion of policies for forest protection, prevention of deforestation, combating the effects of climate change and defense of the rights of indigenous peoples in the government proposals of presidential candidates.

INDONESIA

IRI Indonesia participates in Interreligious Dialogue on Building Synergy and Partnerships for Achieving Sustainable Waste Management

IRI Indonesia recently used participation in the Interreligious Dialogue on Building Synergy and Partnerships for Achieving Sustainable Waste Management to present and raise awareness about the work of the program. The workshop involved the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK), Istiqlal Mosque, European Ambassadors, UNDP, TKN PSL, DANONE, AQUA, and religious leaders. The workshop emphasized the importance of the role of religious leaders in supporting government programs to address waste issues and the best practices for waste management through places of worship, aiming to provide understanding and education to their followers and the community. The event was attended by over 100 participants including academics, journalists, and practitioners and featured presentations by five religious leaders in Indonesia. The event also

featured the Grand Imam of Istiqlal Mosque, which is one of the largest mosques in Southeast Asia. IRI Indonesia served as a facilitator to bring together speakers from various religions to participate and contribute as speakers in the event.

IRI Indonesia facilitates focus group discussion on Collaborative Synergy in Environmental Protection (Peat and Mangrove Ecosystems)

IRI Indonesia facilitated this focus group discussion with the Peat and Mangrove Restoration Agency in collaboration with the Environmental Enhancement Institution and Natural Resources of the Indonesian Council of Muslim Scholars (LPLH SDA MUI). The purpose of the event was to establish synergies between Islamic philanthropy institutions and stakeholders for the empowerment of communities living in peat and mangrove areas. The event was attended by seven major NGOs in Indonesia that presented their environmental-focused institutions in the country, including BRGM, BAZNAS, BWI, PPI UNAS, MLH-Muhammadiyah, LPBI-NU, and Dhompét Dhufa. The event emphasized the importance of collaboration between religious leaders and relevant stakeholders such as academics, practitioners, and philanthropic institutions in supporting forest protection programs and communities, particularly in areas with peat and mangrove ecosystems that are at risk of degradation.

IRI Indonesia holds Instagram Live discussion on forests and the rights of indigenous peoples

On Friday, 23 June, IRI Indonesia held an Instagram Live discussion designed to raise public awareness about the deforestation crisis and to garner support for the protection of tropical forests and the rights of indigenous peoples. The webinar entitled, "Faith, Intergenerational Justice, and the Future of the Environment" was jointly held by IRI Indonesia and ecodeen. During the Instagram live session, Peter Lesmana, a representative of IRI, and a Confucian religious leader from MATAKIN, and Faizah from ecodeen discussed the importance of faith, intergenerational justice, and the future of the environment in Indonesia. Peter Lesmana discussed the role of faith in preserving the environment, emphasizing that religions teach their followers to have a sense of responsibility towards nature and all living beings within it. As a representative of IRI Indonesia, he also shared the efforts of the program in promoting environmental sustainability and creating a better future for Indonesia. The recording can be seen [here](#).

IRI Indonesia focuses on strategic communications work on social media, with NGOs focused on forests and the rights of indigenous peoples

IRI Indonesia is working to reach a larger audience and create meaningful connections with individuals passionate about environmental issues. Through its social media platforms, IRI Indonesia is publishing updates about ongoing activities, initiatives, and projects, showcasing IRI Indonesia work and seeking to educate and inform the public about the critical state of forests and the urgency of protecting them. IRI Indonesia has facilitated several public discussions on forests through Instagram Live, sessions that have served as a platform for collaboration with groups like Walhi and EcoDeen, creating a space where valuable information and insights can be exchanged. IRI Indonesia is working to empower religious leaders to become informed advocates for forest

conservation and the rights of indigenous communities. IRI Indonesia has attracted an audience of over 8,953 viewers.

IRI Indonesia participates in International Conference on Peace, Religions, and Civilizations held by Indonesian Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia)

IRI Indonesia participated in the International Conference on Peace, Religions, and Civilizations held by the Indonesia Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia), where IRI Indonesia Advisory Council members served as speakers at the conference, addressing the theme of "Peace, Religious Movements, and Approaches as Solutions to Address Humanitarian Issues, Environmental Crisis, Internal Conflicts, and Politicization of Religion, and their Threats to Peace." This conference brought together 48 religious leaders from various parts of the world, as well as more than 100 Indonesian Muslim scholars, 14 ambassadors from different countries, five major religious organizations in Indonesia, and five environment NGOs. The discussion focused on gaining a deep understanding of the role of religious communities in promoting peace, tolerance, and interreligious cooperation. As part of the conference, IRI Indonesia contributed to a session on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

PERU

IRI Peru advocates in Congress for archiving of dangerous Bill that threatens natural reserves with indigenous populations in isolation

IRI Peru participated in an advocacy campaign to prevent passage of a bill in Congress (Bill 3518) that has been widely condemned by civil society and indigenous peoples' organizations for weakening the protection of indigenous populations in voluntary isolation and initial contact (PIACI) in Peru. IRI Peru issued a denouncement of the bill through its social media networks and beyond. Working in coordination with other forest and indigenous peoples' partners, IRI Peru succeeded in getting the commission reviewing the bill to refrain from commenting and putting it forward. Links are available [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) to materials associated with the campaign.

IRI Peru meets with Minister of Justice and Human Rights to evaluate the situation of forest defenders

Against the backdrop of illegal activities such as logging, mining and drug trafficking growing alarmingly throughout the Peruvian Amazon, IRI Peru requested a meeting with the Minister of Justice to discuss this situation. On May 9, representatives from the IRI Peru Advisory Council met with the Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Dr. Daniel Maurate, and the Vice Ministers of Human Rights, Luigi Pilotto, and of Justice, Walther Iberos. In the meeting, IRI Peru expressed to the Minister concerns gathered in travels to IRI Peru local chapters regarding the advance of various forms of illegality and how the lives of indigenous peoples are affected. IRI Peru presented the case of the indigenous leader of Puerto Inca, Yesica Diaz, who was attacked by illegal miners despite the presence of the police. The Minister affirmed that he was convinced of the importance of strengthening the Multisectoral Mechanism for the Protection of Defenders, which needs to be

provided with a budget so that it can fulfill its objectives. IRI Peru agreed to sign an inter-institutional cooperation framework agreement to advance in the protection of defenders and to have a more permanent dialogue with the Ministry.

IRI Peru holds working meetings with MINAM on Amazon Summit, defense of protected areas

On May 16, IRI Peru met with the Ministry of Environment (Minam) and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) to discuss the Amazon Summit, to be held in Brazil on 8-9 August. The meeting was held within the framework of the inter-institutional agreement that IRI Peru has with Minam. Peru's presence at the summit, what proposals Peru would bring as a country, and the possibility of civil society participation in defining specific proposals were all discussed. A follow-up meeting was then held with Nancy Chauca, Vice Minister of Strategic Development of MINAM, where they discussed the bill presented by the Ministry of Energy and Mines that prioritizes hydrocarbon exploitation in protected natural areas. The Vice Minister informed that MINAM has issued a report disagreeing with this proposal and that the issue will be discussed at the next Council of Ministers. At the same meeting, the issue of whether civil society could contribute to the construction of Peru's commitments at the Amazon Summit was again raised, a proposal that was accepted and agreed. In addition to IRI Peru, the meeting was attended by representatives of DAR, SPDA, WWF, WCS and OCEANA.

IRI Peru evaluates situation of forest defenders with indigenous leaders of Ucayali and Puerto Inca

IRI Peru held a meeting with Berlin Diques, president of ORAU (Regional Organization of AIDSESP in Ucayali) to evaluate the need to elucidate strategies and mechanisms that commit the state, civil society and indigenous organizations to protection of leaders defending forests and territories. The meeting was instigated by the murder in Rio Tambo of the historical leader Santiago Contoricón and the case of Mrs. Yésica de Puerto Inca, who was threatened and violated by illegal miners in the presence of the police and prosecutorial authorities. Similarly, in Puerto Inca, Huanuco region, IRI Peru held a meeting with Fernando Arias, current deputy mayor of the municipality of Puerto Inca, President of Feconapia and also a member of IRI Puerto Inca. They discussed the advance of illegal activities in the area, especially mining. Indigenous leaders requested that IRI Peru lobby the Ministry of Justice to activate the Intersectoral Mechanism for the Protection of Defenders, which has not yet been implemented or assigned a budget.

IRI Peru mobilizes the Parliamentary Group for a Healthy Amazon, secures new members

IRI Peru activated the offices of Congresswomen Karol Paredes and Ruth Luque for a session of the Parliamentary Group for a Healthy Amazon, a group created by IRI Peru. The topic for discussion is illegal activities in the Amazon, growth in deforestation and forest degradation, and increasing threats to forest defenders and indigenous leaders defending their territories. The intention of the meeting is to improve the State's capacity to prevent and respond to alarming and growing indigenous insecurity, and to address the challenges and opportunities of a legislative agenda for healthy forests. On the first issue, significant progress was made in June with the approval by the Commission on Indigenous Peoples and the Environment of a Bill for the Protection of Environmental Defenders. For this new session of the Parliamentary Group for a Sustainable

Amazon, IRI Peru has secured the participation and engagement of new members of Congress, including Congresswomen Flor Pablo and Susel Paredes.

IRI Peru issues two statements in opposition to dangerous bill that threatens natural protected areas, legislative measures against forests and indigenous peoples

On May 23, the Ministry of Energy and Mines (Minem) sent its environmental counterpart a draft bill prepared by the state hydrocarbons company PetroPerú, which proposes to open Peru's protected areas to hydrocarbon extraction, eliminating legal mechanisms and safeguards that have been in place for more than 60 years. IRI Peru issued an urgent statement, coordinated with civil society, the Ministry of Environment (Minam) and the National Service of Natural Areas Protected by the State (Sernanp) to request the filing and rejection of this proposal. Also, together with other organizations, IRI Peru held a meeting with the Vice-Minister of Strategic Development of MINAM where they received assurance that the proposal had not been consulted in the Council of Ministers and that it would be evaluated there. IRI Peru issued a second pronouncement to request the shelving of a bill that did not recognize the presence of indigenous peoples in isolation. The bill, discussed in the Decentralization Commission, was subsequently dismissed and the commission inhibited from expressing an opinion on the subject. The two statements can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

IRI Peru accompanies local chapters in Marañón, Ucayali, Quillabamba in the realization and execution of work plans

IRI Peru supports its local chapters in regions of the country where forests face the greatest threats to develop work plans that respond to the realities of their forests and faith communities. Meetings were held with local chapters in Chiriaco, Pucallpa and Quillabamba to specify action plans for the year in terms of training, mobilization and advocacy. For advocacy, in the cases of Chiriaco and Quillabamba, the plans take into account the participation of the IRI chapters in the CAMs, fundamental spaces where municipalities take decisions about the forests in their region. Training and mobilization activities also factored in to all of the plans, to engage other faith communities and their own populations in the defense of forests. For IRI Marañón, the action plan has an explicit focus on stopping illegal timber trafficking through Chiriaco, with activities that focus on creating awareness in Chiriaco's faith communities to promote connection with the forests (joint community prayer spaces), public dialogues on forests and faith, and advocacy with the municipal government to stop the trafficking of illegal timber. For IRI Ucayali, the action plan focuses on promoting environmental citizenship in faith communities to actively participate in the defense of forests and their defenders, raising awareness in faith communities (including creating spaces for replication of IRI Peru workshops) and advocacy with regional authorities regarding ensuring the safety of forest defenders in alliance with indigenous peoples. For IRI Quillabamba, the action plan focuses on promoting environmental citizenship and direct actions to stop deforestation, including active participation in the provincial CAM to stop deforestation and forest fires, training of the population through workshops, public posters on the challenges posed by deforestation, and promoting spaces for prayer and reflection on the importance of forests.

IRI Peru trains more than 527 religious leaders in "Save the Forests" workshops

Between April to June, IRI Peru held a series of "Save the Forests" training workshops for religious leaders in the different regions where the its local chapters are located (Chiriaco, Bellavista, Moyobamba, Pucallpa, Quillabamba, Puerto Inca and Yurimaguas). The workshop sessions allowed the active participation of religious leaders to become informed advocates for the protection and defense of forests. The workshops focused on science, theology and political advocacy, which were worked on using a range of teaching materials, including videos, games, and posters, and workshops were adapted to the reality of the leaders of each community. The 527 religious leaders that were trained through the workshops came from the Assemblies of God, the Church of the Nazarene, the Church of Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church and evangelical churches present in each area, as well as educational agents and environmental promoters linked to the faith communities. Materials and work modules used in the sessions were shared with participants, allowing for the further replication of the workshops. For example, religious leaders from the Chiriaco Churches of the Nazarene and the Assemblies of God in the district of Imaza replicated the "Save the Forests" workshop for more than 82 leaders of their congregations, using the materials, modules, and videos. Likewise, religious leaders from Yurimaguas and Moyobamba replicated the workshops with students from their schools. In total, 15 workshops were held, with the following distribution: Chiriaco (4), Bellavista (2), Moyobamba (3), Pucallpa (1), Quillabamba (1), Puerto Inca (1) and Yurimaguas (3).

IRI Peru issues "Love the Forests as yourself" guide for the International Day of Tropical Forests

To facilitate faith-based engagement in the International Day of Tropical Forests, IRI Peru prepared the guide "Love the forests as yourself". The guide is a complement to training processes that provide valuable information for advocacy and mobilization, endeavoring to create spaces that generate an encounter with the sacred presence of the divinity in the midst of nature. The guide promotes recognition of the damage that humanity causes to nature, to ask for forgiveness and, after a moment of interiorization with the divine word, assume commitments to act in favor of the defense of the forests. A link to the guide and images of the celebrations can be found [here](#).

IRI Peru chapters mark the International Day of Tropical Forests

More than 250 leaders in Aucayacu, Chiriaco, Pucallpa and Quillabamba celebrated the International Day of Tropical Forests with moments of prayer and reflection in public spaces. The Plaza de Armas of Quillabamba, the Plaza de Armas of Yarinacocha, the Coliseo Cerrado of Chiriaco were the spaces where these activities took place with the presence of the leaders of the various faith communities present in each area, such as the Church of the Nazarene, the Assemblies of God, the Church of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church. In Aucayacu, the local chapter of IRI organized a parade and interfaith prayer.

IRI Peru screens video during the Conference of Religions of Peru

On April 17, IRI Peru presented a video on the presence of divinity in nature, a video elaborated from a seminar developed by Fr. Javier Melloni, S.J. The event featured remarks by Rocio

Valdeavellano of the Laudato Si collective, Jose Alvarez, senior advisor of the Amanatari Association, Ketty Marcelo, president of the National Organization of Andean and Amazonian Indigenous Women of Peru (ONAMAP) and Rabbi Simantob Nigri of the Israelite Union of Peru. The video proposes a reflection on the sacredness of nature, the encounter of the sacred present in each element that inhabits the forests and how it manifests itself and therefore what it commits. The video is part of the materials produced for the training workshops that IRI Peru carries out. The live broadcast of the event on Facebook, see [here](#), achieved more than 1,600 views.

IRI Peru develops workshop with indigenous communities for the protection of forests in Puerto Inca

On April 19, FECONAPIA and IRI Peru convened a training workshop for indigenous community leaders to analyze the situation of the forests in their communities and study protection measures. The workshop was attended by the Deputy Mayor of the Province of Puerto Inca. During the workshop, the indigenous leads made a diagnosis of their reality; pointed out the activities that affect forests in the region (such as indiscriminate logging, the presence of settlers engaged in extractive activities and, the presence of illegal activities such as mining, drug trafficking and logging). The workshop served to elaborate proposals to the authorities for the protection of the forests and the protection of their defenders, which will be submitted by IRI Peru to the local authorities of the province.

IRI Peru featured on television and radio, provide alerts about seriousness of deforestation challenge

Laura Vargas, National Facilitator of IRI Peru was interviewed on both television and radio in Quillabamba, where she presented IRI Peru and the work being done at the national level to promote the protection of forests and the participation of faith communities and civil society in this task. She shared messages about the urgency to stop deforestation, the challenge of forest fires, and the ways citizens can get involved in advocating with authorities to act in defense of forests. Eduardo Salas, IRI Program Officer, was interviewed on Radio Stereo Villa television regarding the bill that threatened indigenous peoples in isolation (PIACI). In the interview, he made clear the onslaught of interest groups that are in the state bodies, such as the congress and the executive and that, based on economic analyses, have been promoting norms aimed at destroying the Amazon. A link to the interview on Stereo Villa 101.7 FM, a station with an average audience of 80,000 people, can be found [here](#). A link to the interview on Radio Quillabamba, a station with an average audience of 35,000, can be found [here](#).

IRI Peru participates in thematic forums convened by academia and civil society

As part of a series of events related to "Laudato Si Week", the Association of Jesuit Universities of Latin America (Ausjal) organized activities in the various countries of the network to reflect on the message, implications and challenges that the encyclical poses to Catholics. IRI Peru was invited to participate in a panel on "Peru facing the ecological crisis". The proposed topic was forest conservation as a mitigation measure for the climate crisis organized by the Universidad Antonio Ruíz de Montoya (UARM). Laura Vargas, National Facilitator of IRI Peru, participated in the panel calling attention to the critical moment that forests are experiencing in the country and the need

to act accordingly with the encyclical for their defense. IRI Peru was also invited to participate in the panels "Amazonia: challenges in the light of Laudato Si" and "Development without deforestation in the Amazon and environmental problems in the country".

IRI Peru prepares launch of new local chapters in provinces where deforestation is increasing

The city of La Merced, capital of the province of Chanchamayo in the Junín region, is the gateway to the Amazon through the center of the country. As a result, a large migrant population has settled there, mainly dedicated to agricultural activities. This has caused the loss of almost 20% of its forests in the last 20 years. IRI Peru has been coordinating with Adda Chuecas, director of Caritas of the Vicariate of San Ramon, who has extensive experience and knowledge of the area, for the establishment of a local chapter there that can join efforts with the evangelical communities to stop deforestation. The necessary material has been prepared and contact is being made with the different actors for the constitution of a new IRI Peru chapter. Similar coordination has been undertaken for the establishment of new local chapters in Quellouno, (La Convención, Cusco), as well as in Chachapoyas, capital of the Amazon region.

IRI Peru publishes two issues of Somos Bosque

IRI Peru produced and published two issues of its magazine, Somos Bosque. The first edition focused on the defense of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact (piaci), including conversations with the Bishop of Iquitos, Monsignor Miguel Angel Cadenas; the director of the Forestry and Wildlife Service (Serfor), Luis Alberto Gonzáles-Zúñiga; and the president of the National Organization of Andean and Amazonian Indigenous Women of Peru (Onamiap), Ketty Marcelo. A link to that issue can be found [here](#). In the second issue of the magazine, IRI Peru collected interviews with specialists in the environmental sector, including from the Peruvian Society of Environmental Law (SPDA) and the Foundation for Conservation and Sustainable Development. A link to that issue can be found [here](#).