

INTERFAITH RAINFOREST INITIATIVE

Updates - October 2023

BRAZIL

IRI BRAZIL LAUNCHES LOCAL CHAPTERS IN PORTO VELHO AND BELÉM

IRI Brazil recently launched local chapters in Porto Velho (RO) and Belém (PA), marked by events hosting leaders from diverse faiths, including Catholic, Evangelical, Anglican, Judaism, African religions, and Druidism. In both cities, the chapters commence with an initial group of 30 religious leaders. Over the coming weeks, the newly established chapters will strive to enhance religious inclusivity and develop an action plan for the remaining months of this year and, above all, for 2024. Activities will focus on the protection of forests, climate action and securing the rights of indigenous peoples.

IRI BRAZIL FACILITATES TRAINING AND SCIENTIFIC VISIT ON CLIMATE DISASTERS AND FOREST PRESERVATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE AMAZONIAN JUDICIARY

On October 24 and 25, IRI Brazil organized the first scientific visit to the National Center for Monitoring and Alerting of Natural Disasters (CEMADEN) and the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) specifically designed for public authorities working within the Judiciary of the State of Acre and leaders from the State Audit Courts of Acre, Amazonas, and Rondônia. The primary objective of the visit was to deepen awareness and provide training to these leaders, enabling them to develop effective strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as to combat deforestation in tropical forests. Participants included: Rita de Cássia Nogueira Lima – Attorney General for Administrative and Institutional Affairs of the Public Ministry of Acre – MPE/AC, Cosmo Lima de Souza – Attorney General of the MPE/AC, Lucas Nonato da Silva Araújo – Substitute Prosecutor of the MPE/AC, José Ulisses Melo de Lima - Public Defender of Acre, José Ribamar Trindade de Oliveira – President of the Court of Auditors of the State of Acre - TCE/AC, Dulcinéia Benício de Araújo, Correctoral Counselor of the TCE/AC, Sérgio Cunha Mendonça- Attorney of the Public Ministry of Accounts at the TCE/AC, Iara Guedes Bezerra- Planning Advisor at the TCE/AC, Francisco Júnior Ferreira da Silva - Substitute Counselor of the TCE/RO, Felipe Mottin Pereira de Paula - General Secretary of Planning at TCE/RO, Luís Fernando Bueno - Technical Advisor at TCE/RO and Sérgio Meleiro - Director of Environmental Control and Audit at TCE/AM. The initial evaluation of the event was very positive. The institutions present formulated several proposals for integrated actions, such as: i) working with the National Council of Justice – CNJ to include climate change and forests in the curriculum of the Judiciary Schools so that judges can better master these topics, and thus, be able to exercise their legal duties, especially in socio-environmental disputes, with greater knowledge, control and security; ii) create a protocol so that State Audit Courts and Public Ministries can monitor the responses given by public leaders to disaster alerts issued by CEMADEN and; iii) acquisition of rain gauges by the Audit Courts to expand CEMADEN's data collection network, as a way of contributing to the improvement of the system for issuing climate disaster warnings.

IRI BRAZIL INITIATES A SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN AMAZONAS

IRI National Facilitator, Carlos Vicente, along with religious leaders from IRI Manaus visited areas affected by the historic drought in the State of Amazonas, particularly the Rio Negro region. During these visits, Carlos Vicente held meetings with the coordinators of World Vision, a humanitarian organization dedicated to disaster relief in the Amazon and worldwide. As a result of these visits, it was decided that IRI Brazil would spearhead a solidarity campaign to alleviate the hardships faced by multiple drought-stricken communities that lack access to clean drinking water and food. The campaign is being developed jointly by the IRI Brazil communications team and IRI Manaus, with plans for launch in November.

IRI BRAZIL SIGNS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS OF BRAZIL (CNBB)

During a meeting with Dom Ricardo Hoepers, General Secretary of CNBB, Father Marcus Barbosa, who represents the CNBB on the IRI Brazil Advisory Council and serves as an Advisor to the Episcopal Commission for Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue, along with Carlos Vicente, the National Facilitator of IRI Brazil, officially established a partnership to collaborate on various initiatives. Their first joint action will be a scientific visit to CEMADEN and INPE, scheduled for December. The purpose of the visit is to provide Catholic bishops with an opportunity to deepen their understanding of disaster prevention and response strategies in the face of climate-related emergencies, as well as the crucial significance of forest preservation.

IRI BRAZIL'S NATIONAL FACILITATOR MEETS WITH BISHOP DOM ROQUE, ARCHBISHOP OF PORTO VELHO

During a visit to Porto Velho – RO on October 16, 2023, the National Facilitator, Carlos Vicente, expressed his gratitude to the Metropolitan Archbishop of Porto Velho, Dom Roque Paloschi for the support that IRI Brazil received during his tenure as the President of the Indigenous Missionary Council – CIMI, a member of the IRI Brazil Advisory Council. He also extended an invitation to the archbishop to contribute to the newly launched local chapter in the city. Dom Roque confirmed his support and expressed his commitment to collaborate in creating an agenda that raises awareness and leads to tangible results in the preservation of the forest and the defense of the rights of indigenous peoples in Rondônia.

IRI BRAZIL HOLDS MEETINGS WITH INFLUENTIAL SHEPHERDS OF PORTO VELHO, PASTOR MAXWELL BARROS

On October 16, 2023, Carlos Vicente, the National Facilitator of IRI Brazil, introduced IRI Brazil's work proposal to a gathering of Baptist pastors organized by Pastor Jefferson Bandeira, who leads the Bethesda National Baptist Church in Porto Velho, Rondônia. This assembly of evangelical leaders wields significant influence within the religious community of Rondônia and

showed a strong interest in gaining further insights into IRI Brazil's work. They also expressed eagerness to participate in the training sessions scheduled for 2024 as part of the activities coordinated by the state's local chapter. Also, on October 20, 2023, Carlos Vicente shared IRI Brazil's work plan with Pastor Maxwell Barros, who leads the Lagoinha Baptist Church in Belém, Pará. This church is one of the prominent Brazilian evangelical denominations, renowned for its significant theological and musical influence nationwide, along with its extensive membership. Pastor Maxwell expressed keen interest in becoming involved in IRI Brazil's awareness and training initiatives.

IRI BRAZIL SIGNS COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH THE COURT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE STATE OF ACRE - TCE AC

On October 4, IRI Brazil entered into a significant cooperation agreement with the Court of Auditors of the State of Acre (TCE AC) at the UN House in Brasília. This agreement is aimed at enhancing the efforts of the Court in combatting climate change and preserving forests in the state of Acre. The agreement was formally signed by the President of TCE, José Ribamar Trindade de Oliveira, the National Facilitator of IRI Brazil, Carlos Vicente, and the advisor and inspector of TCE AC, Dulcinéa Benício de Araújo. The ceremony was attended by Gustau Mañez, the UNEP Representative in Brazil, who highlighted the significance of this partnership for the United Nations. The cooperation agreement outlines collaborative initiatives in two key areas: (i) TCE and IRI Brazil will jointly develop and implement training programs focusing on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as the restoration, preservation, and sustainable use of forests (trainings will be for the employees of TCE, municipal authorities, and state government agencies in Acre), and (ii) TCE AC and IRI Brazil will collaborate on awareness programs addressing climate change and forest conservation. (programs designed for school communities and the general public in Acre). Audit Courts are external oversight bodies within the Public Administration that support the Legislative Branch in monitoring budgetary and financial execution. They assess both the proper allocation of public resources and the effectiveness of government policies and actions at all levels of government. As such, they hold significant influence in encouraging governments to adopt and implement socio-environmental public policies that safeguard the population from the adverse effects of climate change and protect public environmental assets, such as forests and water resources. IRI Brazil is actively pursuing cooperation agreements with other Audit Courts in the Legal Amazon region, aiming to bolster these bodies' roles in managing socio-environmental policies and cooperating to reduce deforestation, wildfires, and the adoption of climate change adaptation measures. This focus is especially important in areas most vulnerable to these issues and where they pose the greatest threats.

IRI BRAZIL PARTICIPATES IN RIO INNOVATION WEEK 2023

IRI Brazil actively participated in Rio Innovation Week 2023, recognized as one of the most significant technological innovation fairs in Brazil. The event took place from October 3 to 6 in Rio de Janeiro, drawing approximately 125,000 attendees. During the event, IRI Brazil showcased the film "Amazônia Viva" to raise public awareness about the critical importance of preserving

the Amazon rainforest and advocating for the rights of the indigenous peoples and communities residing within it. Over the course of the four-day event, 1,400 individuals watched the film, and numerous others engaged with IRI Brazil promotional materials. The film's impact extended even further as it gained recognition from a leading Brazilian television network, which highlighted its significance in one of their reports on the event, thereby amplifying the reach of the message (TV Globo Rio report).

IRI BRAZIL RAISES AWARENESS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

IRI Brazil took an active role in the Job Experience Fair organized by Centro Universitário de Brasília – UniCEUB on October 17 and 19. This event provided an opportunity for 4,400 Law and International Relations students to gain valuable insights into the climate crisis and the crucial significance of tropical forests. During the event, IRI Brazil presented its ongoing awareness and mobilization efforts in Brazil, and screened "Amazônia Viva". According to the academic coordinator of the mentioned courses, the film was regarded as one of the most impactful experiences within the educational institution in recent years. Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Marina Silva, actively participated in the event and delivered a significant lecture on climate citizenship. Her presentation was closely aligned with the key messages conveyed by IRI Brazil during the event. The institution is a key training ground for a substantial pool of professionals who go on to serve in the federal judiciary, legislative, and executive branches. Prioritizing their education in socio-environmental matters is integral to enhancing public governance in these critical areas.

IRI BRAZIL BRINGS AMAZÔNIA VIVA TO THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO

IRI Brazil has established a partnership with the Social Service of Commerce of the State of São Paulo (SESC SP) to incorporate the film "Amazônia Viva" into the "Art on the Streets for All People" Program. This initiative comprises 12 cultural itineraries spanning 123 cities in the state and involving 400 artists in over 700 activities, running from October 21st to November 26th. The program is a collaborative effort involving municipal governments and local trade, service, and tourism associations. For IRI Brazil, extending the message of forest preservation and solidarity with the indigenous peoples of the Amazon to the most populous, economically prosperous, and politically influential state in the country is of significant importance.

IRI BRAZIL ADVANCES “AMAZON IN COMMUNITIES” PROJECT

The Amazon in Communities Project aims to foster contemplation about the vital importance of preserving the Amazon and other ecosystems. It also highlights the significance of embracing environmental stewardship to enhance the overall quality of life for the population. The primary target audience includes children and youth residing in disadvantaged neighborhoods within Amazonian cities and major Brazilian capitals. This project unfolds in two distinct phases. The initial experimental phase is currently underway in underserved communities around Brasília. Its purpose is to refine and enhance the project's working methodology, with completion slated for December 2023. The subsequent implementation phase is scheduled for 2024. The experimental

phase was launched on September 29, 2026, commencing with the screening of the film "Amazônia Viva" at the Escola Classe Boa Vista in Sobradinho, Brasília. So far, the project has reached 494 young people and children from a variety of institutions and locations, including the Santa Maria Intention Unit (dedicated to juvenile offender resocialization), Boa Vista Community School, Dorothy Stang Urban Settlement, Sanctuary of the Shamans, Pedagoginga Collective, Agricultural Colony 26 de Setembro, Brasília National Forest, and the Brazilinha Neighborhood in Planaltina de Goiás.

IRI BRAZIL EXPANDS TEAM IN AMAZON CAPITALS

IRI Brazil has moved ahead with a Religious Leadership Project for Climate, Forests, and Indigenous Peoples, an initiative aimed at expanding the IRI Brazil team with the goal of increasing awareness among religious leaders, children, young people, and educators in the Amazon capitals and other cities across the nation. Nine individuals were appointed as IRI Brazil coordinators across the nine capitals in the Legal Amazon, where IRI Brazil local chapters are being established. This team comprises five women and four men and is responsible for supporting the national team in formulating and executing the action plans for each local chapter. Two monitors were assigned to oversee the execution of the Amazon Project in Communities, which focuses on raising awareness about tropical forest preservation in underserved communities within the Federal District. Two monitors were also designated to oversee the execution of the Amazon Project in Temples, concentrating on promoting awareness of tropical forest preservation within religious communities in the Federal District. One digital communicator has been tasked with devising strategies to disseminate socio-environmental messages and enhance engagement on social media platforms, supporting the efforts of IRI's Communication Coordination.

COLOMBIA

IRI COLOMBIA POSITIONED TO FOLLOW UP AMAZON COMMITMENTS WITH ELECTED MAYORS AND GOVERNORS

More than 23 million people participated in the regional elections held on October 29 in Colombia, where governors and municipal mayors who will take office in January 2024 were elected. Following the announcement of the results of the elections, the impact of the recent IRI Colombia advocacy campaign was clear – every single elected mayor and governor of the municipalities and departments where IRI Colombia is present through its local chapters committed at IRI Colombia facilitated debates (through the signing of programmatic agreements) to work for the protection and conservation of the Amazon. The commitments were made official through the signing of the programmatic agreement "A New Opportunity of hope for the Amazon". In this document, the candidates committed to develop policies and programs aimed at eradicating deforestation, halting biodiversity loss, and protecting and restoring the Amazon rainforest. As part of its campaign, IRI Colombia held 12 public debates and one private discussion with the mayoral candidates of thirteen municipalities, as well as two

public debates and one private discussion with the gubernatorial candidates of three departments.

IRI COLOMBIA CHAPTERS FEATURE WORK, EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AT GUAVIARE BOOK FAIR

IRI-San José del Guaviare, IRI-Charras Boquerón and IRI-El Capricho participated in the Second Guaviare Book Fair, FLIGUA, held from October 7 to 10 at the Cultural Center of Guaviare Casa Grande, in the capital of Guaviare. "Magic between leaves and rivers" was the motto of this edition of the fair, whose purpose was to raise awareness about the care of rivers and water. The IRI Colombia chapters in San José del Guaviare, in coordination with the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM Colombia), Pastoral Social and the Diocese of Guaviare had a stand called "When the river sounds", where they shared important pedagogical tools with the community. Over 250 people visited the stand, where they received religious teaching guides and toolkits produced by IRI Colombia. They also had access to the encyclicals *Laudato Sí* and *Querida Amazonia*, among other documents.

IRI PUERTO RICO PARTICIPATES IN PRESENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS AT SAGRADOS CORAZONES EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

IRI-Puerto Rico participated in the environmental project presentation ceremony of the Sagrados Corazones Educational Institution (La Paz campus), held on October 26 at the school's facilities. The restoration of a wetland with the planting and maintenance of 72 trees, the breeding of pollinating bees, the creation of a six-kilometer ecological tunnel and an investigation on the carbon sequestration capacity of different species of trees were the topics of the four projects presented by the students who will receive the degree of Environmental Technician in Conservation of Natural Resources. "They are very interesting projects that they should make known to the community to contribute to their progress," said pastor John Jairo Escobar, coordinator of the three IRI Colombia chapters.

INDONESIA

IRI INDONESIA LAUNCHES NEW PROVINCIAL CHAPTER IN NORTH MALUKU

In a gathering that brought together diverse voices and faiths, IRI Indonesia launched a new provincial chapter in North Maluku. The launch took place from October 5-7 in Ternate, North Maluku. The launch establishes IRI North Maluku as a platform for faith-based action on tropical forest protection. The primary objective of the gathering was to expand networks and cultivate collaborations among stakeholders who share a common dedication to promoting peace, tolerance, and interfaith cooperation in the realm of nature conservation, particularly in the context of safeguarding tropical forests. The three-day event attracted representatives from various sectors, including government officials from Ternate, 36 esteemed religious leaders from

across Indonesia based in North Maluku, and 10 indigenous community representatives. In addition, the event drew the participation of four prominent non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Ternate. During the workshops and focus group discussions, participants delved into the core mission and objectives of IRI Indonesia, instilling a shared commitment among the diverse group of attendees to the cause of forest preservation. A key achievement was the formation of a cohesive working team, comprising both religious leaders and indigenous community representatives. This united team was tasked with collaboratively devising an IRI North Maluku action plan for tropical forest preservation, imbued with a religious perspective. The event also facilitated direct engagement with the Sultan Ternate, a role equivalent to a provincial governor, representing the highest leadership in North Maluku. The discussion with the Sultan Ternate revolved around strengthening collaboration and ensuring the sustainable continuity of forest protection programs in the region.

IRI INDONESIA HOLDS MEETING, AUDIENCE WITH MEMBERS OF THE INDONESIAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (DPR RI) COMMISSION IV

The objective of the activity was to diplomatically engage with policymakers, specifically members of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) Commission IV, in order to advocate for and promote the initiatives and activities of IRI Indonesia. The event took place on Monday, October 2, 2023 at the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) building in Jakarta. During the engagement, two members from the PKS party fraction, specializing in environmental matters, represented the DPR RI, received a briefing by IRI Indonesia. The discussion revolved around: (i) presenting IRI Indonesia's initiatives and their impact on rainforest conservation, (ii) establishing common ground and mutual understanding between DPR RI members and IRI Indonesia regarding the importance of rainforest protection and interfaith cooperation; (iii) discussing potential avenues for collaboration, support, and endorsement of IRI Indonesia's conservation endeavors by members of the DPR RI, and (iv) creating diplomatic communication channels for continued engagement on rainforest protection and interfaith cooperation initiatives.

IRI INDONESIA PARTICIPATES IN THE CONFERENCE ON RELIGIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE - SOUTHEAST ASIA (CORECS) 2023 IN LEAD UP TO COP 28.

The Southeast Asia Conference on Religion and Climate Change, themed "Religion and Climate Change: Reviving Religious and Local Cultural Values in Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Development," took place from October 3 – 5 and aimed to bring together religious leaders and experts to address the pressing issues related to climate change. The conference featured a series of sessions focusing on three main topics: reorienting economic and political policies to combat environmental crises and climate change, the role of religion and religious figures in mitigating the impacts of climate change, and the influence of religious and social ethics on human behavior concerning climate change. The event drew the participation of 165 participants, with 100 coming from various domestic entities, including government bodies like the Ministry of Religion and other ministries/agencies, religious councils, Islamic organizations,

universities, Islamic and public educational institutions, pesantrens (Islamic boarding schools), and civil society organizations. The remaining 65 participants represent international organizations, including the Muslim Council of Elders, Al-Azhar Al-Sharif, and religious leaders, scholars, and NGOs from various Southeast Asian countries. Dr. Hayu Prabowo, National Facilitator of IRI Indonesia, took part in the event to profile the program's work.

IRI INDONESIA HOLDS DISCUSSION WITH SULTAN TERNATE

On October 6th, a Sultan Ternate welcomed a delegation from IRI Indonesia at the Sultanate of Ternate government building, where discussions centered on promoting rainforest conservation and interfaith cooperation initiatives. Sultan Ternate engaged with eight IRI Indonesia Advisory Council members, as well as National Facilitator of the program. The diplomatic visit had several key objectives. It aimed to foster a collaborative relationship, enhance awareness, and gain the Sultan's endorsement of IRI Indonesia's conservation efforts. During the visit, the delegation effectively communicated IRI Indonesia's mission and objectives, emphasizing the vital role of interfaith cooperation in rainforest conservation. The discussion revolved around the significance of preserving rainforests and the positive impact of collective efforts. The outcome of this engagement holds great promise for strengthening commitment to safeguarding rainforests and strengthening interfaith cooperation in Indonesia. Sultan Ternate's willingness to engage with IRI Indonesia underscores the importance of their conservation initiatives, offering hope for a harmonious relationship in pursuing a more sustainable and environmentally conscious future.

IRI INDONESIA ATTENDS MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTRY FINAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR COP 28 IN DUBAI

In the lead-up to COP28, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry summoned all prospective participants of COP28, convening them at the dedicated Indonesian Pavilion. The Ministry embarked on extensive consultations with stakeholders, ensuring their voices are heard and their inputs are woven into the event's planning. The discussions were instrumental in shaping a comprehensive set of TORs for COP 28, tailored to align with the event's overarching vision and mission. IRI Indonesia participated in the meeting to share its plans for a dedicated session at the Indonesia pavilion at COP28.

PERU

IRI PERU LAUNCHES NEW LOCAL CHAPTER IN HUAMPAMI

On Saturday, October 28th, IRI Peru installed a new local chapter, this time in the town of Huampami in the district of El Cenepa, province of Condorcanqui in the Amazonas region. In the Cenepa there are a total of 52 indigenous communities belonging to the Awajún, Huambisa, Kichwa and Yagua peoples located between the Cordillera del Cóndor and the Cenepa river basin. Deforestation is one of the major problems in the area, with illegal logging for timber extraction, but also for agriculture and cattle ranching. For the past five years, the territory has

been suffering from the rapid growth of illegal alluvial mining, contaminating the river waters and seriously affecting the aquatic fauna and thus reducing fishing, one of the basic elements of the local diet. The national team of IRI Peru traveled to the territory, together with religious leaders of the Baptist, Evangelical, Catholic churches, indigenous patrols and leaders of indigenous organizations, all Awajun, to reflect on the importance of forests in the life of the planet and the presence of God in the midst of it. IRI Huampami was launched to contribute to stop the destruction of forests and rivers. IRI Huampami formed a coordination group, chaired by the evangelical pastor and president of FIAACSA, Guzman Chigkun, Baptist pastor Evaristo Kajekui and pastoral agent Ruben Esash. Among their first tasks, the group decided to go to the mayor of the district and the Apu of the ODECINAC of Huampami to ask for coordination meetings on steps to stop deforestation.

Photos: ["Lanzamiento IRI Huampami"](#)

IRI MARAÑON DEVELOPS PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN ON FORESTS IN ALLIANCE WITH THE MUNICIPALITY OF CHIRIACO

The IRI Marañon chapter, based in Chiriaco, has been developing a campaign to raise awareness about the urgency of protecting forests. The town of Chiriaco, capital of the district of Imaza in the province of Condorcanqui, Amazonas region, is the obligatory stop for all vehicles coming and going from Santa María de Nieva, near the border with Ecuador, most of them transporting legal and illegal timber. For this reason, IRI Marañón, in agreement with the Municipal Environmental Commission, decided to carry out a campaign to raise awareness among the population as well as the people who travel along this road about deforestation by installing two billboards. The design of the billboards was done by the IRI Peru team and the municipality was in charge of their production. The billboards are located one at the entrance and the other at the exit of Chiriaco. One reads, "If the forests are healthy, we can all be healthy. Let's save the forests. They give us water, they give us life." The second reads, "98% of all the water we use in Peru comes from the Amazonian forest. Let's save the forests. They give us water, they give us life."

IRI PERU PROMOTES ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA IN THE CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC

IRI Peru coordinated with the office of Congressman Arturo Alegria, current Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Congress of the Republic, to promote laws that favor the conservation of biological diversity, including the Law of Park Rangers and the Law of Healthy Environment by taxes. In order to fine-tune its policy proposals, a coordination meeting is planned for November.

IRI PERU COLLABORATES WITH CONGRESSMEN TO STOP APPROVAL OF BILLS THAT GENERATE RISKS TO FORESTS

In October, IRI Peru developed collaborative meetings with the offices of Congresswomen Karol Paredes (Vice President of Parlamaz) and Ruth Luque (President of the Environment and Indigenous Peoples Commission), both members of the Parliamentary Group for a Healthy Amazon. With the latter, IRI Peru has been reviewing the Bills on land management and the granting of mining concessions in Madre de Dios. The latter Bill was submitted to the Plenary of Congress for approval. Thanks to the request of Congresswoman Luque, the Bill was referred to the Energy and Mines Commission, since the Bill in its current version generates risks for forest concession holders and land use planning in Madre de Dios.

IRI PERU DEVELOPS TRAINING SESSION ON FOREST CARE FOR 400 RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN AREQUIPA

Laura Vargas, national facilitator of IRI Peru, was asked to deliver three working sessions on the socio-charitable pastoral "Witnesses of God's Love" to 400 religious leaders, where she focused on the theme of care for forests. The training was important for outreach and awareness raising, but also to open doors for the potential launch of an IRI Peru chapter in the city, the possibilities of working with the archbishop on forest issues, and to work with other denominations that participate in the Interreligious Council of Arequipa.

IRI PERU HOLDS DISCUSSION ON "LAUDATE DEUM"

IRI Peru organized a discussion on the Apostolic Exhortation "Laudate Deum" to discuss and deepen the analysis of the serious climate crisis we face and the possible results expected from the COP28, issues raised in the document published by Pope Francis on October 4. The event was attended by Minister of Environment, Albina Ruiz, Bishop Miguel Angel Cadenas of Iquitos, Karina Pinasco of FAS and Yésica Patiachi Vice President of REPAM, as well as Laura Vargas, coordinator of IRI Peru. Bishop Cadenas informed that more than 50 years of oil exploitation in Loreto has only brought pollution, deforestation and poverty, especially to the indigenous communities that inhabit these territories. In agreement with the Pope, Bishop Cadenas pointed out that the energy transition is essential to stop the pollution caused by the extraction of oil from the Amazon.