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| Danish organisation | Aktion Amazonas |
| Title of the intervention | Creating Community Governed Forest Corridor |
| Partner name(s) | Fundación para la Conservación del Bosque Chiquitano (FCBC) |
| Amount applied for | 500.000 DKK |
| Country(ies) | Bolivia |
| Period (# of months) | 1/10/2022-30/3-2024 (18 months) |

**1. Objective and relevance (the world around us)**

- What is the main purpose with the intervention, including challenges that need to be addressed?

The impact objective of the project is to reduce deforestation by creating a community governed forest corridor, enhancing sustainability and climate change resilience of local livelihoods, and contributing to landscape connectivity and CC mitigation. The project focus on sustainably conserving three community forests in the municipality of *San Rafael* in the southern part of the province of *San Ignacio de Velasco* in the department of *Santa Cruz* in eastern Bolivia through popular anchored forest protection and management while strengthening a civilian organization around the management and protection of the municipality governed forest area *Reserva Natural de San Rafael* (*RNSR*) with representation from both the indigenous and rural communities and local authorities. The three communities are in the immediate vicinity of the RNSR while the RNSR itself is in the immediate vicinity of National Park *San Matias* allowing the communities and the RNSR to be included as steppingstones in a large landscape corridor connecting the community territories with the RNSR and eventually connect the RNSR with San Matias as part of joint Aktion Amazonas/FCBC ambition to create connectivity in the Santa Cruz department. We call it the **San Rafael Corridor** - a landscape corridor connecting almost 1300 km2 of forest and nature[[1]](#footnote-1) providing communities with access to vital ecosystem services while conserving pristine tropical dry forest and benefitting climate in terms of CO2 uptake and mitigation of local consequences of climate change. From a conservationist perspective, ecological corridors are key to protecting biodiversity and a major component in successfully fighting fragmentation and strengthening biodiversity, ensuring species can move between protected areas and maintain genetic strength.

- Describe the context of the intervention:
The CDF region is the largest patch of healthy and best preserved tropical dry forest ecosystem in South America alive today and one of the most biologically diverse dry forests in the world extending over more than 24 million hectares. The forest-region is situated roughly in the center of the South American continent with most of the CDF lying within the eastern lowlands of Santa Cruz, Bolivia, (around 16 million hectares) and smaller patches extending into the western Mato Grosso, Brazil (the Pantanal wetlands and the woodlands of the Cerrado). The CDF has a high range of biodiversity and provides ecosystem services in the form of carbon storage, water, wood, pollinators, food, and medicines to hundreds of communities depending on its resources to sustain their life in terms of economy, nutrition, and food security. Dry forests are the most endangered tropical forest in the world and the CDF region are no exception. Despite being considered globally outstanding for its biological distinctiveness the CDF ecoregion is critically threatened and faces an uncertain futureand maintaining its ecological integrity is key to sustainable development and climate change adaptation in eastern Bolivia, resulting in CDF in 2020 being declared a conservation priority for South America by the IUCN World Conservation Congress.  Habitat conversion due to agricultural expansion, land encroachment for livestock and unplanned colonization are the major threats to the CDF region.  Habitat degradation comes next in the form of uncontrolled logging and the forest conversion rate is almost 100 hectares per day. Until 2019 the total loss of natural vegetation cover in the department of Santa Cruz was approximately ​​6.2 million hectares, placing the CDF forest in the unfortunate category as one of the most threatened forests in South America. With this trend, projections estimate a total loss of 7.1 million hectares (43%) by 2040. In addition, uncontrolled forest fires threaten both the biodiversity and people living in the CDF and the adjacent ecoregions including the Amazon. Small, controlled fires have long been a seasonal occurrence in Bolivia. They are routinely used as a tool to maintain pastures, burn off spent crops, clear brush, and forest, fertilize soil, and burn trash. But the fires since 2019 have been anything but routine and have prompted the Bolivian government to declare a state of emergency in 2019 and 2020 and there is no indication that the fires will decrease in strength - on the contrary. In 2019, four million hectares of forest and savannah were lost to the flames and in 2020 and 2021 NASA Earth Observatory could document escaped fires burning unchecked in several ecosystems, including the Pantanal wetlands in the eastern part of the country; the CDF in the southeast; and the Beni savanna and Amazon rainforest areas in the north. The fires are largely the result of intentional burning to convert forest to farmland by typically migrants from the highlands and have in Bolivia increased in strength and scope after the Supreme Decree 3974 was issued by the former Bolivian president in July 2019. Following the Supreme Decree, the amount of controlled burning allowed by farmers increased five-fold, from five hectares per year to 20. Same month the president signed the Supreme Decree 26075 expanding land demarcated for livestock production and the agribusiness sector to include Permanent Forest Production Lands in the regions of Beni and Santa Cruz. These changes in regulations have together with increasingly higher temperatures and lower than average precipitation due to changes in the regional climate contributed to the vast extent of the fires seen in recent years. Over the longer term, deforestation of tropical forests will have a broader impact, affecting global climate and biodiversity. These changes are however more challenging to observe and forecast from local effects, since they take place over a longer time scale and can be difficult to measure. The most immediate impact of deforestation occurs at the local level with the loss of ecological services provided by tropical forests and related ecosystems. Such habitats afford humans valuable services such as erosion prevention, flood control, water filtration, fisheries protection, and pollination - functions that are particularly important to the region's poorest people, who rely on natural resources for their everyday survival, just as forest loss reduces the availability of renewable resources like timber, medicinal plants, nuts and fruit, and game.

- Stable versus fragile context
Bolivia is a constitutional Plurinational State with the president as head of state with constitutional checks and balances, a threefold division of power, regular and semitransparent and democratic elections, and a large degree of decentralization of central power with various government agencies managing and enforcing nature conservation at different levels. However, large turnover in the civil administration and general poor level of education among public employees and low wage levels make the system vulnerable to corruption and weaken the institutions' capacity to monitor and enforce legislation. The Bolivian national state is composed of 36 nations and especially the indigenous peoples’ rights to territory and self-government are important as some of the biggest and best-preserved forest areas are found on indigenous territories. In 1991, the Bolivian government signed the ILO Convention 169, a major binding international convention protecting indigenous rights and in 2007, the government passed Law 3760, which approved the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, the government is disregarding indigenous rights encouraging migrants from primarily the highlands and the interior of the country (La Paz, Oruro, and Potosi) to "colonize" the Santa Cruz region by people from the highlands as a deliberate strategy to alleviate poverty problems in the highlands and to expand the government's electorate to the lowlands especially to the department of Santa Cruz where the desire and demand for autonomy is most prevalent. The ‘relocation-strategy’ also involves the investment in infrastructure making it easier for settlers to access more remote areas of Santa Cruz causing conflicts and clashes between the indigenous and peasant inhabitants and the settlers.  Participant partners will navigate within this semi-well-functioning political framework where especially green NGOs must be careful to criticize and confront central power as they, among other things, are audited every year by the authorities who review organizational strategies and projects and extend or revoke the organizations' NGO licenses depending on whether their activities are political and run counter to the state's development plans. For this reason, the project addresses problems with forest destruction and degradation in a less confrontational way through cooperation with primary local authorities and to some extent private sector stakeholders and by supporting voluntary fire brigades and sustainable development in communities based on NFTRs to showcase and encourage a sustainable approach to development and nature conservation and a general emphasis on the value of intact ecosystems and the connection between nature conservation, healthy livelihood and local development in public campaigns, communications and advocacy instead of politically attacking central government’s settlement and expansive agricultural policy by demanding a complete stop to forest burning, land encroachment, colonization and logging. However, there is also a recognition that a strengthened civil society can create change, which is why one of the project's three strategic efforts focuses on empowering of indigenous communities to defend their territories and influence conservation policies using new technologies.

- How the intervention will strengthen civil society organizing to contribute to social justice
The challenges with deforestation in Bolivia are human rights and poverty related. Gaining increased territorial control of the forests is key to combating deforestation and it is directly interrelated with the indigenous peoples’ ability to stand together against the erosion of their territorial rights as well as their prospects of improving their economic situation in an inclusive and a sustainable way. However, the indigenous peoples struggle to establish a proper and well-functioning organizational structure that represents them. That’s why the project focuses on empowering community groups to defend their territories through training in rights and advocacy and introduction to new surveillance technologies. The illegal logging that takes place in both indigenous territories and in protected areas happens with and without the "blessing" of local forest authorities. A stop to this requires first and foremost that the indigenous peoples know their rights, know about current forest and environmental legislation and are familiar with complaints mechanisms and not least can document the environmental violations and make the outside world aware of these. The projects support and strengthen the communities to bring the illegal activities occurring in their territory to the outside world's attention through evidence-based advocacy and dissemination of infringements and thereby raising awareness of the problems and pressuring the appropriate authorities to put an end to illegal activities and respect their territorial rights.

- Climate- and environmental conditions the intervention responds to?

The project is implemented in community forests where intense deforestation has an impact on both community livelihood, biodiversity, and climate. The aim of the project is to protect indigenous community forests as 'ecological safe havens' for biodiversity, to sustainably improve indigenous rural families' livelihood and enable them to manage their territory sustainably and protect their forest livelihoods from external commercial interests. Furthermore, the project is in line with CISU's new sustainability model, as the project partnership works to achieve a long-term vision of nature conservation through organizing and training civil society, as well as to carry out advocacy efforts in order to improve the living conditions of local communities, strengthen food security, conserve the Chiquitano Dry Forest, secure that future generations have access to valuable natural resources and contribute to climate mitigation through avoided deforestation.

**2. The partnership/collaborators (our starting point)**

- Experiences, capacities, and resources of participant partners
***Aktion Amazonas:***  Aktion Amazonas (previously under the name of EAA until April 2022) is a Danish non-profit nature and development organization concerned with sustainable management and protection of unique and valuable natural areas in South America in partnership with local NGOs and in close collaboration with both civil society actors, local authorities, and the private sector. Aktion Amazonas has since 2014 worked to promote sustainable coexistence between people and nature, ensure global diversity of species, and strengthen locally anchored ownership and sustainable solutions to degradation of nature through activities based on three interdependent strategic efforts in South America; land use management, promotion of social justice and strengthening of social and indigenous peoples' rights.Aktion Amazonas has a project team with specific knowledge and practical experience with promotion of indigenous and social rights in a South American context and development of nature-based community IGAs from several both ongoing and successfully completed CISU funded projects in Bolivia besides more general experience with the development community in Latin America. The project team collaborates with the finance and communication teams on PRO and project controlling. The secretariat is managed by an executive director and head of finance, who are responsible for the day-to-day operations and management and is supported by professional volunteers with competencies in communication, finance, and project management. In addition, several volunteer resource persons assist with professional advice, capacity building of partners and quality assurance of project applications on an ad hoc basis. All volunteers have been carefully selected for their qualifications to ensure high standards in all aspects of the organization’s work including project implementation and management of funds.  In 2019, Aktion Amazonas led a humanitarian intervention in 2019 to help families affected by the wildfires in the Chiquitano Region. In relation to the intervention, Aktion Amazonas was assessed by DERF for its organizational capacity, which was given sound advice*.*Aktion Amazonas’s international development and nature conservation efforts are built around the implementation of a four-year strategy, prepared in collaboration between the Board of Directors and the Secretariat and regularly evaluated and adjusted by the Secretariat with the approval of the Board.
**FCBC** is a non-profit organization based in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, whose scope of action encompasses the entire department of Santa Cruz. FCBC focuses on the ecosystems that are the most environmentally vulnerable, especially those situated within the Chiquitano Dry Forest ecoregion, the Cerrado tropical savanna ecoregion2 and the arid subtropical Chaco ecoregion of low forests and savannas. For more than 20 years FCBC has been developing and carrying out activities in different fields of conservation and sustainable development, achieving results that have had a great socio-economic and environmental impact. Since its foundation in 1999 FCBC has promoted the design and implementation of around 500 projects and initiatives of varying sizes and durations. This work has been developed mainly in the Chiquitania region, in close collaboration with civil society actors and authorities and in alliance with local, national, and international organizations. FCBC has invested more than 10 million US dollars - of own and external funds - benefiting more than 60 thousand people directly and around 100 thousand people indirectly. In doing so, FCBC has built a local reputation and accumulated knowledge that allows the good results to continue and for these results to reach beyond the immediate scope of each project. Support for the development and promotion of NTFRs is one of FCBC's core competencies and a permanent part of the organization's focus on Sustainability as one of three strategic focus areas together with Conservation and Nature Restoration. FCBC consists of professionals in the fields; natural sciences, cartography, and geomatics, besides forestry sciences (timber and non-timber) and sustainable management of natural resources (including provision of safe water for human use, ecological kitchens with low consumption of wood, sustainable livestock, management of native and foreign bees, among others), in addition to specialists in protected areas. The project will draw on all these competencies.
 - How previous cooperation

Since 2017 the FCBC/Aktion Amazonas partnership has been implementing several CISU financed Development and Citizen Participation interventions with the common features of aiming at improving living conditions for marginalized primarily indigenous groups in the Department of Santa Cruz.  FCBC/ Aktion Amazonas has further led a humanitarian effort in 2019 to help families affected by the wildfires in the Chiquitano Region. The intervention was focused on the distribution of clean water and seeds and the prevention of new wild forest fires through the establishment and training of community-based emergency brigades in firefighting.  Currently FCBC and Aktion Amazonas are implementing a CISU funded Development Project in Northern Chiquitania with the project impact objective to connect an indigenous territory with a national park and two protected areas to create a huge landscape and biodiversity corridor of more than 35.000 km2 or the size of Belgium*.* The previous cooperation has strengthened the partnership and provided Aktion Amazonas with an even greater local knowledge and understanding of the cultural and political dynamics in the area of intervention which altogether will benefit the project positively, just as experience with development and implementation of sustainable indigenous community territory management plans, training in and organization around sustainable extraction, processing and commercialization of NTFRs as well strengthening of social and indigenous peoples' rights and territories and 'empowerment' of communities through organization, training in evidence-based advocacy, information and introduction to new monitoring technologies to document environmental violations from previous and current projects helps to qualify the current project application. In addition, has Aktion Amazonas, FCBC and a third local Aktion Amazonas-partner conducted a strategy workshop in April 2022 to discuss a future multinational conservation strategy, which further underpins the partnership's common visions and long-term commitment to forest conservation in Bolivia and beyond.

- Contributions, roles, and responsibilities of the partners
Aktion Amazonas is as per contract formally responsible for the entire project to CISU and will take the lead in planning the project implementation and carry out monitoring and supervision, technical assistance, financial controlling as well as project evaluations and follow-up on the project. Aktion Amazonas is also responsible for project related information, communication and knowledge sharing in Denmark with the purpose of increasing the understanding and knowledge of Danish development assistance, its results and strengthening the awareness of global development thematic and issues of national concern. In addition, Aktion Amazonas is responsible for arranging and facilitating the final external audit at the end of the project and coordinating the external evaluation. Furthermore, the Aktion Amazonas Project Team will be responsible for being updated on new policies, guidelines etc. from CISU and DANIDA that are relevant for guiding the project work and on new methodological approaches. Both Aktion Amazonas and FCBC will be responsible for being updated on ‘best practices’ within the broader context of development cooperation and conservation in general. However, FCBC will be responsible for being updated on development in local and national politics which can potentially influence the project so that the project can be adapted in a timely manner if necessary. The project is initiated with a joint governance workshop with the primary purpose of preparing a results framework with indicators and targets based on the project's ToC and not least to ensure common understanding and expectations of project finance management and align expectations regarding formats and frequency of reporting. Also preferred channels/media for communication and knowledge sharing agreed on at the governance workshop. In addition, the partnership will discuss a plan for PSHEA and risk management with inspiration from Danida’s Guidelines for Risk Management. The project is supervised by Aktion Amazonas’ head of Project and Finance and managed by volunteer project coordinators. Aktion Amazonas’ head of Project and Finance has a professional background in business administration and 20 years of experience in project management and financing from the development sector from different positions in NGOs and institutes in Denmark and abroad including in Bolivia. This ensures timely, adequate, and high quality in project implementation, management, and reporting. All Aktion Amazonas’ project coordinators and financial controllers have relevant academic backgrounds, some with direct experiences from the Danish development Sector from previous or current positions and knowledge of South America, just as the majority has solid and native Spanish language skills. FCBC contributes to the collaboration with their extensive local knowledge of the region, their network as well as a well-established organizational infrastructure in the Santa Cruz region with local offices, equipment and cars that will serve the project. FCBC is responsible for the implementation of the project, cooperation with stakeholders, achievement of results, hiring and line management of adequate staff, quality assurance of deliveries, monitoring, financial and narrative reporting internally and to Aktion Amazonas as well as sharing of lessons between partners. Furthermore, FCBC will share information about political changes and other developments in Bolivia, along with potential changes in their own organization, knowledge, and data, which are relevant and useful for the project. Finally, Aktion Amazonas will strengthen FCBC within the field of strategic and organizational communications, advocacy and forest surveillance and monitoring using Theory of Change. FCBC has allocated a full-time project coordinator responsible for the project implementation accompanied by FCBC's 'supporting team' of experts. The FCBC Institutional Coordinator also forms part of the project team responsible for the implementation of the current project and the dialogue with Aktion Amazonas.

- How the intervention will contribute to developing the collaboration between partners
In terms of strengthening the partners’ capacities after the intervention period FCBC and Aktion Amazonas have recently extended a five-year Partnership Agreement (2022-2026) - which sets out the framework and visions for the collaboration. The Partnership Agreement aims to formalize the collaboration and form the framework for a long-term strategic alliance, where the parties mutually complement their organizational competencies based on a shared interest in protecting the biodiversity of the Chiquitano Dry Forest and its ecosystems, while promoting sustainable development, particularly among indigenous people (the partnership agreement in Spanish can be shared on request). The collaboration between FCB and Aktion Amazonas will thus continue around the development of various projects both CISU-funded and privately-funded - also after the end of the current corridor project applied for. And with the long-term common goal of establishing a Gran Corridor of Connectivity in the Chiquitano Region, there is ample opportunity and reason to continue and further develop the collaboration based on lessons learned and shared ambitions.

**3. Target groups, objectives, and expected results (our intervention)**

- Composition of the target groups

The project’s main target group are Chiquitano indigenous people and groups of people referring to themselves with the term 'campesinos' living in three communities adjacent to RNSR in the southern part of the Velasco Province of the Santa Cruz department. The three communities house a total of approx. 1305 people divided into approx. 260 HH’s. They live semi-isolated in areas with sparse infrastructure and are geographically scattered however still connected to the rest of the region and beyond by road infrastructure and telecommunication network although the communities do not necessarily have the resources to make use of the available infrastructure.  The families depend on local ecosystem services and their community livelihood is based on agriculture and forest resources, just as most of the households can be classified as poor with an average income below the national poverty line gained from among other sale of crops, unskilled employment of shorter or longer duration, typically seasonal, or profit from own micro-businesses. The project communities have been chosen based on the communities expressed interest and predisposition to form part of the project, just as the communities' access to infrastructure provides a basis for building small scale micro businesses as these successes depend on relatively easy access to markets. The acceptance and predisposition of the municipality of San Rafael to work constructively to protect the forest and sustainable manage the RNSR has also been crucial for the choice of project area, as the political situation in Bolivia - especially for green NGOs - is difficult. A constructive collaboration with local authorities is thus necessary for a project of this nature is to be succeed.

**The projects direct target group:**1. Community-members organized in Community Surveillance Groups enriched with knowledge and skills to document environmental infringements using new technologies: **30 community members** trained and organized (20 men and 10 women of which at least 10% are young).

2. Community-members and municipality representatives organized in a Management Committee with capacities to sustainably manage and protect the forest corridor through training in advocacy, rights, and management: **10 municipality representants** and **30 community members** trained and organized (25 men and 15 women) of which at least 10% are young).
3. Community-members organized in 6 production groups (one per community) and trained in collecting, harvesting, and processing of honey: **120 community members** trained and organized (50 men and 70 women) – one person per family. 10% are young.
In total: 190 individuals will benefit directly from the intervention (95 men and 95 women of which 19 are young)

**The projects secondary target group:**

120 families benefiting from a potential increase in income from sale of honey equivalent to **600 people**. All **1305 habitants** of the three communities benefitting from:

- being stronger financially as communities vis-à-vis potential buyers of their territories.
- fire prevention and mitigation and thereby increased chance that they will less likely avoid losing some or all crops, livestock and property and not least community forest to the flames.
- potentially fewer environmental infringements in their territory.

- secure and sustainable access to water and other forest ecosystem services

- generally, more community knowledge about the value of intact ecosystems and the connection between nature conservation, healthy livelihood, and local development which will ultimately benefit nature through potential popular engagement in sustainable nature conservation.

The wider target group includes citizen of the municipality capital of San Rafael through an awareness raising campaign about forest fire prevention based audiovisual communications as presentations, radio spots and billboards. The awareness raising strategy has been chosen as the municipality of San Rafael covers a huge area and inhabitants live scattered. In addition, illiteracy is widespread and access to communication devices differs. To reach a wider section of the local population, it has therefore been decided to base the information work on audiovisual communication. The increased awareness about forest fire prevention will ultimately benefit nature by fewer wildfires.

- Describe how the target groups will participate in- and benefit from the intervention

The project approach continues to be rights-based in that it enables communities to raise their voice to

influence the decision-making government duty-bearers at the local level and strengthen the capacities of

government entities to fulfil their obligations as duty-bearers and address the demands and challenges raised by the right-holders. The MC therefore consist of both delegates from the three communities and the Municipality to ensure long-term protection and mutual understanding of nature conservation and

sustainable development. From the communities the delegates will be representative people with leadership capacities, including young people based on the principle of the shared responsibility we have for hatching new future nature conservationists. The political context of Bolivia, including Santa Cruz, has experienced major changes in state and local administration in the wake the subnational elections on March 7th, 2021. The new municipal council in San Rafael, however, remains positive about forest conservation and continued collaboration with FCBC, which has been decisive in deciding on project area, as access to natural resources is a constant source of conflict as described in Chapter 1. A constructive collaborative environment between local authorities and local communities are therefore crucial to the success of the project. The project also has a focus on promoting gender equality and supporting women empowerment with requirements for meaningful representation of women in organization and project activities. Gender distribution is considered when forming the groups and ideally half of the members of a group are women and the other half are men. Similarly, marginalized/vulnerable groups are included and empowered to take part in community decision-making and income-generating activities, as equality as a cross-cutting issue not only refers to gender but also to households and individuals. Furthermore, the project aims to involve young people in income-generating and management activities. This contributes to counteract the increasing migration of young people to the urban areas, where there is a demand for unskilled and typically poorly paid work. The participation of all ages and both genders are not only inclusive, but it also follows the reality of the communities where the daily work for the maintenance of life requires the participation of all family members.

- Project objective, expected results and intervention strategy

The projects **theory of change** is that *by* empowering local communities in territorial management, monitoring and evidence-based advocacy in cooperation with local authorities and generating sustainability and climate change resilience of local community livelihoods based on democratic organization and benefit sharing around NTFP, in addition to involving local communities and civil society in wildfire prevention and recovery *then* community and municipality forests and ecosystem services will be sustainably conserved and forest health status improved while community poverty reduced and communities access to important ecosystem services secured *thus* contributing to achieving the project impact objective: **Community governed forest corridor conserved, enhancing sustainability and climate change resilience of local livelihoods, and contributing to landscape connectivity and CC mitigation.”**

To contribute to the project impacted the following three outcomes has been defined:

*(O1) Popularly rooted forest protection and management mechanisms promoted.
(O2) Incentives for long-term nature protection strengthened by linking local communities' development opportunities to forest conservation.
(O3)* *Wildfire prevention awareness and recovery capacities increased in and around the San Rafael Corridor improved.*

The operational part of the project strategy is based on a number of outputs each leading to one of the intended outcomes:

1. **Outputs 1.1 - 1.3.** relates to (1) Organizing, equipping, and training of Local Surveillance Group *(LSG)* consisting of representatives from one or more communities to survey and document environmental infringements in community and RNSR territory, (2) Establishing a Management Committee *(MC)* with capacities to sustainably manage and protect the forest corridor and (3) Assessment and monitoring of forests health status on an ongoing basis and in coordination with the LSG[[2]](#footnote-2). Data and recordings to strategically be used in management, advocacy and awareness raising, which will lead to **outcome 1.**
2. **Outputs 2.1 - 2.2** relates to (1)Establishing and equipping three Honey Production Groups,(2) strengthening communities’ capacities to sustainable collect, harvest, and process honeyand (3) promoting communities access to local and departmental markets,which will lead to **outcome 2.**
3. **Outputs 3.1 - 3.2** concerns (1) Increasing public awareness of the consequences of wildfires and (2) Supporting communities and the RNSR management committee in developing a forest Recovery Plan, which will lead to **outcome 3**.

The project contributes to the Development Triangle by combining capacity, strategic services, and advocacy as mandatory to deliver the project outcomes. Enhancing sustainable community livelihoods to reduce external pressure on indigenous territories from the agribusiness sector and settlers and building and strengthening community resilience to forest fires through training and inputs of a more technical nature are two crucial outcomes directly contributing to the project's impact objective. This effort is supported by a focus on empowering the indigenous communities to be defenders of their territory through training and organization and building knowledge capacity of FCBC to ensure the latest knowledge about the conservation status of the CDR, threats to the regions' ecology and socio-economic and cultural challenges as a solid basis for advocacy for forest protection, indigenous rights, and social justice.

**Outcomes and outputs are identified based on the following context-specific reasoning:**

**O1:** Community and municipality forests are large and impassable and local authorities only have limited resources to monitor the vast forest areas. At the same time lack of local knowledge about rights, environmental legislation and complaints mechanisms and not least lack of capacities to document environmental violations makes it easier for economic interests not to comply with environmental legislation and to extract natural resources illegally on both community and municipality territories. Strong organization around forest management and protection in addition to awareness raising can contribute to broader popular and political support for nature conservation, which again can contribute to greater restraint and respect for legislation from parties engaged in destructive activities as their actions can have personal economic or political consequences due to increased public awareness. In addition, involvement of the local population in the management and protection in coordination with local authorities makes it possible to monitor large areas of forests making it more difficult for external economic and political interests to commit infringements without creating awareness and resistance - in short, it becomes more difficult for illegal activities to fly under the radar when forest management and protection is popularly anchored. At the same time involvement of civil society in nature conservation increases knowledge about and understanding of the value of intact ecosystems and the connection between nature conservation, healthy livelihood, and local development while also providing communities with democratic access to ecosystem services in areas adjacent to community territories.

**O2:** Just as weak organization possess a threat to forests so does insufficient land, scarce community production capacity, poverty, and long periods of droughts. These factors make locals economically vulnerable to fluctuations in market and climate and compelled to sell land and natural resources to private investors, just as it forces especially the younger generation to migrate to the cities in search of work. Strengthening the development of nature based IGAs is a second key conservation strategy of the project. The project communities already experiment with honey production, which does not require much space, and which is not as vulnerable to climate fluctuations as e.g., agriculture, as bees find water and nutrients in the forests where climate change is felt later compared to the cultivated landscape. At the same time natural honey represent a great economic opportunity for local communities according to FCBC analysis and calculations. Honey could thus provide the communities and rural families with climate smart alternative income and a solid incentive to conserve the forest which sustain the honey production in terms of nutrition for the bees and turn down economic interests in search of natural resources in community territories thus reducing the external pressure on rural community land from various political and industrial interests that are all too often put above the environment, climate, and wildlife. However, the communities continue to need support for the development and upscaling of their honey production why the project focus on strengthening the local honey production.

**03:** In terms of preventing and mitigate consequences of uncontrolled wildfires it is more short-term necessity than a long-term strategy rooted in the fact that the annual wildfires are a reality the project must act on if the project's intentions and long-term visions are not to literally go up in flames. Though many of the fires are intentionally ignited, many wildfires are also due to lack of knowledge about ontrolled slash-and-burning (*chaqueo)* among migrants from the highland departments referred to as *'colonos interculturales'* who by the central government are allocated plots of land on municipal and regional lands. They do not necessarily come with knowledge of *chaqueo*, which has been practiced for generations by the indigenous peoples and campesinos inhabiting the Chiquitano forest region, why the fires often get out of control. However, in terms of improving wildfires risk management and preventing wildfires there is a great deal of uncertainty associated with involving representatives from the settlements in training and capacity building in *chaqueo* as not all settlements are legal or recognized by adjacent indigenous communities or the municipal authorities and there may therefore be reluctant both parties to cooperate. In addition, not all settlers are interested in controlled forest burning, as forest burning is a deliberate strategy to gain access to agricultural land. Politically it can also be dangerous to advocate against illegal settlements and the central government's encouragement to burn forests - both for the communities and FCBC - especially considering that NGOs in Bolivia are audited every year by the authorities which review organizational strategies, etc. and extend or revoke the organizations' NGO license depending on whether their activities are political and run counter to the state's development plans.

Therefore, the project first and foremost focus on prevention and recovery as 4 million hectares of forest has already gone up in smoke alone in the Santa Cruz department and the wildfires continues in Bolivia and neighboring countries. Restoration is thus necessary to counteract changes in microclimates, restore access to ecosystem services and for the sake of biodiversity. To contribute to the prevention of wildfires our experience shows that through strategic communication and information, we can create local awareness about the importance of protecting forests and thereby help reduce wildfires as people become more aware of their actions and more interested in protecting forests. Awareness raising action will be based on billboards and radio spots as the municipality of San Rafael covers a huge area and inhabitants live scattered. In addition, illiteracy is widespread and access to communication devices differs. However, most HHs have access to a transistor radio. Recovery actions to re-plant and re-create forest ecosystems is a challenge, which requires knowledge of tree species and their interaction if biodiversity is to be restored, but also knowledge of nature's ability to regenerate itself, so we ensure to recreate as natural an environment as possible. Therefore, we focus this first phase on gathering knowledge and on that basis prepare a recovery plan.

- Systematizing of experiences

Aktion Amazonas' project monitoring is based on the project's Theory of Change. At the outcome level, sustainable changes are measured and reported once a year, while progress in project implementation is continuously monitored via online meetings between FCBC and Aktion Amazonas and via quarterly reports, which measure activities completed under the outcomes and briefly describe the most significant outputs witnessed because of activities implemented each quarter. Measurement at both outcome and output level will take place based on several clearly defined indicators and targets set out in the project's results framework.In connection with the development of the project, Aktion Amazonas has developed monitoring formats, which also measure lessons learned, assumptions and risks. Aktion Amazonas works with a format for annual reporting on outcome level and quarterly reports that measure at output level.At monthly partner skype meetings, progress of projects and challenges are discussed, and work plans, and Results Framework are updated or adjusted, if necessary, to improve the project. In addition, Aktion Amazonas holds internal project meetings at the secretariat to discuss progress in project implementation. Further, monitoring is followed up by project visits from Aktion Amazonas’ project team to check whether the project is achieving expected results as planned. The project visits have a quantitative objective to document the implementation of the project's more tangible goods and services by on-the-ground-inspection. Simultaneously these visits are also the qualitative objective to document the various parties’ views of the project’s development and achievements through face-to-face interviews with the target groups. In addition, documentation of the project progress is collected through photos and participant registration forms from meetings and workshops, reports, and other "products'' listed as means of verifications.  All information is shared through Google Drive for Aktion Amazonas’ and FCBCs projects to access, respectively.

- Intervention-related information work in Denmark

The information work in Denmark is carried out to inform members, volunteers, stakeholders, and other followers through Aktion Amazonas' website, electronic newsletter, Facebook, and annual report about the results of the organization's nature conservation and development work. With the public information and results from the intervention will be available at the website (www.eaango.dk), Facebook and press work. The information material will include photos, articles and will also be included in Aktion Amazonas’ annual report. Information about results distributed in Bolivia is more targeted on nature conservation to:

(1) Strengthen the support for Aktion Amazonas and Danish development assistance. (2) Contribute to increase knowledge and understanding of the development and nature conservation issues associated with Aktion Amazonas' work. (3) Increase the awareness and support for promoting and preserving biological diversity and sustainable coexistence between humans and nature.

1. San Matias covers an area of 50.087 ha. The RNSR covers an area of 69.143 ha while the three communities together cover an area of 7.693 ha. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The distances are enormous. Therefore, the setup and collection of game camaras is done in collaboration with the LSG, which monitors and knows the area. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)