

# Switzerland and Amazonia: Together for a Thriving Planet

A snapshot of Swiss-based organizations engaging with the Amazon region through education, research, innovation, and the arts.





# Preface

Without the Amazon, Switzerland would have been deprived of its most famous delicacy. A world without Swiss chocolate is hard to imagine, yet cacao trees, like rubber trees, are native to the Amazon basin. Both helped seed industries that transformed economies far beyond South America. Long before Swiss chocolatiers perfected their recipes, Indigenous peoples were cultivating these species as part of a complex, enduring dialogue with nature, an ecological sophistication that predates the very idea of ecology. The rainforest, often romanticized as untouched wilderness, is in fact a landscape profoundly shaped by millennia of human presence, care, knowledge, and adaptation.

That quiet truth sits beneath the global economy: a lot of what the world values rests on the intelligence that emerges when humans and ecosystems evolve together. The Amazon remains a living laboratory for that experiment, a place not only for conservation but for learning, exchange, and the reimagining of how societies might coexist with nature. Yet it is also a system under strain: vital to planetary stability, and perilously close to its limits.

With COP30 coming to Belém, Swissnex and its partners saw an opportunity to amplify Switzerland's engagement with the region. Building on our nexBio Amazônia program, we began by mapping Swiss-based organizations doing innovative work in the Amazon. What we uncovered is presented in this report: a dense network of collaborations, made of projects linking advanced technology with traditional knowledge. From satellite observation and robotic DNA sampling to partnerships rooted in reciprocity with Indigenous and riverine communities, these efforts reflect a distinctively Swiss formula: precision joined with respect, innovation grounded in cooperation. The result is a story of co-creation: ideas refined as carefully as Swiss chocolate, and meant to be shared.

It is apt that, for COP30, Swissnex established a "Planetary Embassy" inside Belém's Goeldi Museum, named after Swiss naturalist Emílio Goeldi, who catalogued the region's biodiversity in the late 19th century, around the same time Swiss confectioners were perfecting their craft. His legacy embodies a long tradition of Swiss scientific curiosity and diplomacy in the tropics. That tradition continues today: a commitment to science, partnership, and the conviction that solutions to planetary crises will arise not from isolation but from connection. The rainforest, after all, thrives not as a collection of individual trees, but as a web of relationships – human and more-than-human alike. So too is the future we must build.

Benjamin Bollmann  
CEO, Swissnex in Brazil





## Why is Amazonia So Important?

The Amazon basin is home to the Earth's largest tropical rainforest and the greatest river system by volume, hosting unparalleled biodiversity, with an estimated one in ten known species found there. Amazonia spans nine countries: Brazil, which contains the majority of the forest (approximately 60%), followed by Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname, and the French overseas territory of French Guiana. Its continental size rivals that of the contiguous United States, is around nine times the size of France, or roughly 150 times that of Switzerland.

The region is also a cultural and human mosaic, with a population of more than 50 million people, including more than 420 Indigenous peoples who represent hundreds of distinct ethnic groups, dozens of which remain in voluntary isolation. These communities speak over 300 distinct languages, many of which are endangered, and manage more than 3,000 Indigenous territories, covering about 35% of the Amazon biome.

The Amazon rainforest is often imagined as being nature in its raw state, yet it has been managed and transformed by its inhabitants for centuries through their ecological knowledge and cultural traditions. It is a cradle of agricultural innovation, where crops such as cassava, açai, cacao, and rubber were domesticated before spreading across the world.

The Amazon is of immense importance for climate stability. It stabilizes rainfall patterns across South America, supporting agriculture, freshwater supply, and energy production, while also storing vast amounts of carbon that help regulate the Earth's climate system. Yet deforestation, unsustainable agriculture, illegal mining, and water pollution increasingly threaten these functions and the region's populations.

Studies indicate that the Amazon may be approaching ecological tipping points, where continued forest loss and climate change could trigger abrupt and potentially irreversible change, such as widespread conversion to savanna, putting local communities and the global climate at risk. Safeguarding and regenerating the Amazon is therefore critical not only for its inhabitants but for the health and stability of the entire planet.



# Amazonia\*



\*Amazonia is a neutral term used across Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries of the Amazon region, pronounced and accented differently in each language.

To maintain inclusivity and distinguish the geographical region from the global e-commerce brand “Amazon,” this report uses the unaccented form Amazonia.





## What is Bioeconomy?

The concept of the “bioeconomy” has become central to discussions on the future of Amazonia. Although its interpretation varies globally, in the Amazon region the term is used to describe economic models that increase the value of a living, standing forest compared to a cleared one, while supporting natural-based livelihoods in the long term.

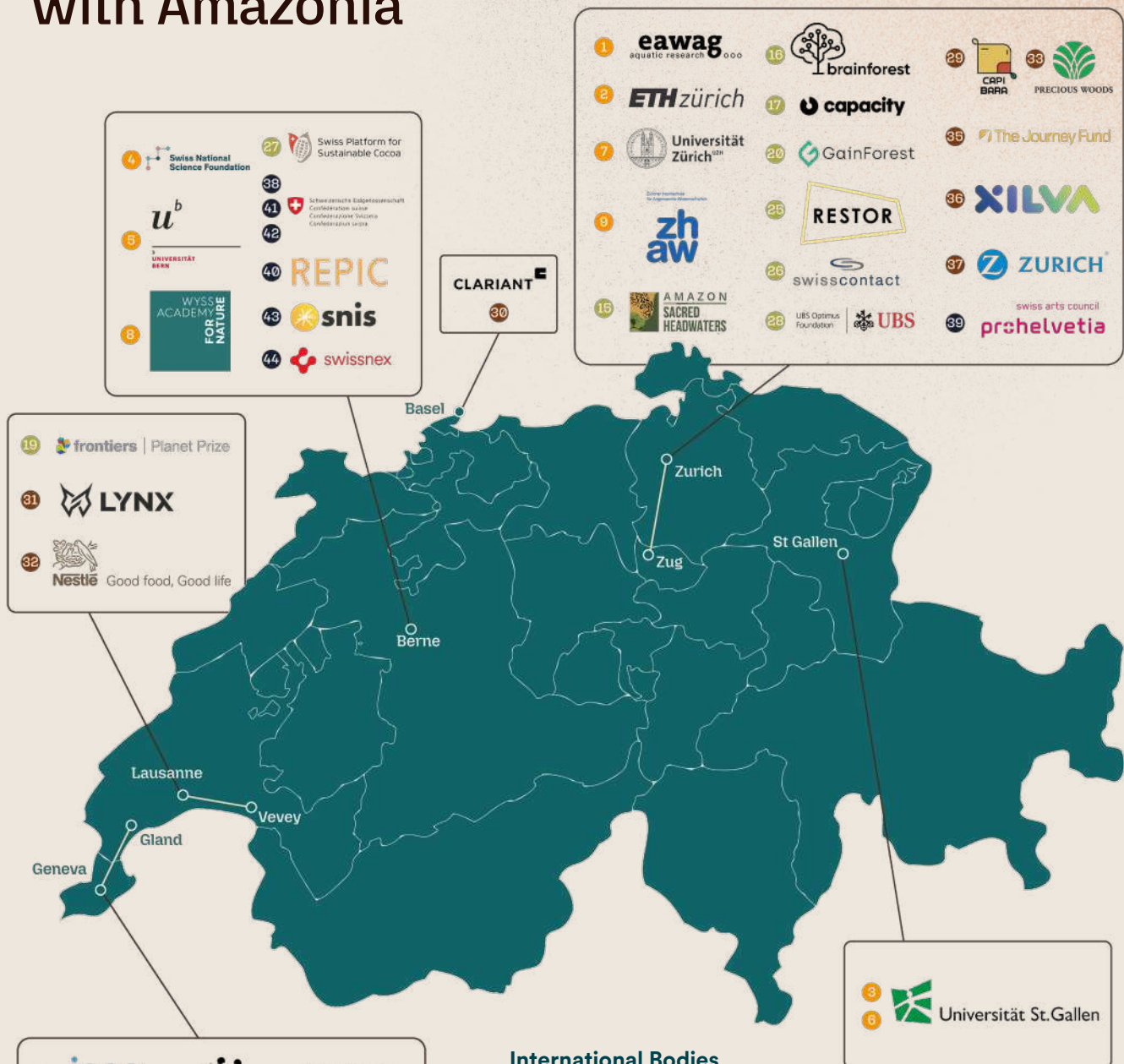
The Bioeconomy represents a strategic transition away from deforesting industries such as cattle ranching and soy cultivation, towards approaches that leverage the region’s rich biodiversity as a foundation for inclusive, sustainable economic growth.

A report by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) found that bioeconomy efforts across Amazonian countries share a set of core principles that includes the use of biological resources and processes, the integration of science, technology, and innovation, and the inclusion of ancestral and traditional knowledge.

Increasingly, the term “socio-bioeconomy” is used to underscore that successful approaches in the Amazon must not only build on biodiversity, but also place local communities and equitable benefit-sharing at the center. Examples include value chains for non-timber forest products such as açai and Brazil nuts, biocosmetics and biopharmaceutical ingredients, sustainable community-managed fisheries, some forms of ecotourism, and carbon credit initiatives developed in partnership with Indigenous and traditional peoples.



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# Universities and Research Centers

## 1 Eawag

The [Department of Sanitation, Water and Solid Waste for Development](#) (Sandec) at the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (Eawag) works in Brazil on water management, sustainable agriculture, and climate change around Palmas, Tocantins, in the transition zone between the Amazon basin and the Cerrado savanna. To strengthen water resilience during dry periods, Sandec and partners assessed governance in the Palmas watershed with government and civil-society stakeholders. Gaps and uneven enforcement of water rights were identified, leading to overuse and illegal extraction, particularly for agriculture. Regenerative soil practices to improve water retention are now being tested.

## 2 ETH Zurich

[ETH Zurich](#) competed among more than 300 teams in XPRIZE Rainforest, a global five-year competition to develop breakthrough technologies for real-time monitoring of tropical biodiversity, with an ambitious project in the Amazon. In 2024, the [ETH BiodivX](#) team was awarded the Bonus Prize of USD 250,000, recognizing its innovative approach that combined cutting-edge tools – including drones, satellite imagery, eDNA sampling, and AI – and deep collaboration with Indigenous communities.

In a separate effort, the [Ecosystem and Landscape Evolution](#) (ELE) at ETH Zurich group launched WildinSync, a global biodiversity-monitoring initiative that combines environmental DNA (eDNA) with satellite imagery and AI-powered analysis. In the Amazon region, the group collaborates with the Universidade Federal do Amazonas (UFAM) in Manaus, Brazil, and works closely with local and Indigenous communities to co-develop field-based DNA extraction methods and long-term conservation strategies. By integrating scientific innovation with traditional knowledge, [WildinSync](#) aims to generate actionable insights that connect wildlife, ecosystems, and people, strengthening the planet's resilience and biodiversity.

At the [Institute of Landscape and Urban Studies](#) (LUS), Ecuadorian architect and urbanist [Santiago del Hierro](#) focuses on Indigenous territoriality in the Andean Amazon. Based between Zurich and Quito, his work has spanned territorial planning, participatory action research, environmental conservation, design, arts, and education across Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. He has been deeply engaged with the Inga Indigenous people of Colombia to study and support their traditional territory. His research introduces new ways to understand and

cartographically represent Indigenous lands, advancing collaborative methodologies that promote respectful, inclusive, and community-led knowledge production in complex socio-ecological contexts. He is now beginning a new collaboration with the Quijos people of Ecuador, supported by the Rietberg Museum in Zurich, to be featured in an exhibition opening in October 2026.

Part of the Institute of Agricultural Sciences of ETH Zurich, the [Plant Nutrition](#) group works to meet the world's growing food needs sustainably while reducing pressure on natural resources. In the Colombian Amazon, the group collaborates with the Universidad de la Amazonia and the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) to improve the sustainability of tropical pastures at forest margins. Its main project focuses on integrating legumes and grasses with biological nitrification inhibition (BNI) capacity into existing pasture systems, helping to enhance soil fertility and reduce strain on surrounding forests. The project also includes a strong educational component, involving students and researchers from Switzerland and Colombia.

## 3 Leading House Latin America

The University of St.Gallen was mandated by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) to act as a national “Leading House” promoting scientific cooperation between Switzerland and Latin America. Through different funding instruments, the [Leading House Latin America](#) supports early-career mobility, joint research projects, and innovation exchanges. In the Amazon region, the Leading House partnered with Swissnex in Brazil and Brazilian National Council of State Research Support Foundations (Confap) to create nexBio Amazônia, a bilateral program on the Amazon's bioeconomy. In addition, it has funded over 20 research projects co-designed by different Swiss and Amazonian universities, advancing science diplomacy and capacity building in areas such as biodiversity, sustainable development, and environmental governance, while reinforcing Switzerland's enduring commitment to sustainability and equitable scientific partnerships.

## 4 Swiss National Science Foundation

The [Swiss National Science Foundation](#) (SNSF), Switzerland's main funder of basic research, supports Amazonian research through several instruments. Through the international Belmont Forum's Tropical Forests call, it supports research projects developing innovative solutions to address challenges faced in tropical forest regions, such as deforestation, environmental justice, and the development of local economies. SNSF also participates in the Brazilian initiative Amazon+10, which supports multidisciplinary scientific expeditions focusing on a better understanding of the nature-society interactions for the sustainable and

inclusive development of the Legal Amazon. In addition, SNSF coordinates bilateral funding calls with several Brazilian bodies on topics such as neglected diseases, clean technologies, water, and urban development.

## 5 University of Bern

The [Institute of Ecology and Evolution](#) (IEE) at the University of Bern conducts research on the taxonomy and diversity of several Amazonian fish groups, contributing to a deeper understanding of the region's biodiversity. In Brazil, the IEE participates in Protax, a program of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) in partnership with the National Council of State Research Support Foundations (Confap), which aims to strengthen biological taxonomy through training and talent development. More generally, the IEE investigates how organisms respond to and interact with their environments, from individual organisms to entire populations, communities, and ultimately the functioning of whole ecosystems.

## 6 University of St.Gallen

In the Amazon, the [Institute of Management in Latin America](#) (GIMLA) at the University of St.Gallen (HSG) fosters experiential learning and applied research at the intersection of conservation, entrepreneurship, and Indigenous knowledge. One of its initiatives, "Socio-Environmental Entrepreneurship in the Green Heart of Latin America," is a field-based block seminar run in the Baixo Rio Negro region in Brazil. Recognized for its innovative teaching methods, the program promotes community-based entrepreneurship and dialogue among academia, policymakers, and Indigenous leaders. Complementing its teaching portfolio, GIMLA leads the project "Confronting Green Colonialism: Indigenous-Led Actions and Solutions for Food-Water-Energy Sustainability" funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. The project brings together academic partners and Indigenous scholars from Brazil, Canada, Germany, Mali, Mongolia, Peru, Thailand, Togo, and the US. GIMLA also conducts research in the Brazilian state of Pará, with a focus on Indigenous people's resistance and role in shaping equitable, climate-resilient socio-bioeconomies throughout the Amazon.

## 7 University of Zurich

The [University of Zurich](#) (UZH) conducts research on the Amazon's deep past and present across the natural and social sciences. For example, UZH computer scientists developed AI tools and released a public satellite-image database to enable faster detection of deforestation. UZH paleontologists studied how long-term environmental changes and human interactions shaped aquatic biodiversity, and in 2024 published the major

discovery of the 16-million-year-old river dolphin *Pebanista yacuruna* in the Peruvian Amazon. UZH biologists modeled how shifts in river networks driven by Andean uplift over 80 million years contributed to today's exceptional freshwater fish diversity in the western Amazon. UZH geographers quantified dissolved carbon carried by the Amazon River to improve understanding of the global carbon cycle. Further research explored the behavioural economics of extreme events in the Amazon region, and Indigenous communities and traditional medicine, including the cultural and psychological uses of the tobacco plant. Importantly, UZH is the lead institution behind the World Biodiversity Forum in Davos, which addresses Amazon-related issues among others.

## 8 Wyss Academy for Nature

The [Wyss Academy for Nature](#) at the University of Bern, whose mission is to develop, test, and drive solutions that transform the relationship between people and nature, works in the Amazon region through its South America Hub in Peru, located in the Tambopata province of the Madre de Dios region. The Hub focuses on collaborative territorial transformation grounded in applied research, public-policy engagement, co-creation of solutions, and local capacity building along the road and river corridors of Tambopata. Building on lessons from its work on the ground, it also contributes to regional and global processes that enable more sustainable human-nature relationships and support forest conservation and sustainable use. Research areas include biodiversity, climate change, political economy, governance, land systems, mining, Indigenous peoples, agroforestry, ecosystem services, transformative innovation, policy dialogue, forest conservation, and science diplomacy.

## 9 Zurich University of Applied Sciences

The [Zurich University of Applied Sciences](#) (ZHAW) collaborates with the University of Campinas (Unicamp) in Brazil on exploring new raw materials for chocolate production and alternative post-harvest processing methods to create flavorful products. To address the cacao crisis, ZHAW and Unicamp are investigating the potential of *Theobroma grandiflorum*, commonly known as cupuaçu, as a cacao alternative. Native to and widely cultivated throughout the Amazon basin, cupuaçu produces a fruit that is consumed across Central and South America. This project exemplifies ZHAW's holistic approach to sustainability, integrating cultural, ecological, economic, legal, social, technological, and educational dimensions.



## International Bodies

### 10 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC) provides scientific assessments that are crucial for informing discussions at forums such as the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) Summit and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP30), to be hosted in Belém, Brazil. Its work establishes best practices for carbon accounting, ensuring transparent and rigorous studies on Amazon fires and carbon emissions to guide policy decisions. The IPCC also synthesizes global climate models to project potential future scenarios for the Amazon, including substantial reductions in rainfall, assessments of tipping point risks, and the likelihood of extreme weather events.

### 11 International Union for Conservation of Nature

The [International Union for Conservation of Nature](#) (IUCN) is leading major initiatives in the Amazon, focusing on Indigenous-led conservation, forest protection, and sustainable forest management. One key project, Amazonia 2.0, strengthens forest governance and sustainable practices across six Amazonian countries: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Guyana, and Suriname. The initiative uses bottom-up approaches to combat deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change. Recently, the IUCN published a study highlighting the Amazon's forests as a natural barrier against diseases threatening the region's inhabitants. Analyzing data from 1,733 municipalities – covering over 74% of the Amazon – the study found that deforestation is directly linked to increased cases of neglected tropical diseases, including Chagas disease, malaria, hantavirus, visceral and cutaneous leishmaniasis, and spotted fevers.

### 12 World Business Council for Sustainable Development

The [World Business Council for Sustainable Development](#) (WBCSD) is working in Brazil's Amazon to show how business can drive regeneration and inclusive growth. Through its Landscape Accelerator: Brazil (LAB), WBCSD partners with companies, governments, and communities to advance regenerative agriculture, agroforestry, and nature-positive value chains in the state of Pará – home to nearly a third of Brazil's Amazon. The initiative aims to make standing forests and sustainable production economically competitive alternatives to deforestation, while improving local livelihoods. Ahead of COP30 in Belém, WBCSD partnered with CEBDS (Brazilian Business Council for Sustainable Development) to mobilize the

private sector to scale climate-smart supply chains, strengthen biodiversity, and promote a 1.5°C-aligned economy.

### 13 World Economic Forum

The [World Economic Forum](#) (WEF) advances forest conservation, climate action, and sustainable development in the Amazon through multiple initiatives. It hosts the Tropical Forest Alliance, which unites companies, policymakers, and investors to tackle land-use change – especially deforestation and ecosystem conversion, both major drivers of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In 2020, the WEF launched [1t.org](#), a global platform aiming to conserve, restore, and grow one trillion trees by 2030. Additionally, through its open innovation platform UpLink, the WEF connects entrepreneurs developing solutions for biodiversity protection, climate resilience, and sustainable forest economies.

### 14 WWF International

The WWF Network of [WWF International](#) launched “Amazon Push,” a coordinated and inclusive effort to scale up ambition, investment, and collective action for the Amazon. The initiative aims for the three “big wins” to avoid the Amazon's ecological tipping point, the threshold beyond which gradual changes trigger irreversible ecosystem collapse: zero deforestation, no illegal gold, and 80% of the Amazon conserved by 2030. Collaborating with Indigenous peoples, local communities, and key regional partners – including SPA, ACTO, RAISG, and the Pan-Amazon Bioeconomy Alliance – WWF works to safeguard the integrity of the Amazon's forests across national borders in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, the Guianas, and Peru.

## Nonprofits

### 15 Amazon Sacred Headwaters Alliance

The [Amazon Sacred Headwaters Alliance](#) (ASHA), formed in 2017, unites Indigenous peoples across the Napo, Pastaza, and Marañón River Basins of Ecuador and Peru. As one of the world's largest Indigenous-led protection efforts, ASHA represents 30 nations defending the Amazon against destructive extractive industries. Their bold vision is the permanent protection of 86 million acres of bioculturally rich rainforest, an area larger than Italy. ASHA guides its systemic objectives, including halting deforestation and advancing territorial governance, through the Bioregional Plan 2030. Innovative programs, such as the Living School of the Amazon (EVA) for youth leaders and the “Jaguar Tokens” pilot, which utilizes verifiable stewardship credits for direct conservation financing, are central to their strategy.



## 16 Brainforest

**Brainforest** is a venture studio that partners with Indigenous communities in the Amazon to develop scalable, impact-driven business models. These initiatives provide local communities with sustainable income sources while empowering them to regenerate and protect forests. By fostering a standing forest bioeconomy, Brainforest addresses the interconnected climate, biodiversity, and food crises. The studio develops and invests in ventures across the Amazon, with a focus on the Northeast Amazon and the Manaus region. Its approach integrates forest conservation, biodiversity protection, and community-led entrepreneurship. Key partners include the Amazon Investor Coalition, Latimacto, Ceres Seeding, Biotara, Aqua Viridi, Camtaua, Cofruta, Bioverse, Biofert, and the Instituto BioTara.

## 17 Capacity Foundation

The **Capacity Foundation** combines advanced technology with Indigenous-led stewardship to pioneer a groundbreaking model for biodiversity protection in the Amazon. Through its flagship initiative, The Shield, Capacity has built the world's first end-to-end system for real-time rainforest protection. The system uses AI-powered satellite monitoring to detect deforestation and alerts Indigenous rangers via the Guardiã app – which functions offline – enabling rapid on-the-ground responses and escalation to federal authorities when necessary. Currently, The Shield operates across six Indigenous territories, safeguarding 7.9 million hectares of the Amazon rainforest. Key partners include Planet, OroraTech, Rainforest Alliance, Aritana Institute, and Treesistance.

## 18 Earthworm Foundation

The **Earthworm Foundation** is a nonprofit dedicated to regenerating nature. It designs, tests, and scales innovative production and business models in collaboration with companies, farmers, NGOs, and governments. In the Amazon region, its initiative “Empowering Communities for Nature-Positive and Conflict-Free Supply Chains” develops agroforestry systems for palm oil and cocoa, securing community land rights, and using satellite monitoring to track forest degradation. It is supported by partners including Cargill, Nestlé, Givaudan, Lavazza, Natura, and ICRAF.

## 19 Frontiers Planet Prize

In the Amazon region, the **Frontiers Planet Prize** supports Instituto Juruá, which advances biodiversity conservation, food sovereignty, and sustainable livelihoods for Indigenous and local communities. Another key collaboration tackles plastic pollution in the Amazon

basin, analyzing marine litter dynamics from rivers to the Atlantic Ocean. The Frontiers Planet Prize, presented by the Frontiers Research Foundation of Swiss open-science publisher Frontiers, was created with the mission to recognize and accelerate the world's most impactful scientific breakthroughs advancing planetary boundary science. It is the world's largest science competition dedicated to planetary health and Earth system science, awarding three annual prizes of USD 1 million.

## 20 GainForest

**GainForest** is a nonprofit that empowers grassroots organizations to generate sustainable income through Web3 technologies, rewarding verified conservation efforts. Its flagship project, Ecocerts, tokenizes conservation outcomes led by Indigenous peoples and local communities, certified with blockchain and cryptographic verification, to channel financial incentives. The organization also develops AI models to enhance climate governance and ensure fair fund distribution. Key partners include the Youth Negotiators Academy, Oyà Institute, Ma Earth, and over 40 grassroots groups across Brazil's Amazonas region, such as Santa Helena do Inglês and Parque das Tribos, where it supports Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC).

## 21 ICCA Consortium

The **ICCA Consortium** (Indigenous Peoples and Community Conserved Territories and Areas Consortium) is a global association that supports the recognition and strengthening of Indigenous and community-conserved areas. Active across Amazonia, it collaborates with local partners to protect biodiversity, cultural heritage, and governance systems rooted in traditional stewardship. Its initiatives include emergency protocols and humanitarian campaigns, such as the “Let's Save the Amazon Rainforest” initiative, to address crises like wildfires and support affected communities. The Consortium also stands with Indigenous groups in legal actions against threats like oil exploitation, as seen in its work with Peru's Wampis Nation.

## 22 Innovate 4 Nature

The **Innovate 4 Nature** (I4N) Foundation identifies, supports, and scales innovative solutions to restore ecosystems and biodiversity, such as AI-powered biodiversity monitoring and digital monitoring, reporting, and verification systems (MRVs) to track and validate data related to the Amazon. Through its annual I4N Award, the foundation provides CHF 150,000 in financial and strategic support to foster innovation and collaboration. Backed by partners like the Wyss Academy for Nature, Fundes, the Givaudan Foundation, Business for Nature, and the Biodiversity Credit Alliance, I4N aims to catalyze over 100 nature-positive solutions by 2030.



## 23 NatureFinance

[NatureFinance](#) is a nonprofit think tank, solutions lab, and global catalyst that designs, tests, and scales financial tools and partnerships to align the global economy with the planet's boundaries. NatureFinance is supporting the nine Brazilian Amazon states to develop a pioneering interstate nature credits policy, transforming conservation in protected areas into a fiscal asset. These credits are quantified using a scientifically robust model that values ecological attributes like preserved hectares, maintained connectivity, and protected threatened species, providing a new income stream for the states. By attracting private capital from corporations and investors, it reduces budgetary pressure on the states, ensures long-term conservation, and creates a scalable model that values standing forests. Furthermore, NatureFinance also supports the "Financing the Bioeconomy in the Pan-Amazon" research that mapped 141 financial mechanisms across the region and is working with the city of Manaus to structure an Urban Biodiversity Credits pilot.

## 24 NTFP Foundation

In the Amazon rainforest, the [NTFP Foundation](#) (Non-Timber Forest Products) has launched Amazonel, a beekeeping initiative that produces honey from Melipona, a stingless bee species native to the region. By training local and Indigenous families as beekeepers, the foundation empowers them to become guardians of the forest, as beekeepers avoid burning down the forest and stop using pesticides to protect their bees. It has also financed the Casa do Mel honey processing facility near Manaus, helping to professionalize production and establish a fair-trade bioeconomy model. Today, Amazonel honey is ready for export, and NTFP is working to transfer the know-how developed in Brazil with other tropical regions around the world.

## 25 Restor

[Restor](#) is a nonprofit platform that empowers communities, organizations, and companies to monitor the ecological impact of their projects with transparency and precision. By offering high-resolution satellite imagery and science-based ecological indicators, Restor enables evidence-based decision-making and accountability, allowing users to track biodiversity, forest cover, carbon storage, and land-use change. In the Amazon, Restor delivers the world's most comprehensive, evolving biodiversity dataset to the largest global network of conservation and restoration projects. Key partners include the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, UN FAO, WWF, Suzano, UBS Optimus Foundation, Salesforce, Manulife, and the Observatório da Restauração e Reflorestamento.

## 26 Swisscontact

Founded in 1959 by Swiss companies, [Swisscontact](#) is a foundation for international development cooperation, active in the Amazon through two key initiatives. The first, "Collaboration Programme for the Competitiveness of the Tambopata Tourism Destination," strengthens sustainable tourism and forest conservation in Tambopata, Peru, through public-private coordination. The second, "Amazon Prosperity," advances agroforestry, inclusive value chains, and biodiversity protection to enhance livelihoods of small producers and Indigenous communities. Partners include the Wyss Academy for Nature and local governmental and private actors.

## 27 Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa

The [Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa](#) is a multi-stakeholder initiative that unites actors from the cocoa and chocolate industry, the public sector, NGOs, and research institutions to foster a sustainable and deforestation-free cocoa value chain. SWISSCO supports the "Sustainable Cocoa Sourcing Landscapes 2.0" project in San Martín, Peru, with the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) as the donor behind this contribution. Helvetas implements the project together with Peruvian partners. The project seeks to improve farmer livelihoods and halt deforestation by promoting diversified agroforestry systems and transparent collaboration across value chains. More broadly, SWISSCO works to promote sustainably managed and climate-resilient cocoa landscapes in the Amazon region and beyond. By bridging producers, exporters, manufacturers, and civil society, the initiative strengthens inclusive partnerships for responsible sourcing. Key project partners include Helvetas, Choba Choba, ECOM, HALBA, Lindt & Sprüngli, PRONATEC, Earthworm, FiBL, South Pole, Cocosource, and regional organizations in Peru.

## 28 UBS Optimus Foundation

In addition to UBS's commercial activities and the bank's partnership with Banco do Brasil to offer investment banking and institutional brokerage services in Brazil, the [UBS Optimus Foundation](#) has a number of on-the-ground projects in Brazil. For example, the UBS Optimus Foundation, along with several other partners, helped establish the Brazil NbS Investment Collaborative to bring together investors, innovators, project developers, and local communities, lining up scattered nature-based solutions projects into a powerful investment pipeline as part of Capital for Climate's broader NbS Investment Platform. Additionally, UBS Optimus Foundation provided early stage support along with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to design and prove the integrity framework and monitoring system for the HIFOR (High Integrity FOrEst) initiative in Brazil. These are only two examples of project based activities UBS Optimus Foundation has in Brazil.



## Companies

### 29 Capi Bara

Capi Bara, a brand of Swiss company Valuable Forests, works directly with smallholder farmers in the Peruvian Amazon to strengthen value chains for underutilized native fruits. It buys and sells exotic fruit purée to give a better income to small holders and to preserve these native crops in the Amazon. Capi Bara develops fruit pulp transformation and logistics processes, and partners with local agricultural agents to support agrobiodiversity and food resilience. It aims at connecting rural Amazonian communities to international markets, positioning biodiversity preservation as an engine of economic opportunity.

### 30 Clariant

Since 2021, Clariant advances a nature-positive bioeconomy through its acquisition of Beraca, a Brazilian manufacturer of natural ingredients for the personal care sector. With operations across Brazilian biomes, including the Amazonian forest, Beraca aims at creating sustainable cosmetic ingredients that generate positive socioeconomic and environmental impact, cultivating partnerships with local communities. Since 2000, it has done so through its Sociobiodiversity Enhancement Program, with over 14,000 families impacted, 1.83 million hectares enabled for organic production, 1,370 tons of waste diverted from landfills, and 220 training sessions conducted in local communities.

### 31 Lynx Technologies

In the Amazon, the startup Lynx Technologies partners with Brazilian biotech firm Seringô to strengthen traceability in non-timber forest product value chains. By integrating Swiss company Sicpa's smart-tag technology into its digital platform, the collaboration ensures supply-chain integrity, product authentication, and accountability, from forest producers to end consumers. Beyond its technological focus, the project connects traditional Amazonian communities with global compliance frameworks, enabling their sustainable products – such as rubber and açai – to meet international standards.

### 32 Nestlé

In the Amazon region's states of Pará and Rondônia, Nestlé works directly with over 1,400 farming families, providing training in agroforestry systems, crop productivity, and succession planning for cocoa farms. The Nestlé Cocoa Plan is part of a broader national effort: the state of Pará alone accounts for approximately 40% of Nestlé's cocoa purchases in Brazil. The company aims

to source 100% of its cocoa through responsible-sourcing programs. In 2025, Nestlé announced a partnership with reforestation startup re.green in Brazil and Zurich-based chocolatier Barry Callebaut, with the goal of planting 11 million trees across 8,000 hectares – areas where they source their key ingredients. This initiative seeks to restore ecosystems critical for cocoa and coffee production.

### 33 Precious Woods

Precious Woods is recognized as a global pioneer in sustainable tropical forestry. Since 1990, the company has promoted certified forest management and timber processing that protect biodiversity while generating long-term value for local communities. In the Brazilian Amazon, it manages approximately 500,000 hectares of natural forest under FSC and PEFC certification, ensuring the conservation of ecosystems and responsible resource use. Its operations also include a sawmill and a 9 MW cogeneration power plant producing renewable energy from wood residues, as well as reforestation services and forest carbon projects for third parties. A key partner is the International Tropical Timber Technical Association.

### 34 Sylvania

Sylvania aims to transform the planet's natural capital into an investable asset class that delivers competitive financial returns while generating measurable climate and biodiversity benefits. It is a flagship initiative of Mercuria, an independent energy and commodity trading group, which provided USD 500 million to establish its foundation. In the Amazon, Sylvania channels investment into critical ecosystems, supporting projects such as the J-REDD initiative in Tocantins, Brazil, an innovative public-private partnership promoting forest protection and sustainable agriculture. In addition, Sylvania co-founded Race to Belém, a high-profile campaign designed to mobilize billion-dollar private sector investment to safeguard Brazilian forests ahead of COP30. Across these efforts, the initiative collaborates with Brazilian states, Indigenous peoples, local and traditional communities, farmers, and the federal government.

### 35 The Journey Fund

The Journey Fund is a global fund-of-funds platform, incubated by Bridging Ventures and structurally supported by EBG Investment Solutions in Switzerland. It blends catalytic and commercial capital to turn high-impact opportunities in communities working toward a just transition into scalable, investable assets. Its core mission is to replace fossil fuel dependence with sustainable alternatives in regions advancing a just transition. Targeting emerging markets, The Journey Fund's first pilot launches in Latin America with a USD 200 million campaign. This investment supports



Colombian projects, such as bringing decentralized solar power to Amazonian communities. Specifically, the fund will deliver solar power to 50,000 people in the Amazonian regions of Mitú and Puerto Leguízamo, strengthening local economies and eliminating 38,000 tonnes of CO2 annually by cutting fossil fuel imports.

### 36 Xilva

[Xilva](#) builds investor confidence in forest and nature-based projects through advanced due diligence and monitoring. Its proprietary frameworks – Xilva GRADE, SCREEN, and MONITOR – combine data analytics and AI to assess project integrity and performance. In the Amazon, Xilva evaluates conservation, agroforestry, and reforestation projects for institutional investors, ensuring that investments meet the highest standards of environmental and social responsibility. It does this due-diligence work by using an integrated, standardized framework covering all aspects of a forest-based, nature-based solution.

### 37 Zurich Insurance Group

The [Zurich Insurance Group](#) is the main sponsor of Amazônia, Sebastião Salgado's acclaimed photo exhibition celebrating the Amazon rainforest, its landscapes, and Indigenous peoples. This sponsorship aligns with the Zurich Forest Project, a long-term partnership with Instituto Terra – founded by Lélia Wanick and Sebastião Salgado – which, since 2020, has supported reforestation, sustainable bioeconomy practices, and biodiversity restoration in Brazil's Atlantic Forest.

## Federal Entities

### 38 Embassy of Switzerland in Brazil

In the lead-up to COP30, the Embassy of Switzerland in Brazil launched the [Road to Belém](#) campaign with the support of [Presence Switzerland](#). Established in October 2023, this initiative brings together various activities of the Swiss network in Brazil – Swissnex, Swiss Business Hub, General Consulates – and the Regional Hub Lima of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation with the aim of promoting economic development and prosperity by identifying sustainable, shared, and innovative solutions.

In partnership with the Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi in Belém and Associação Artística Cultura Oswaldo Goeldi, the Embassy developed the exhibition “The Swiss-Brazilian Heritage in the Amazon: Art, Science and Sustainability,” which presents Switzerland's historic involvement in the Amazon, particularly that of Swiss naturalists who catalogued the fauna, flora, and territory

of this biome in the 19th century, most importantly Emílio Goeldi. The Embassy has also set up a public-private partnership with architecture firm Herzog & de Meuron and Brazilian stakeholders for the sustainable restoration of the historic house where Emílio Goeldi lived, on the Goeldi Museum's campus in Belém. The house is envisioned to become a center of exchange between scientific and traditional knowledge.

In addition, the Embassy supports a series of targeted social initiatives in the region, such as a project with the Vila da Barca Solidarity Association in a disadvantaged neighborhood of Belém that promotes Amazonian food culture, while supporting the economic independence of women through training in entrepreneurship, culinary techniques, digital marketing, and ancestral knowledge. The Golden Bicycles project fosters green mobility on the island of Cotijuba, off the coast of Belém. Finally, the project “Women are the lifeblood of agroecology,” carried out in the Belterra region, trained the local community in sustainable agricultural practices in order to strengthen the family economy and contribute to the protection of the forest.

### 39 Pro Helvetia

Through its South America office, [Pro Helvetia](#) supports projects that explore the intersection of art, ecology, and Indigenous knowledge across the Amazon region. One of these initiatives, “Fungi Cosmology: Dialogue between Art and Science,” launched in partnership with Swissnex in Brazil, brought together Swiss and Brazilian artists and scientists, blending ecological research with artistic experimentation. Other Amazon-focused projects include a collaboration between Swiss drag artist Soya The Cow and Belém-based drag artist Uhura Bqueer, or “the Amazonian Panther,” which connects artistic expression with environmental awareness. “Amazonia Revisited,” developed in collaboration with the Contemporary Music Cycle in Salvador, Brazil, explores Amazonian sound archives and cultural memory, reinterpreting the region's biodiversity through sound art. Swiss designer and artist Alex Amir Khan works with Brazilian startup Da Tribu to investigate the potential of wild Amazonian rubber (*Hevea brasiliensis*). The project serves as an interface for intercultural and transcultural exchange, focusing on the artistic, investigative, and experimental aspects of rubber. Finally, Guerreiro do Divino Amor, a Swiss-Brazilian artist who represented Switzerland at the 2024 Venice Biennale, is working on a project supported by Pro Helvetia in the Amazon.

### 40 REPIC

In the Amazon region, [REPIC](#) (Renewable Energy, Energy and Resource Efficiency Promotion in International Cooperation) supports initiatives to foster circular economy and clean-energy systems while empowering local communities. The flagship project,



Fair Recycling Brazil, developed with Stiftung Fair Recycling and the Inclusive Waste Recycling Consortium (iWrc), expands the iWrc University digital learning platform for waste collectors and recycling cooperatives in Brazil. This initiative connects large companies with socially responsible cooperatives, formalizes informal recycling sectors, and enhances resource efficiency across Amazonian cities. REPIC, a Swiss government platform promoting renewable energy, aims to transfer Swiss knowledge abroad, where it can have the greatest impact.

## 41 State Secretariat for Economic Affairs

The [State Secretariat for Economic Affairs](#) (SECO) finances Switzerland's participation in the Amazon Fund managed by the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES). Established in 2008, the Amazon Fund supports efforts to prevent deforestation and foster sustainable development in the Amazon, and is widely regarded as one of the world's leading mechanisms for protecting tropical forests. Switzerland renewed its commitment for another three years in 2025, with a ceremony held at COP30. SECO also contributes to the Inter-American Development Bank's Bioeconomy and Forest Management Fund in the Amazon.

In addition, Brazil benefits from other sustainability-related multilateral initiatives supported by Switzerland, including the Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) of the World Bank. SECO is also part of relevant initiatives such as UNDP's Green Commodities Programme and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

## 42 Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) [Regional Hub Lima](#) focuses on disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change, and water issues. Its goal is to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and communities and promote regional exchanges and transboundary cooperation. Through its FiRe (Strengthening Resilience to Forest Fire Risk) initiative, the SDC supports governments in Andean-Amazonian countries by enhancing response systems and information management to better manage and prevent forest fires. Additionally, the hub contributes to international efforts to restore forests and landscape, conserve biodiversity and improve livelihoods in countries such as Brazil, Colombia, and Peru, among others.

## 43 Swiss Network for International Studies

The [Swiss Network for International Studies](#) (SNIS) promotes dialogue between science, international organizations, and civil society to address global

challenges. In the Amazon region, it supports the project "Early Warning System for Vector-Borne Diseases," which aims to develop a real-time monitoring system to assess the parasitic load of mosquitoes and provide early alerts to prevent infections such as malaria and dengue. Originally focused on Colombia, the initiative is expanding to cover the broader Amazon region through a knowledge partnership with ETH Zurich.

## 44 Swissnex

Swissnex is the Swiss global network connecting Switzerland and the world in education, research, innovation, and the arts. Through its annual program nexBio Amazônia, [Swissnex in Brazil](#) brings together researchers and startup entrepreneurs from Switzerland and Brazil for a two-week immersion into the Amazon bioeconomy, fostering co-creation at the intersection of biodiversity and traditional knowledge. nexBio Amazônia is a partnership with the Leading House Latin America (University of St.Gallen) and the Brazilian National Council of State Funding Agencies (Confap).

From Brazil, Swissnex also launched the Planetary Embassy, a series of pop-up experiences exploring the idea of "planetary diplomacy" across the global Swissnex network, as part of the Swissnex for the Planet initiative. For COP30 in Belém, Swissnex created a Planetary Embassy pavilion in the zoo and botanical park of the Goeldi Museum, with the support of [Presence Switzerland](#), as part of the Road to Belém program led by the Embassy of Switzerland in Brazil. The pavilion was designed to serve as a novel diplomatic space bringing together Amazonian voices and global climate solutions.

Over the years, Swissnex has implemented a range of Amazon-related projects, including high-level events at the House of Switzerland in Davos during the World Economic Forum, collaborations with ETH Zurich's BiodivX initiative to survey Amazon rainforest biodiversity, and "Fungi Cosmology," a program connecting Swiss researchers and artists with Amazonian partners to explore biodiversity, ecology, and the interplay between traditional and scientific knowledge. Swissnex is an initiative of the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and is part of the Swiss Confederation's network abroad managed by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).



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## Report by Swissnex in Brazil

Disclaimer: This report does not claim to capture every Swiss-based initiative connected to Amazonia. It is a living document designed to grow and improve over time. If your work is not yet included or you have suggestions, we invite you to contact Vincent Neumann.

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