



BIOREDD+

Investing in Conservation and Improved Livelihoods in Colombia



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INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN COLOMBIA:

+ One of the fastest growing economies in the region (4.3% GDP growth last year); in 2013 alone foreign investment amounted to almost US\$ 17 billion.

NUMBER OF REDD+ PROJECTS: 8

+ **TOTAL AREA:** Over 700,000 hectares.

PROJECT OWNERS:

+ 20 Afro-Colombian community councils and indigenous cabildos with constitutionally guaranteed land tenure, home to over 8,000 families and more than 40,000 people.

TOTAL EMISSION REDUCTION POTENTIAL:

+ More than 2 MtCO₂e per year from avoided deforestation and degradation, as well as regeneration of forests.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BENEFITS:

+ Strengthened local institutions, governance and capacity for effective participation, equitable benefit sharing, and preservation of cultural values.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS:

+ Improved livelihoods via investments in non-traditional economic activities such as the development of value-chains for agroforestry crops (e.g., acai, cacao, annatto and coconut), artisanal fishing, and ecotourism.

BIODIVERSITY BENEFITS:

+ Protection of the Chocó Biogeographic Region - one of the world's 10 "biodiversity hotspots" with ecological zones ranging from upland humid tropical forests to coastal estuaries, including a RAMSAR site, mangroves and habitat for a host of endangered flora and fauna (IUCN).

STANDARDS AND METHODOLOGY:

+ All projects will be validated under the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance and Verified Carbon Standard (VM0006 modified for new MRV tools) – Gold Level.

MAIN PARTNERS:

+ Afro-Colombian Community Councils and Indigenous Cabildos; United States Agency for International Development (USAID) – Colombia; USAID Development Credit Authority (DCA); Althelia Climate Fund (ACF); *Fondo para la Acción Ambiental y la Niñez (Fondo Acción)*.



The USAID/BIOREDD+ PROGRAM

BIOREDD+ is the flagship environmental program of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Colombia. This US\$ 27.9 million program is designed to strengthen Colombian capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, protect biodiversity and support the development of remote, impoverished communities. The development of REDD+ projects is a key element of the Program, which seeks to promote sustainable livelihoods compatible with forest conservation. The USAID/BIOREDD+ Program is developing a portfolio of 8 REDD+ projects in the Colombian Pacific to be validated under the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) and the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS). The projects are located in four geographic nodes covering over 700,000 hectares.





OUTSTANDING BIODIVERSITY ATTRIBUTES

Part of the Chocó Biogeographic corridor, one of the 10 world's "mega-diverse hotspots".

The region is home to 9,000 species of vascular plants, 200 mammals, 600 birds, 100 reptiles, and 120 amphibians, many of which are endemic to Colombia.

The Chocó is characterized by a variety of ecosystems, transitioning from coastal estuaries, mangroves and wetlands to upland humid tropical forest, cloud forest and highland *paramo*.

The area contains abundant wetlands, including RAMSAR sites and over 40,000 ha of mangrove.

REDD+ investments will support the protection of species listed by IUCN as endangered such as tamarins, sloths, eagles (*Spizaetus isidori*), poison dart frogs (*Ranitomeya minuta*, *altobueyensis*), crocodiles (*Caiman crocodylus*), otters (*Lontralongicauda*) and the spider monkey.

Protection of endangered tree species such as *guayacan*, *nispero* and *roble*.

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

The Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities in the Pacific region have traditions and livelihoods that reflect a long and profound interaction with their natural environment. Through centuries of experimentation and learning they have accumulated a wealth of knowledge and developed strategies to meet their physical, cultural and spiritual needs. However, expanding populations and increased interaction with broader Colombian society have exerted additional pressure on the region's fragile resource base with increased extraction of timber and conversion of forests to less sustainable land uses. This has led to a search for more sustainable development paths, which contribute to the conservation and restoration of ancestral forests while strengthening the culture and governance capacity of ethnic communities. They have identified REDD+ as one such option.

USAID/BIOREDD+ PORTFOLIO

REDD+ activities are currently being developed jointly with 20 Afro-Colombian Councils and Indigenous Cabildos.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE COLOMBIAN PACIFIC

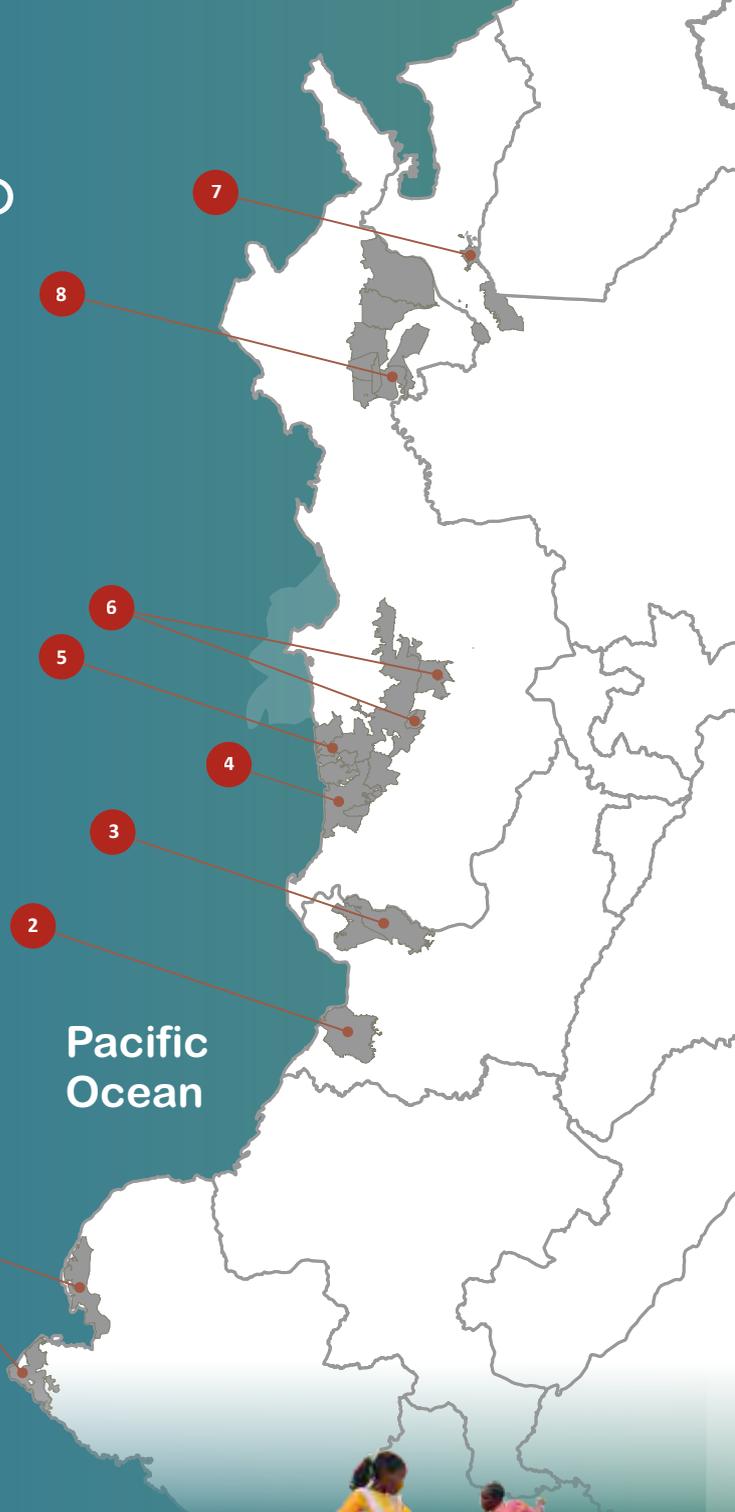
Largely occupied and owned by ethnic Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities, organized in collective, autonomous territories.

Project areas belong to local communities, who have inhabited the region for centuries and have clear title to their lands as established by the 1991 Constitution and regulated later by Law 70 of 1993, which also governs ownership and administration of forests.

The Department of Chocó ranks first in Colombia's poverty index with 79% of people having unsatisfied basic needs and 32% living in extreme poverty.

Coverage and access to basic services such as drinking water, sanitation, health care, education and energy is very limited.

The region has significant untapped development potential.



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DISTRIBUTION OF USAID BIOREDD+ PROGRAM PROJECTS

NODE	Municipality	REDD+	Community	Hectares	Families	Carbon Potential (tCO ₂ eq/y)
Tumaco Node	Tumaco	1	CC Bajo Mira y Frontera	46.482	1.240	183.824
	Francisco Pizarro		CC Acapa	94.388	1.453	216.306
Buenaventura Node	Buenaventura	2	CC Cajambre	75.710	1.497	256,923
		3	CC Bajo Calima	104.761	801	403,485
			CC Bahía Málaga-La Plata			
Chocó Sur Node	Bajo Baudó /Litoral del San Juan	4	CC Concosta	73.034	829	240.375
	Bajo Baudó	5	CC Pizarro	59.887	595	165.108
			CC San Andrés de Usaragá			
			CC Sivirú			
			CC Río Piliza			
	Medio Baudó / Cantón de San Pablo	6	CC Río Pepé	44.859	1.257	21.206
CC Acaba						
Urabá - Darién Node	Riosucio	7	RI Chontadural Cañero (Emberá Katío)	57.702	432	99.005
			RI Polines (Emberá Katío)			
			RI Yaberaradó (Emberá Katío)			
			RI Jaikerazavi (Emberá Katío)			
	Chigorodó / Mutatá	8	CC Chicao	143.313	221	381.892
			CC Apartadó - Buenavista			
			CC La Madre			
			CC Río Montaña			
			CC Vigía de Curvaradó y Santa Rosa de Limón			
			CC Río Domingodó			
TOTAL				669.048	8.325	1.780.116

CC = Afro-Colombian Council
RI = Indigenous Reserve

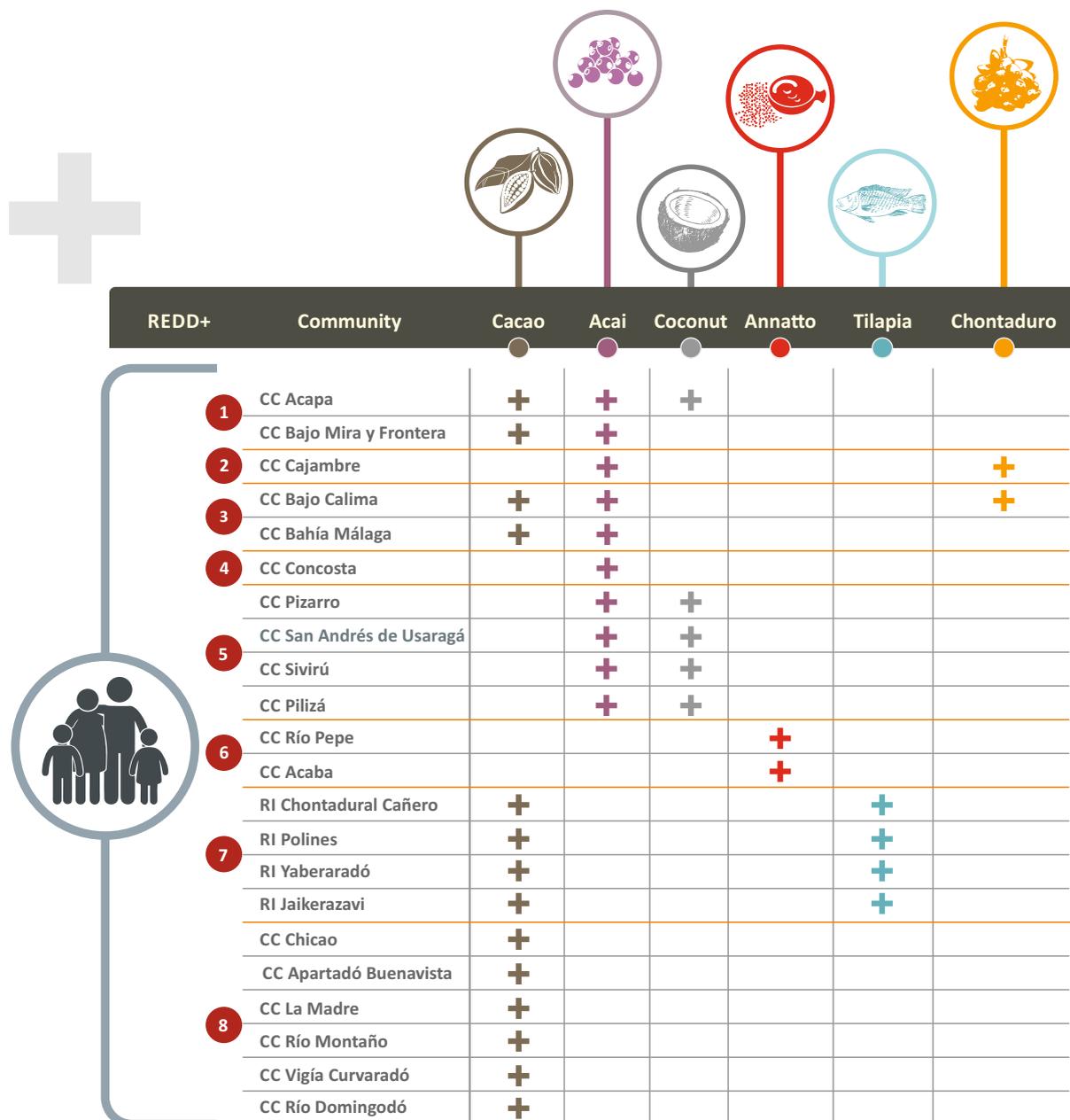
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BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH REDD+

8

The REDD+ projects being developed by the USAID/BIOREDD+ Program are designed to tackle forest degradation and deforestation, which arise largely from selective, illegal logging and the conversion of forests to agriculture and livestock. Through investments in alternative economic development options, as well as forest protection and governance activities, local communities are empowered to support biodiversity conservation and forest protection commitments.

The USAID/BIOREDD+ Program supports the REDD+ development process up to pre-validation, including an awareness-raising, information sharing and consultation process with local communities, building the biomass and carbon baseline and reference scenarios, developing the proper methodological tools to allow for carbon accounting, and undertaking feasibility studies and business planning to underpin pilot productive activities. Investors can co-finance project implementation via carbon reduction purchases and/or participation in value-chain development. Additionally, thanks to a USAID Development Credit Authority (DCA) facility, up to 50% of funds invested in REDD+ projects under USAID/BIOREDD+ can benefit from this US government-sponsored credit guarantee.



FREE PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT

The Colombian Pacific is largely occupied and owned by ethnic Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities, organized in collective territories, with land titles and property rights recognized and protected by Colombian constitutional law. This is an enormous advantage when compared to other countries in the region and beyond. Where outside interventions in collective territories are planned or proposed, the Colombian law requires a formal process of “prior consultation” and consent with Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities. REDD+ is considered a sustainable development option promoted and sustained from within the communities themselves. Thus, Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) criteria are met precisely by the free and unfettered participation of the communities in the REDD+ projects proposed, which follows a thorough process of internal consultation and community approval, according to communities’ own institutional governance structure and by-laws. The USAID/BIOREDD+ Program is supporting a broad process of awareness-raising, information sharing and consultation to ensure that communities understand the potential benefits and rewards as well as responsibilities and risks that can flow from their commitments under REDD+.

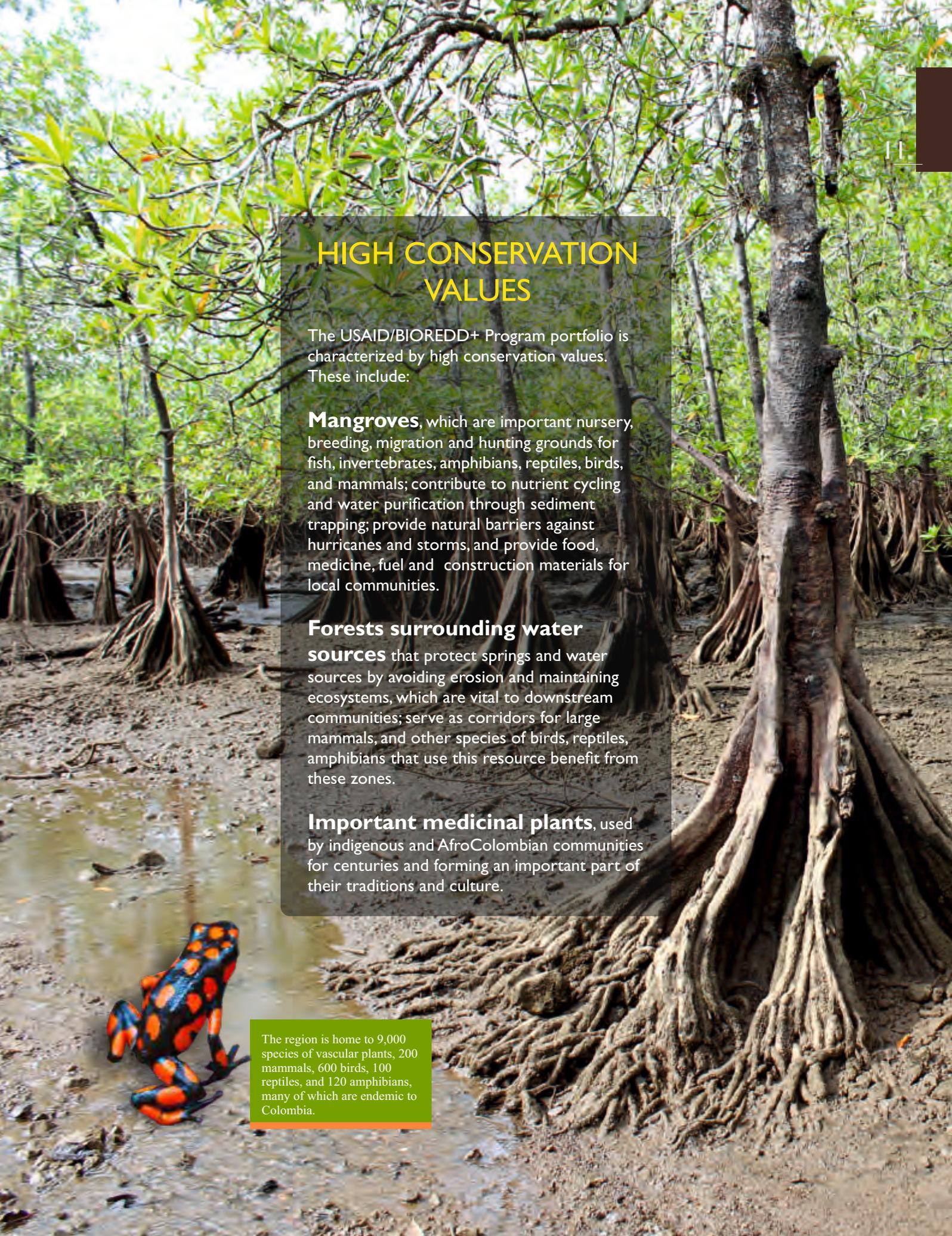
A woman with a blue braided headwrap and a colorful striped shirt is smiling and looking towards the camera. She is standing in a lush green field, possibly a coffee plantation, with her hand resting on a branch. The background is filled with dense green foliage.

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INNOVATION IN CARBON MAPPING

Technology and science play a key role in project development. The USAID/BIOREDD+ Program is built on a state-of-the-art approach, which consists of combining field data with LIDAR and SAR remote sensing information. This work is being led by the renowned NASA scientist Dr. Sassan Saatchi. His work will ensure first-rate carbon accounting with high confidence levels to permit the tracking of carbon stocks resulting from avoided degradation and deforestation, as well as carbon capture as forests regenerate over time. Analyses of LIDAR and SAR data are complemented by permanent and temporary forest inventory plots, and by the development of local allometric functions specific to Pacific forests. Industry leader, Terra Global Capital, assessed BIORREDD+ 's methodological approach to ensure full consistency with VCS and CCBA. New methodological tools for remote sensing will be incorporated into VCS Methodology 0006. USAID/BIOREDD+ is working with EcoPartners to develop all Project Documents using the combined VCS – CCB Standard format. Work on setting the carbon baseline and MRV and other complementary studies on deforestation and degradation drivers is underway.

The area contains abundant wetlands, including RAMSAR sites and over 230,000 ha of mangrove.



HIGH CONSERVATION VALUES

The USAID/BIOREDD+ Program portfolio is characterized by high conservation values. These include:

Mangroves, which are important nursery, breeding, migration and hunting grounds for fish, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals; contribute to nutrient cycling and water purification through sediment trapping; provide natural barriers against hurricanes and storms, and provide food, medicine, fuel and construction materials for local communities.

Forests surrounding water sources that protect springs and water sources by avoiding erosion and maintaining ecosystems, which are vital to downstream communities; serve as corridors for large mammals, and other species of birds, reptiles, amphibians that use this resource benefit from these zones.

Important medicinal plants, used by indigenous and AfroColombian communities for centuries and forming an important part of their traditions and culture.

The region is home to 9,000 species of vascular plants, 200 mammals, 600 birds, 100 reptiles, and 120 amphibians, many of which are endemic to Colombia.

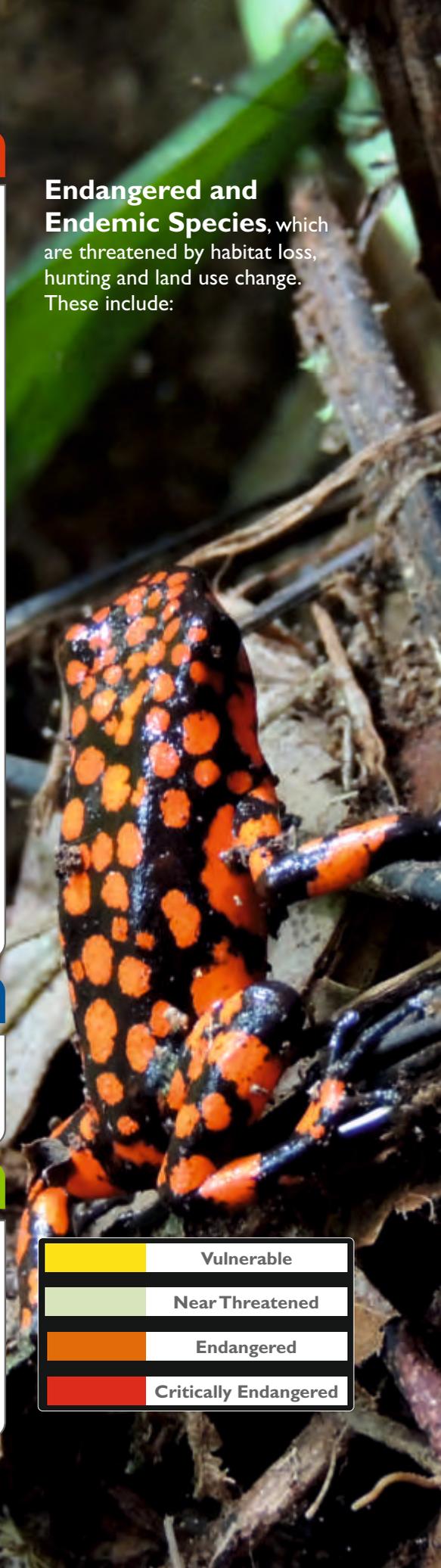
Birds	Common Name	IUCN Status
<i>Campephilus gayaquilensis</i>	Guayaquil Woodpecker	Near Threatened
<i>Capito quinticolor</i>	Five-colored barbet	Vulnerable
<i>Capito squamatus</i>	Orange-fronted barbet	Near Threatened
<i>Cephalopterus penduliger</i>	Long-wattled umbrellabird	Vulnerable
<i>Chaetocercus bombus</i>	Little woodstar	Vulnerable
<i>Leucopternis plumbeus</i>	Plumbeous hawk	Near Threatened
<i>Micrastur plumbeus</i>	Plumbeous forest falcon	Vulnerable
<i>Nyctiphrynus rosenbergi</i>	Choco Nightjar	Near Threatened
<i>Penelope ortonii</i>	Baudo guan	Endangered
<i>Pittasoma rufopileatum</i>	Rufous crowned-Antpitta	Near Threatened
<i>Tangara johannae</i>	Blue-whiskered tanager	Near Threatened
<i>Veniliornis chocoensis</i>	Choco Woodpecker	Near Threatened

Mammals	Common Name	IUCN Status
<i>Ateles fusciceps</i>	Brown headed spider monkey	Critically Endangered
<i>Choeroniscus periosus</i>	Long - tailed bat	Vulnerable

Amphibians	Common Name	IUCN Status
<i>Ranitomeya viridis</i>	Green poison frog	Vulnerable
<i>Phyllobates bicolor</i>	Black legged dart frog	Near Threatened
<i>Atelopus spurrelli</i>	Harlequin frog	Vulnerable
<i>Ranitomeya altobueyensis</i>	Dendrobates frog	Vulnerable

Endangered and Endemic Species, which are threatened by habitat loss, hunting and land use change. These include:

Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Near Threatened	Near Threatened
Endangered	Endangered
Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered



Investment Opportunities in the USAID/BIOREDD+ Projects

USAID/BIOREDD+ offers an unparalleled opportunity to invest in Colombia, in any of the 8 REDD+ projects of its portfolio and/or in any of the businesses ventures associated with the development of strategic value-chains. Carbon assets are backed by state-of-the-art technology and leading international carbon companies. Businesses are built upon local experience, community natural resource endowment and market potential. A number of high-potential value chains are being developed to support livelihoods, enhance incomes and create jobs. The following criteria are key:

- + Products and services adapted to local ecological conditions.
- + Compatibility with biodiversity conservation and alleviating pressure on forests.
- + High value/low volume products with low perishability to meet logistical realities.
- + Solid domestic and potential international market demand.
- + Attractive rates of return.
- + Potential to scale up and add value with simplified, low input production chains.
- + Natural raw materials, readily at-hand or available in the near-term.



IMPLEMENTING AGENT

Fondo Acción is one of the main partners of the USAID/BIOREDD+ Program, and will act as project manager and implementer as authorized by the Project Owners to administer investments, resources and proceeds, and implement associated project activities.

It is a Colombian non-profit, private foundation. The Fund was established in 2000 under a framework agreement between the governments of Colombia and the United States of America. The Fund's Board of Directors is composed of eight members representing the private sector and civil society, the Colombian government, and the US government (represented by the USAID Mission in Colombia). *Fondo Acción* has a solid track record in financial administration, program management and conservation finance, which includes the creation and management of endowments, sinking and revolving funds and the design of innovative financial mechanisms for conservation and sustainable development.

Fondo Acción's current role in REDD+ projects in Colombia includes: (1) Fiduciary and management services; (2) Capacity building and coaching of local leaders and teams in forest-dwelling communities that own REDD+ projects; (3) Design and implementation of Benefit Sharing Mechanisms.

For more details visit:

www.bioredd.org/projects

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With a firm commitment by communities, USAID support and a top-notch in-country team, application of cutting-edge technologies, and access to the new DCA risk-sharing mechanism, investing in the USAID/BIOREDD+ Program projects provides an unbeatable opportunity for mitigating climate change, protecting one of the most biologically diverse areas of the planet and fostering the development of Colombia's Pacific Coast communities.

For more information about the **USAID BIOREDD+ Program**, or to learn more about individual REDD+ projects and how you can invest contact:

Daniel López
dlopez@usaid.gov



Luz Abusaid
labusaid@bioredd.org



Jose Luis Gomez
joselgomez@fondoaccion.org



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