

# UNDERSTANDING GENDER DYNAMICS, DEFORESTATION AND WOMEN RIGHTS IN THE AMAZON REGION

Photo: FODS

Deforestation and nature degradation affects all life in the Amazon rainforest, from fish to birds and from fungi to mammals. Throughout the Amazon region, the way of life of Indigenous peoples and local communities is also threatened by deforestation, pollution and the violation of human rights. Related activities, such as mining, affect women and men differently. How does deforestation influence gender dynamics? And what obstacles encounter women environmental defenders? In a forthcoming report, IUCN NL will analyse gender dynamics and the obstacles women environmental defenders encounter, based on studies conducted in Colombia and Peru.



## Women environmental defenders

Women defenders, often on the frontline of nature conservation, encounter systemic obstacles exacerbating the dynamics that put them in a vulnerable position, such as socio-economic inequalities and cultural norms that marginalise their voices.

A field study conducted in Madre de Dios in Peru, reveals these systemic obstacles faced by women environmental defenders in their efforts to protect nature and safeguard their territories.

The study includes a detailed analysis of legal and administrative barriers, as these are a major obstacle for women in exercising their rights. It also elaborates on the various forms of violence women in Madre de Dios endure, including:

- obstruction of freedom of movement and autonomy
- environmental violence
- criminalisation
- moral violence
- physical and sexual violence
- psychological violence
- violence against youth and children.



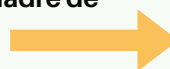
**By combining field data from the Colombian and Peruvian Amazon, we have developed a deeper understanding of gender dynamics in the Amazon region.**

Liliana Jauregui,  
Senior Expert Environmental Justice at IUCN NL

## PIDDA: Inclusive protection of defenders

These different types of violence, which are deeply interconnected, underscore the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to protect women defenders and their territories. The PIDDA project, supported by AFD, aims to strengthen Peru's protection system for environmental human rights defenders, applying a gender and intercultural approach.

Read more about the study in Madre de Dios.





## Gender dynamics and deforestation

In another study, we analysed the role of women in the context of deforestation in the Colombian Amazon. Applying critical feminist geography and intersectional approaches, this study focused on power relationships affecting forested territories based on social inequalities related to gender, ethnicity and age. Due to the dominant roles of men in businesses and activities related to deforestation, they dominate the economic dynamics and public spaces. This leads to unsafe areas for women and a range of different types of gender violence.

Because women bear the brunt of care labour, they have a close connection with their natural environment. Its degradation affects women disproportionately: they feel it directly in their bodies.



## Amazon rights in focus

Together with our partner organisations and supported by NORAD, we aim to tackle forest crime and improve the territorial rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities in the Colombian Amazon.

# Understanding gender dynamics and deforestation in the Colombian Amazon

In the Colombian Amazon, deforestation and destructive (illegal) activities affect women differently than men. Water scarcity and pollution, for example, exacerbate the already existing power imbalances. Women find themselves in a vicious circle affecting their rights, security and well-being.



Understanding the dynamic of gender and deforestation contributes to breaking the cycle.



Read more about the study in Colombia.

