FOREST GUARDIANS INVEST

Connecting Private Finance to Indigenous Bioeconomies

UNDP

The Offer: A rights-based UN-hosted platform to drive global private finance to Indigenous-led forest conservation and bioeconomy solutions.

THE CHALLENGE:

Tropical forests represent the most crucial ecosystem for complementary action on climate, biodiversity, and sustainable land management.

Private companies, impact investors, and philanthropies are increasingly willing to finance the planetary commons through direct engagement with Indigenous Peoples, but lack reliable mechanisms to do so efficiently, at scale, and in compliance with the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous Peoples steward one third of the world's tropical forests but receive little political and finance support for this key role. The latest climate summits have accordingly issued international calls and pledges for Indigenous peoples' access to forest tenure rights and finance flows.

THE SOLUTION:

BUILD A PORTFOLIO

of investment-ready, Indigenous-led bioeconomy proposals in forest territories, with demonstrated climate, biodiversity and economic outcomes.

FACILITATE FINANCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

between Indigenous Peoples and private companies to achieve climate & biodiversity goals, in compliance with human rights and international ESG standards.

KNOWLEDGE AND SCALE

private investments in Indigenous-led conservation & bioeconomy proposals, ensuring they deliver the agreed environmental and economic services, shifting the narrative, collecting lessons, and identifying pathways for scaling up.

VALUE PROPOSITION:

For private companies, investors and philanthropies:

1. Access to a curated, vetted pipeline of Indigenous-led forest conservation and bioeconomy solutions that are economically sound and environmentally measurable.
2. Facilitated partnerships with Indigenous organizations with due compliance on Indigenous peoples' rights and provisions for measuring and reporting climate and biodiversity impact.
3. Cross-cultural mediation and management of ESG, legal and reputational risks.
4. Join a cutting-edge global community of practice that connects private finance with the planetary commons and social equity with Indigenous Peoples.

For Indigenous Peoples:

1. A trusted gateway for direct access to international financiers and commercial markets, with due respect to political, territorial and economic rights.
2. Technical advice to prepare investment-ready proposals to implement self-determined Life Plans.
3. Support to become innovators and entrepreneurs for the Planet.

Proof of Concept: UNDP has implemented a pilot version of the Accelerator in 2024-2025, with successful financial partnerships such as:

Lavazza company:

Deforestation-free coffee sourced from diverse Indigenous communities from Ecuador.

Lavazza Foundation:

Investing in community and school water provision in Indigenous communities in the Amazon that produce deforestation-free coffee.

Rurban:

Connecting Indigenous artisans in Ecuador to global fashion brands.

Sacred Forests and Rituals:

Financing of a pilot project of the Arhuaco people (Colombia) for the protection, restoration, and sustainable use of their forests, facilitated by Sacred Forests. This pilot was honored with the 2024 UNDP Equator Prize. As a result of this success, Rituals announced a 10% Profit Pledge committing to forest conservation for the future.

Amazon Investor Coalition:

Grants made to Indigenous business incubators in the Amazon.

How it works:

- Hosted and managed by **UNDP**, under the UNDP Climate Promise, led by the UNDP Climate & Forests team, in cooperation with UNDP country offices, the UNDP Local Action hub, and the Small Grants Programme.
- **Funding** (under scoping): Public donors, private partnership fees, philanthropic donations.
- Guided by a gender-balanced, multi-stakeholder **Advisory Council**, composed of Indigenous peoples and entrepreneurs as well as environmental champions from private companies and philanthropic networks.
- UNDP applies robust social, environmental, governance and fiduciary safeguards.

How to join:

Private companies, investors and philanthropies can join the Accelerator to get tailored support to scope and build financial partnerships with Indigenous organizations towards climate, biodiversity and sustainable trade targets.

A **financial contribution** is encouraged.

UNDP will carry out a **due-diligence** process.

A letter of intent will define the scope of the cooperation and the services of the Accelerator, with anticipated results and timelines.

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