

# Building on Two Decades of Impact

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“ARPA Communities is here to innovate the governance model of our territories. It brings the possibility of a sustainable development model that guarantees access to land and a better quality of life for its people. From the moment communities play a leadership role - participating in decision making and implementation - we will create stronger, more transparent, and active governance. I have no doubt that ARPA Communities will be a transformative instrument that will strengthen sustainable extractive production, valuing our traditions, and contributing to the preservation of our Amazon rainforest.”

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Julio Barbosa, president of the National Council of Extractivist Populations

Rogério Barros, young extractive leader and son of Raimundão Barros, at the Chico Mendes extractive reserve. Resex, Acre  
© Christian Braga / WWF-Brazil

The Amazon is one of Earth's greatest natural treasures. It shelters one in every 10 known species, from dazzling birds to towering rainforest giants. But it's more than a biodiversity hot spot; the Brazilian Amazon stores vast amounts of carbon, helping to stabilize the planet's climate. It's also home to more than 40 million people, whose cultures, traditions, and daily lives are deeply tied to the forest's bounty.

On November 17, 2025, the government of Brazil and a partnership of community, public, and private partners expanded their commitment to conserving the Amazon with the launch of a new initiative - ARPA Comunidades (ARPA Communities).

Over 15 years, ARPA Comunidades will benefit more than 130,000 people and reduce deforestation pressure in 60 sustainable-use protected areas spanning 23.7 million hectares, an area twice the size of Ohio. The launch of this major community-centered nature finance initiative cements local leadership, sustainable livelihoods, and broad partnerships as essential to the durable protection of the Amazon and its role in the planet's health.

ARPA Comunidades builds on two decades of impact through the Amazon Region Protected Areas (ARPA) program - the world's largest tropical forest conservation initiative - which has created over 27 million hectares and improved the management of 120 Brazilian protected areas, resulting in an estimated 104 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions avoided. ARPA Comunidades will support the creation of 3 million hectares of new protected areas, improving biodiversity conservation and reducing deforestation in this critical global ecosystem while strengthening natural resource management in ARPA's existing sustainable-use areas. ARPA Comunidades is supported by a U.S.\$120 million, 15-year donor sinking fund managed by FUNBIO.

To achieve the program's ambitious outcomes, ARPA Comunidades will support around 130 community organizations that focus on helping individuals safeguard their territorial rights, improving access to public policies and services, identifying opportunities for environmentally friendly livelihoods, strengthening local food security, supporting women and youth, and improving communities' resilience to the impacts of climate change.

A Brazilian study explored the link between poverty reduction and deforestation in the Amazon region and found that for every 100 people taken out of poverty, the rainforest avoided close to 25 hectares of deforestation during an eight-year period. For vulnerable populations facing food insecurity and limited access to economic opportunities, illegal activities linked to deforestation may be a last resort.

The key innovation in ARPA Comunidades addresses economic vulnerability using the concept of socio-bioeconomy, which refers to community-led, sustainable economic development activities, like nut, fruit pulp and honey production, handicrafts, fishing, and tourism. ARPA Comunidades will support communities in generating diversified incomes and creating opportunities for future generations to protect the rainforest in the face of encroaching threats.

These activities in ARPA protected areas have the potential to generate U.S.\$95–132 million in annual revenue that can directly benefit over 130,000 people living in these areas, with the potential to lift 100,000 people out of poverty.



Collecting a bowl of Açaí, Ilha Marajó, Amazon, Brasil ©Adobe

ARPA Comunidades will also accelerate the implementation of public programs that aim to expand energy access in the Amazon and provide training on renewable energy system operation and maintenance, so communities aren't reliant on distant partners for technical support. Communities will gain access to the electrical grid, renewable energy, and internet services, benefitting 77,000 people living in protected areas supported by ARPA. This will replace costly and polluting diesel generators with clean, local renewable sources like solar, hydro, biomass, and wind, and provide reliable electricity to underserved communities, enhancing livelihoods and enabling durable development.

ARPA Comunidades is building a future in which community prosperity and nature protection sustain a living Amazon. It demonstrates that community leadership and forest-friendly livelihoods are essential for long-term conservation success. It establishes a conservation model for the Amazon and beyond that establishes resilient systems of protected areas while providing economic opportunities for local communities.



Box with native Canudo bees for honey production in a meliponary in the São Francisco community, Pará, Brazil © WWF/Tatiana Cardeal

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“Traditional peoples and communities, with their ways of life and knowledge passed down through generations, are essential to addressing climate change. ARPA Communities seeks to strengthen their organizations, support the management of their territories, generate sustainable income for extractive populations based on socio-bioeconomy chains, and expand access to energy and connectivity to boost their ventures. This joint effort by the Brazilian government and partners demonstrates that cooperation, solidarity, and co-design are effective paths to public policies that value those who protect our ecosystems.”

Marina Silva, Brazilian Minister of Environment and Climate Change



Marina Silva, Brazilian Minister of Environment and Climate Change, speaking at the ARPA Comunidades launch event at COP30. Belem, Brazil © Nay Jinkns / WWF-Brazil