



THE AMAZON WE WANT

Science Panel for the Amazon

Statement on the Occasion of the 9th Summit of the Americas

June 8, 2022

NEW YORK, JUNE 8 2022 | From June 6 to 10, 2022, leaders from across the region gathered in Los Angeles, USA, for the 9th Summit of the Americas. This occasion represents an opportunity for countries of the Americas to reiterate our shared values and vision for a peaceful, sustainable, and inclusive region, and reaffirm our commitment to uphold the human rights of all, promote the rule of law, and accelerate conservation efforts to protect our natural resources and the well-being of our societies.

The Science Panel for the Amazon (SPA) calls upon leaders at the summit to act urgently and ambitiously to conserve the Amazon basin, which represents an incredible share of our human and natural heritage. The Amazon provides critical ecosystem services, including rainfall and climate stability, carbon storage, and removal. However, increased exploitation and accelerating deforestation and forest degradation threaten to push the Amazon past a tipping point beyond which recovery may be impossible. The Panel's [2021 Amazon Assessment Report](#) calls for an immediate deforestation and forest degradation moratorium in areas nearing tipping points over all southern and southeastern Amazon and zero deforestation and forest degradation in the entire Amazon region before 2030, with a massive investment in ecosystem restoration and in science, technology, and innovation to create a large-scale "Reforestation Belt" across Amazonian countries to preserve the Amazon rainforest and combat the climate emergency. This will require government policies and commitments, corporate action to eliminate deforestation and forest degradation from supply chains, and the work of civil society organizations and responsible leadership from our policy makers.

Equally important is the need to recognize and value the irreplaceable role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the defense of their traditional territories and the conservation of natural ecosystems. The SPA report shows unequivocally that Indigenous territories have the lowest levels of deforestation but currently are under increasing pressure from extractive industries. Some of the countries in the Americas also face the highest rates of homicide among human rights activists and environmental advocates, and strengthening the rule of law, justice, and commitments to peace is critical in achieving the sustainable development goals and greater prosperity.

The SPA also recommends that substantial financial resources be mobilized to advance sustainable pathways for the Amazon, including the implementation of a healthy standing forests and flowing rivers bioeconomy. This includes significant investment in science, innovation, and technology, to increase capacity for research and development of new products and processes and the organization of fair markets. This offers an opportunity for all countries to work together on joint research initiatives, training the next generation of entrepreneurs through fellowships and exchange programs, and building skills and competencies of Amazonian institutions. This will strengthen the economy across the Americas, increase competitiveness,

and build greater resiliency in the face of multiple crises. Our region is also severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, demanding programs to increase resiliency, strengthen collaboration, and reduce inequality.

As we approach COP27 where countries will start implementing commitments such as the Global Forest Finances Pledge, the second meeting of COP15, and as scientists warn of the “sixth mass extinction”, it is a crucial moment to invest in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in the Americas. In order to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and achieve recovery by 2050, we must encourage countries to work together to adopt targets that are measurable, science-based, and outcome-oriented and invest in solutions not only for the many benefits for the Americas but also for the entire planet. The Amazon, as the most biodiverse region in the world and a crucial component in the global climate cycle, should be a critical priority for all leaders at this year’s Summit.

Carlos Nobre, Mercedes Bustamante, and Emma Torres, on behalf of the Science Panel for the Amazon

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