

# ANDINA FUNDATION

ANNUAL IMPACTS 2025



ANDINA FOUNDATION



## **PRESENTATION**

**During 2025, the Andean Foundation reaffirmed its commitment to building a more just, sustainable, and inclusive future for Colombia and its most vulnerable territories. This period was marked by significant environmental and social challenges, but also by important progress demonstrating that collective work, community trust, and international cooperation are real tools for transformation.**

**In a global context characterized by climate change, the accelerated loss of biodiversity, and widening social inequalities, our organization responsibly embraced the challenge of strengthening comprehensive actions that connect environmental conservation with human well-being. We overcame logistical, territorial, and social barriers thanks to the leadership of Indigenous, rural, and Afro-descendant communities, who have been our main allies and mentors on this journey.**

**During this year, we consolidated ecosystem restoration processes, expanded educational programs in historically excluded territories, and made progress in the protection of strategic species and ecosystems. Every tree planted, every child or young person trained, and every community strengthened represents the fulfillment of objectives that belong not only to one institution, but to a shared vision of sustainable development based on respect for life and cultural diversity.**

**The Andean Foundation understands that biodiversity conservation cannot be separated from the recognition of Indigenous peoples as ancestral guardians of the territory. Therefore, we continue working with an intercultural approach that promotes education, community leadership, and territorial autonomy as fundamental pillars for long-term sustainability.**

**To our international partners, strategic allies, and friendly organizations, we express our deep gratitude for trusting in our mission. Your support has allowed us to transform challenges into opportunities and collective dreams into tangible results. However, we are aware that the journey has only just begun. The magnitude of the environmental and social challenges demands greater commitment, innovation, and global cooperation.**

**Looking to the future, the Andean Foundation maintains a constant commitment to itself: to continue growing, improving our technical capabilities, and expanding our impact on behalf of Indigenous communities, protecting biodiversity, and promoting transformative education that prepares new generations to care for the planet.**

**We will continue working with determination, humility, and hope, convinced that protecting nature is also protecting human dignity and ensuring life for future generations.**

**Eva Sandrith Dávila Pérez  
General DirectorFundación Andina**



## Summary

During 2025, the Andean Foundation strengthened the implementation of its institutional strategy focused on ecosystem restoration, biodiversity conservation, and educational empowerment for Indigenous and rural communities located in the Andean region and the Colombian Caribbean coast.

During this period, the organization consolidated international cooperation alliances with environmental and academic organizations committed to the protection of strategic ecosystems and climate action, establishing technical and financial collaborations with initiatives driven by WWF, The Nature Conservancy, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme, the Rufford Foundation, and international community conservation networks. At the national level, collaboration with regional environmental authorities, universities, community organizations, and local governments was strengthened.

Within this framework of cooperation, the Andean Foundation advanced in the development of comprehensive processes that connect environmental conservation with the social and cultural well-being of the territories.

### Biodiversity Conservation in Indigenous Territories

Participatory conservation actions were implemented in Indigenous communities of the Andean mountain range and Caribbean coastal areas, promoting community monitoring of priority species and the protection of high Andean forest, tropical dry forest, and coastal mangrove ecosystems. These actions strengthened the role of communities as guardians of their territory, integrating ancestral knowledge with scientific tools for the sustainable management of biodiversity.

### Ecosystem Restoration and Recovery of Degraded Landscapes

The Andean Foundation led ecological restoration processes by recovering areas affected by deforestation and environmental degradation, including the implementation of community nurseries, planting of native species, and the establishment of ecological corridors that promote biological connectivity between strategic mountain ecosystems and coastal areas.

### Environmental Education and Community Strengthening

Environmental education and community development programs were consolidated for children, youth, Indigenous women, and community leaders, aimed at promoting nature conservation, climate change adaptation, and the development of sustainable economies. These educational processes incorporated intercultural methodologies that recognize traditional knowledge as a fundamental axis of learning.

## **Climate Adaptation and Territorial Monitoring.**

During 2025, local climate change adaptation initiatives were developed through community-based environmental observation systems, training in resilient agroecological practices, and knowledge-sharing spaces between Andean and coastal communities. These actions improved local capacity to anticipate climate risks and strengthen environmental and food security.

## **Territorial Management and International Cooperation**

The Andean Foundation actively participated in processes to identify and strengthen new community conservation areas and sustainable landscapes, contributing to national conservation goals and international commitments associated with the 2030 Agenda, the Global Biodiversity Framework, and nature-based climate action strategies.



## Main Achievements

- Contribution to the management of the protected area "Páramo and High Andean Forest System of Northwest Antioquia - territory of the harlequin frog (*Atelopus*)," municipality of Timbiquí (Cauca), Embera Indigenous Reserve, through: implementation of the harlequin frog (*Atelopus*) monitoring plan, led in the field by an Indigenous monitor, achieving the number of transects required by the statistical design and maintaining a database designed and updated in the R program.
- Implementation of a closed professionalization course in tourism guiding technology in partnership with SENA (National Learning Service) for the training of 25 Indigenous people. Support for the management of the Technical Management Committee for the protected area, comprised of the Regional Autonomous Corporation of Antioquia, 4 governors of the Reserve, and the Andean Foundation.
- In terms of biodiversity, the Foundation implemented participatory monitoring programs in 12 Indigenous territories, integrating ancestral knowledge with technical tools for the protection of critical habitats. These processes contributed to the conservation of ecosystems associated with six threatened species and enabled an approximate 27% reduction in local pressures on priority areas, thanks to community conservation agreements.
- The educational component also showed significant growth. During the year, 8,200 people participated in environmental education and territorial strengthening programs, with 64% participation from women and youth, reflecting the Foundation's inclusive approach. 540 community leaders were trained in environmental governance and climate adaptation, and intercultural methodologies were implemented in 25 indigenous and rural communities, promoting education as a transformative driver of sustainable development.
- Regarding climate adaptation, the Andean Foundation developed nine community climate monitoring systems, strengthening local capacity to anticipate environmental risks. These processes increased the adoption of resilient agroecological practices among supported rural producers by 35% and contributed to a 22% reduction in climate vulnerability in the areas where the projects were implemented.



## Key Achievements in Biodiversity

During 2025, the Andean Foundation consolidated significant progress in biodiversity conservation in strategic ecosystems of the Andean region and coastal areas of the Colombian Caribbean, strengthening a conservation model based on community participation, ancestral knowledge, and scientific land management.

One of the main achievements was the implementation of participatory monitoring programs in prioritized Indigenous and rural territories, enabling the communities themselves to assume an active role as guardians of biodiversity. Through training and technical support, community leaders participated in monitoring flora and fauna, generating key information for local decision-making and strengthening environmental governance in their territories.

The actions undertaken directly contributed to the protection of habitats associated with emblematic and endangered species native to high-Andean ecosystems, cloud forests, and ecological transition zones. Thanks to community conservation agreements and territorial awareness strategies, an estimated 27% reduction in human pressure on critical areas was achieved, decreasing practices such as deforestation, unsustainable hunting, and the degradation of water sources.

During this period, the Andean Foundation also promoted the consolidation of community ecological corridors, improving connectivity between forest fragments and facilitating the natural movement of wildlife. These corridors represent a fundamental step forward in maintaining ecological resilience to the effects of climate change and landscape fragmentation.

Working together with Andean and coastal Indigenous communities allowed for the integration of traditional knowledge into conservation strategies, recognizing Indigenous peoples as essential actors in biodiversity protection. This intercultural approach strengthened sustainable land management practices and promoted a balanced relationship between human well-being and environmental conservation.

Additionally, the Andean Foundation supported technical processes aimed at identifying new priority areas for community conservation, aligning its actions with national ecosystem protection goals and international commitments of the Global Biodiversity Framework and the 2030 Agenda.



## Key Achievements in Biodiversity

Within the framework of an international grant managed by the technical team of the Andean Foundation, led by biologists María Fernanda Cárdenas and Andrés Felipe Ríos, with support from The Whitley Fund for Nature (£7,500), the project entitled “Strengthening Strategies for Mitigating Conflicts between the Andean Bear (*Tremarctos ornatus*) and Rural Communities in the Central Cordillera of Colombia” was developed during 2025.

As a result of this initiative, significant progress was made in managing human-wildlife conflict in the area surrounding Los Nevados National Natural Park and adjacent areas in the departments of Tolima and southern Quindío.

In direct collaboration with the Los Nevados National Natural Park authority, preventative strategies were implemented to reduce predation on local production systems, including the installation of deterrent fences, improvements to livestock corrals, and training in preventative livestock management.

The project facilitated the active involvement of four rural communities, strengthening their capacity to monitor mammals through the use of camera traps, GPS devices, and georeferencing mobile applications. This process not only improved local knowledge about the diversity of wildlife present in their territories but also promoted a culture of informed and evidence-based coexistence.

Through the signing of three voluntary conservation agreements with farming families, the protection of 65 hectares (160 acres) of high-Andean forest was guaranteed, contributing to the preservation of strategic habitats for the Andean bear and other associated species.

As a strategy for raising awareness in the community, the Community Meeting for the Conservation of the Andean Bear was held. This event brought together rural families, environmental authorities, and educational institutions from the municipality of Herveo, creating a space for dialogue and community engagement regarding the ecological importance of the species.

Furthermore, a technical database was consolidated, integrating geospatial information on areas with a history of conflict between Andean bears and rural communities. This database serves as a key input for decision-making at the local and regional levels.

Finally, through the development of a statistical model in the R programming language, an Andean bear occupation probability of 94.7% and a detection probability of 31.4% were estimated for the area under intervention. A positive correlation was also found between the presence of natural food sources and the reduction of conflict interactions, information that strengthens adaptive management strategies in the territory.



## Impacts on Education

During 2025, the Andean Foundation strengthened its educational component as a fundamental pillar for building sustainable territories, recognizing that biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change are only possible through inclusive, intercultural educational processes focused on community empowerment.

The educational activities were primarily carried out in Indigenous and rural communities in the Andean region and coastal areas of the Colombian Caribbean, territories where historically gaps in access to environmental, technological, and scientific education persist. Following this approach, the Foundation implemented training programs for children, youth, women, and community leaders, promoting learning as a tool for protecting the territory and generating sustainable opportunities.

During 2025, more than 8,200 people participated in educational processes focused on environmental education, climate change, ecosystem restoration, and territorial governance. These programs prioritized the participation of traditionally excluded populations, achieving a 64% representation of women and youth, strengthening local leadership and equitable participation in community decision-making.

One of the most significant advances was the implementation of intercultural educational methodologies that integrate scientific knowledge with ancestral Indigenous wisdom, allowing learning processes to respond to the social, cultural, and environmental realities of each territory. Through practical workshops, community environmental training schools, and collective learning spaces, education based on local experience and the intergenerational transmission of knowledge was promoted.

The Andean Foundation also supported the training of 540 community leaders in topics related to environmental education, youth leadership, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation. These leaders now act as local multipliers, expanding the educational impact beyond the organization's direct interventions.

Digital literacy programs and access to technological tools were also strengthened for rural communities, helping to close educational gaps and facilitating access to environmental information and continuing education opportunities. These actions improved community engagement with modern educational tools without compromising the unique cultural identity of the territories.

The educational component developed during 2025 reaffirms the Andean Foundation's vision that education not only transmits knowledge but also transforms relationships with nature, strengthens the social fabric, and empowers communities to become key players in environmental conservation and sustainable development.



## Impacts on education



connectivity, helping to reduce the digital divide in rural areas and facilitating access to educational content and learning platforms.

component, the Andean Foundation for Transformation for Indigenous and Rural Learning 2025. Developed with financial cooperation from UNESCO Colombia, historically affected by social inequalities,

strengthening community-based education retention.

ities, and community organizations, environmental education, the responsible educational processes. These actions creating spaces, provision of educational

, directly benefiting elementary and entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and scientific methodologies and project-based learning,

duction in school dropout rates was student participation in extracurricular strengthening of the social fabric and the

s for rural teachers, equipping 48 education, and contextualized teaching strengthened the adaptation of the cities.

tion of families and caregivers was shared responsibility between the men and youth.

ical tools and community educational

## The following points are highlighted in the climate change section:

Regarding the strengthening of climate adaptation processes at an international scale, the Andean Foundation joined the Climate Smart Agriculture Lighthouse Initiative global network in 2025. This network, coordinated by Wageningen University (Netherlands), is a platform that brings together demonstrative experiences in climate change adaptation from more than ten countries in Latin America, Africa, and Europe.

The Colombian experience was represented by the Climate-Resilient Andean Territory model of Eastern Antioquia, developed by the Andean Foundation in partnership with farming communities in the rural villages of the municipality of San Luis (Antioquia). This area is characterized by high climate vulnerability associated with variations in rainfall patterns, soil degradation, and pressure on Andean forest ecosystems.

As a result of this international collaboration, the Andean Foundation participated in global technical exchange forums on climate-smart agriculture and nature-based solutions. It was invited to present the Colombian experience to international platforms for territorial sustainability and climate adaptation, positioning the community work developed in Antioquia as a regional benchmark in Latin America.

Within the framework of this initiative, the Community Climate Observation System for Territorial Adaptation (SOCAT) was designed and implemented. This tool allows for the collection of local information on climate variables such as precipitation, temperature, and soil moisture, facilitating community interpretation of climate forecasts and strengthening productive and environmental decision-making in the participating rural communities.

The Andean Foundation also consolidated its position as an active member of the Antioquia Agroclimatic Technical Committee, a forum led by IDEAM (the Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies) and regional environmental authorities. The Foundation contributes territorial information and community knowledge to the analysis of climate scenarios and the formulation of agroclimatic recommendations for rural producers.

Additionally, the Farmer Field Schools for Climate Adaptation approach was implemented, promoting practical learning processes among farmers through territorial exchanges and knowledge tours between communities in Eastern Antioquia and rural producers in the Aburrá Valley. These activities, developed with the support of CORANTIOQUIA, made it possible to strengthen local capacities in resilient agroecological practices, sustainable water management and productive diversification in the face of climate variability.



## Impacts on gender diversity

During 2025, the Andean Foundation strengthened the cross-cutting gender diversity approach within its environmental, educational, and climate adaptation programs, recognizing that territorial sustainability is only possible when equitable participation, inclusive leadership, and the recognition of the rights of all people are promoted.

Under this vision, the Foundation integrated the gender approach as a structural component in the design and implementation of community projects developed in Indigenous and rural territories of the Andean region and coastal areas of the Colombian Caribbean. This approach made it possible to reduce historical participation gaps and strengthen the role of women, youth, and diverse populations as key actors in environmental conservation and sustainable development.

In partnership with UN Women Colombia and with the support of the international Equality Fund program, the “Women Guardians of the Territory” project was implemented, aimed at strengthening women's leadership in ecosystem restoration processes, environmental education, and community governance. Through this program, Indigenous women, peasant women, and rural leaders participated in training processes focused on environmental rights, territorial leadership, economic autonomy, and the prevention of gender-based violence.

As a result, more than 620 women actively participated in conservation, restoration, and climate adaptation initiatives, increasing female participation in community decision-making spaces related to environmental management by 41%. The program also promoted the creation of local networks of women leaders who are now driving sustainable productive initiatives linked to territorial protection.

The diversity component also incorporated strategies for youth inclusion and the recognition of diverse identities within educational and community spaces, fostering safe, participatory, and discrimination-free environments. These processes strengthened social cohesion and promoted a culture of respect and equality within communities historically affected by social exclusion and unequal opportunities.

The Andean Foundation promoted community awareness actions that reached more than 3,500 people, fostering collective reflections on gender equality, community co-responsibility and inclusive leadership in biodiversity conservation.



## Ecosystem Restoration and Reforestation Projects 2025

During 2025, the Andean Foundation consolidated ecological restoration as one of the strategic pillars of its territorial intervention, developing participatory reforestation projects aimed at recovering degraded ecosystems, strengthening community environmental governance, and contributing to climate change mitigation in the Andean and Caribbean regions of Colombia.

In partnership with the international program One Tree Planted and with technical support from regional environmental authorities, the Andean Foundation implemented the project “Forests for Life: Community Restoration in Indigenous and Rural Territories,” focused on the recovery of strategic landscapes that fulfill essential functions for water regulation, ecological connectivity, and biodiversity conservation.

The project was developed in collaboration with Emberá Chamí indigenous communities in the high Andean areas of Antioquia and Zenú indigenous communities in the Caribbean region, promoting a restoration model based on local leadership and ancestral knowledge of land management.

As a result of the process, 1,480 hectares of degraded ecosystems were restored through the planting and assisted regeneration of more than 1,050,000 native trees, selected according to their ecological function and climate adaptation. The species planted included trees native to high Andean forests, tropical dry forests, and community agroforestry systems.

One of the main achievements was the creation of 22 Indigenous community nurseries, managed by local associations and rural women's groups, strengthening local technical capacities and generating economic opportunities related to the production of plant material. These nurseries increased community autonomy in forest restoration and maintenance processes by 46%.

The project directly involved 18 Indigenous and peasant communities, benefiting more than 2,900 people through training in ecological restoration, sustainable soil management, and water resource conservation. Through voluntary conservation agreements, Indigenous and farming families committed to protecting an additional 210 hectares of natural forest, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the restored areas.

The reforestation efforts also contributed to the recovery of strategic ecological corridors that connect fragmented forest areas, promoting the return of wildlife and improving ecosystem resilience to climate change. It is estimated that these interventions will allow for the potential capture of more than 52,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent over the next few years.



- 38% increase in vegetation cover restored compared to the previous year through participatory restoration processes.
- Recovery of 32 community micro-watersheds, improving water regulation and access to water for Indigenous and rural communities.
- Implementation of 15 community agroforestry systems that integrate sustainable production and forest conservation.
- Active participation of 420 Indigenous and peasant women in restoration brigades and forest nursery management.
- Establishment of 4 local biological corridors connecting fragments of high-Andean forest and ecological transition zones.
- Restoration of areas affected by extensive livestock grazing using assisted natural regeneration techniques across 270 hectares.
- Protection and ecological isolation of 48 water sources, contributing to community water security.
- Community production of 1.2 million native seedlings, strengthening local economies associated with environmental restoration.
  - Development of educational planting workshops that engaged more than 1,600 Indigenous and rural students, integrating environmental education and climate action.
- Signing of 27 community conservation agreements, guaranteeing long-term maintenance and monitoring of restored areas.



## Strategic Alliance for Restoration and Conservation 2025–

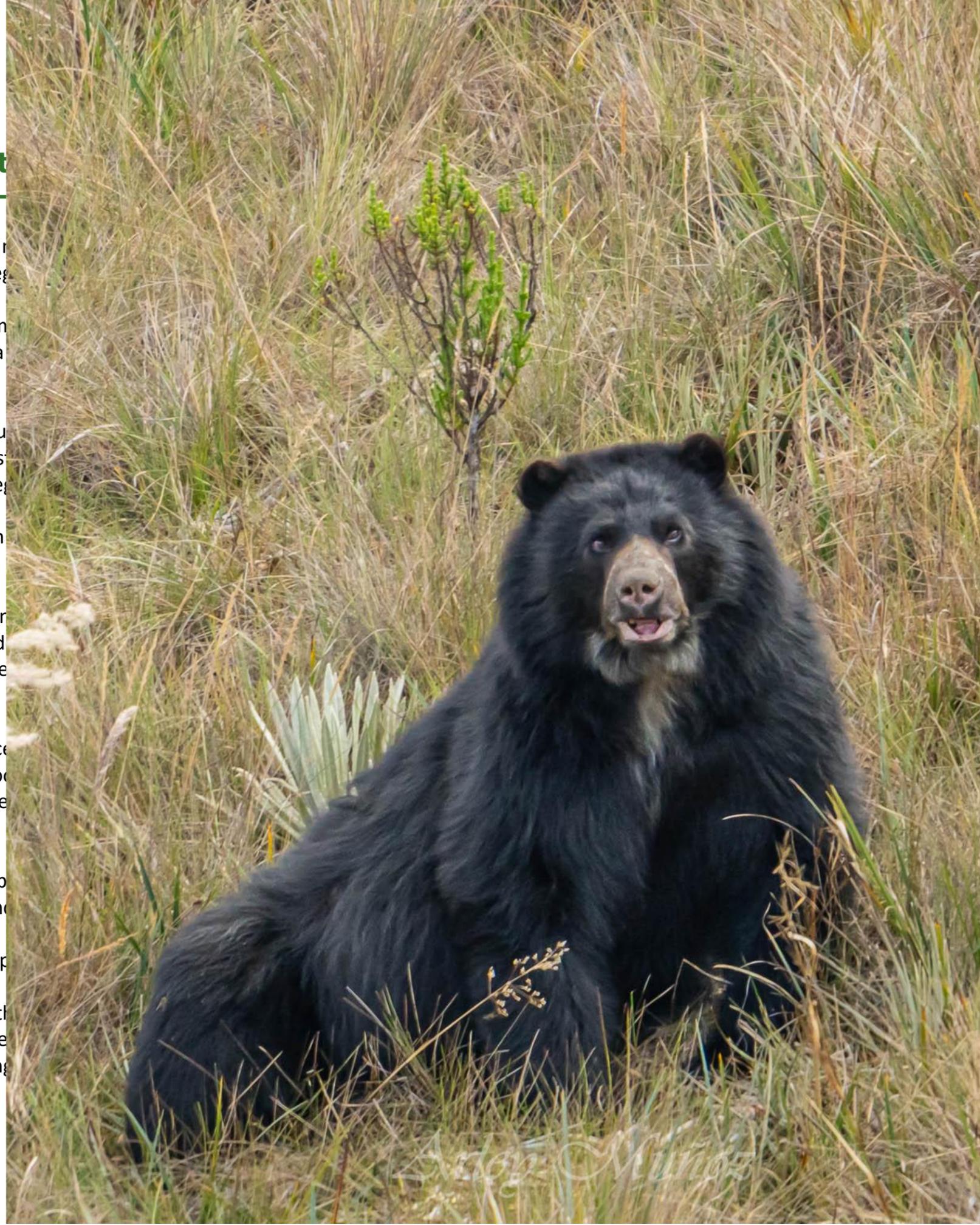
In 2025, the Andean Foundation achieved one of the milestones in its institutional management by signing a Strategic Agreement with the Rufford Foundation, establishing a partnership for strengthening comprehensive processes of ecosystem restoration and sustainable community development in Colombia.

This agreement represents a shared vision between the two organizations, promoting community-driven climate solutions, equitable opportunities, and the protection of strategic ecosystem territories of the Colombian Andean and Caribbean regions.

The alliance includes the progressive implementation of the following main strategic lines:

1. Ecological restoration and nature-based solutions in degraded landscapes, the creation of biological corridors and community nurseries that enable the restoration of key species and climate regulation.
2. Community-based energy transition, promoting access to rural communities through solar systems for schools and sustainable production projects, reducing dependence on fossil fuels and improving the local quality of life.
3. Environmental education and community leadership capacity building, especially among women, youth, and indigenous communities, by promoting educational processes on conservation, social innovation, and territorial development.

The agreement establishes joint goals through 2030 to restore thousands of hectares of strategic ecosystems, the resilient to climate change, and the strengthening of conservation networks.



## Impacts on

2025 was a year of implementing community living conditions of farming families in rural areas affected by armed conflict, geographic isolation, and limited access to basic services.

In partnership with the international organization and with the support from local stakeholders, the Foundation has been working on facilitating sustainable energy solutions to rural communities in these contexts.

As a result of the project, 18 solar energy systems have been installed in the departments of Antioquia and southern Tolima, directly benefiting 180 families who previously used generators, candles, or unreliable electrical connections.

The implemented systems ensured basic lighting, charging of mobile devices, and improved household energy costs associated with fossil fuel use and decentralized energy sources.

Additionally, the Andean Foundation supported the training of rural youth, who were trained in basic solar panel management of energy infrastructure. This contributed to the technical sustainability of the installed solutions.

Access to clean energy also had significant economic and social impacts, creating safer and more vibrant community spaces that benefited extended family activities, community gatherings, and educational activities powered by electricity.

In territories with a history of armed conflict, the project supported reconstruction processes, creating safer and more sustainable productive initiatives.



## Territorial governance

During 2025, the Andean Foundation consolidated territorial governance as one of the cross-cutting pillars of its intervention model, promoting participatory processes that strengthen community autonomy, sustainable land management, and local decision-making regarding environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The actions undertaken focused on Indigenous and rural territories in the Andean and Caribbean regions of Colombia, where historically there have been limitations in access to technical tools, spaces for institutional participation, and territorial planning mechanisms.

In collaboration with Indigenous authorities, community organizations, regional environmental entities, and local governments, the Andean Foundation facilitated the development of collective agreements aimed at protecting the territory and strengthening community leadership.

### Community Governance Agreements

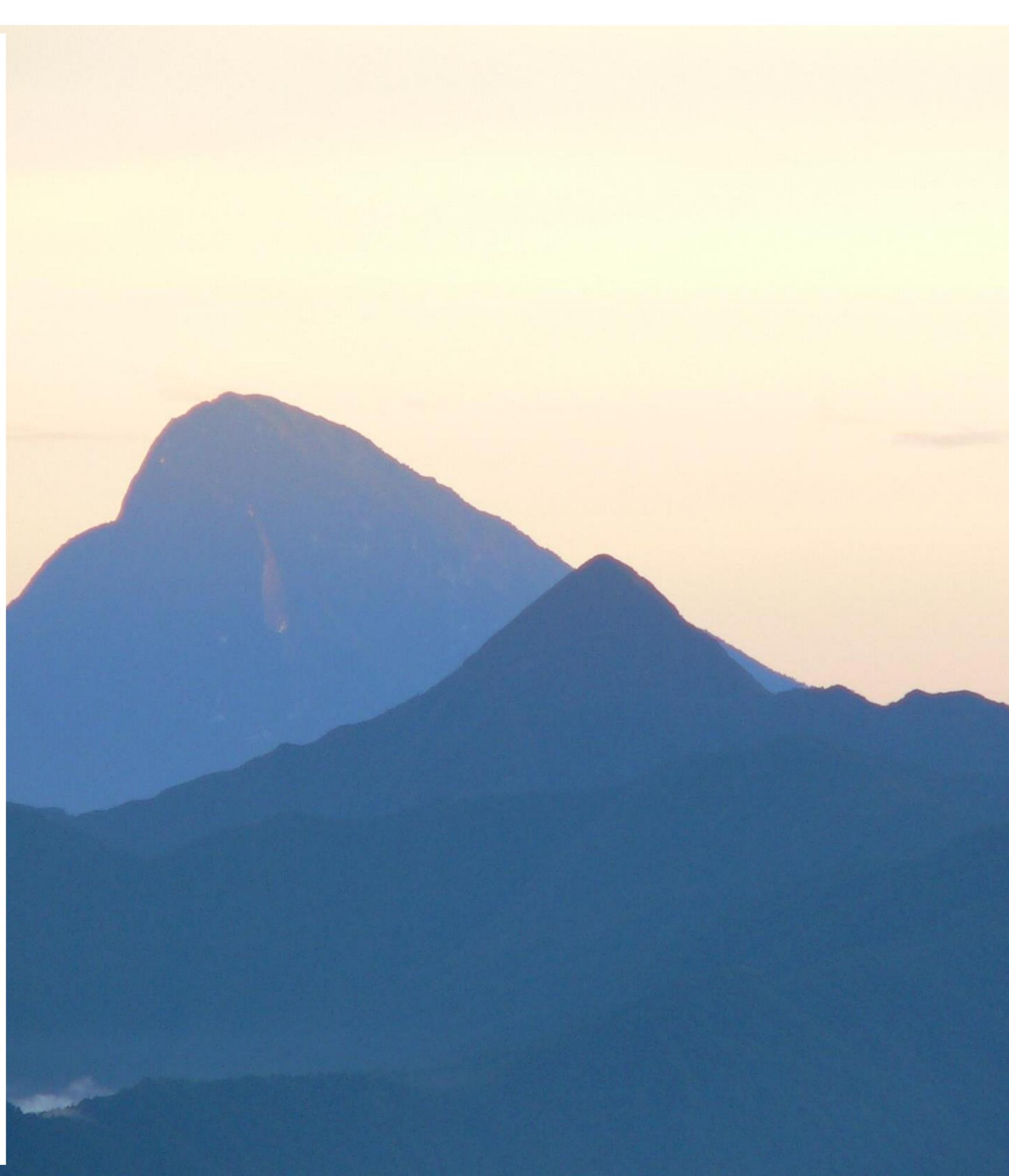
During 2025, the signing of 31 voluntary agreements for the conservation and sustainable use of the territory was promoted among Indigenous communities, farmers' associations, and local authorities. These agreements enabled the establishment of community commitments for the protection of forests, water sources, ecological restoration areas, and biodiversity corridors, consolidating local environmental governance mechanisms.

Likewise, the Foundation supported participatory planning processes that integrated environmental and climate criteria into community territorial development plans, strengthening co-responsibility between communities and public institutions.

### Capacity Building and Local Leadership

As part of the territorial governance process, training programs were developed for Indigenous leaders, rural youth, and community representatives, reaching 685 territorial leaders in topics related to:

- Community environmental governance.
- Territorial and environmental rights.
- Resolution of socio-environmental conflicts.
- Participatory biodiversity monitoring.
- Local climate adaptation.



These processes increased community participation in local environmental decision-making spaces by 45% and strengthened the leadership of women and youth in territorial organizational structures.

#### Territorial Leadership Schools

The Andean Foundation implemented Community Schools of Territorial Governance in nine priority municipalities. These spaces fostered intercultural dialogue among Indigenous communities, public institutions, and academic stakeholders. Through participatory methodologies, capacities for the autonomous management of environmental projects and influence on local policies were strengthened.

#### Institutional Participation and Regional Coordination

During 2025, the Andean Foundation actively participated in environmental technical working groups, climate planning initiatives, and regional sustainability platforms, contributing to the inclusion of community-based approaches within regional environmental agendas. This work helped position local experiences as benchmarks for environmental governance processes in rural contexts.

#### Territorial Impact

The governance actions implemented directly benefited 24 Indigenous and peasant communities, impacting approximately 4,300 people through organizational strengthening, training, and community participation.

As a result, a significant improvement in coordination between communities and institutions was observed, along with a reduction in conflicts related to land use and greater community ownership of the conservation and climate adaptation projects implemented in the territory..





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