

How Philanthropy Can Change the Amazon Bioeconomy

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 **AMAZON
INVESTOR
COALITION**

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Introduction

I have always seen the Amazon as an opportunity for Brazil, a great place to live and do business. My first enchanting contact with the rainforest occurred in the early 1980s, when I left southern Brazil and went to the state of Acre to help organize a school for the rubber tappers located in the deep forest. Since then, I have never disconnected from the region.

I am an impact entrepreneur and a sustainability expert with over 30 years of professional experience, most of it in the Brazilian Amazon region. I was a senior member of the sustainability team at Natura & Co, and have managed projects for the Inter-American Development Bank, the UNDP, among others. I am also co-founder and director of the Institute of Amazonian Studies (IEA), an NGO created in 1986 to support the implementation of Extractive Reserves, which are conservation units intended for sustainable use. In June last year, I joined the Amazon Investor Coalition (AIC), as Director of Catalytic Philanthropy.

This article reports about the current state of bioeconomy philanthropy in the Amazon and identifies what the main gaps are for implementing a bioeconomy that conserves the forest and respects local populations.

To this end, in 2022 we evaluated philanthropy reports, institutional websites, conducted interviews and held meetings with more than 30 foundations from Brazil and abroad, talked to NGOs and investors that operate in the Amazon bioeconomy, and profiled eighteen of the main philanthropic organizations that operate in the region.

AIC also created opportunities to discuss the main challenges of philanthropy for the bioeconomy with entrepreneurs, supporters and foundations, organizing two workshops and a meeting with managers of major Brazilian foundations at the [2nd Amazonia Rising: Global Summit on Investing in the Amazon](#). In addition, we held consultations with entities that represent the traditional populations of the Amazon, such as the National Council of Traditional Populations (CNS), the Chico Mendes Memorial, the Chico Mendes Committee, and also the Institute of Amazonian Studies (IEA).

Part 1. The opportunities found in the economy for the common good

In simplified terms, there are two types of economy in the Amazon: one based on the sustainable exploitation of the standing forest and the ancestral knowledge of the original indigenous peoples and traditional communities, known as bioeconomy; and one based on the degradation and irrational exploitation of natural resources, represented by illegal mining, land grabbing, and the clearing of new areas for cattle ranching.

Frontier areas such as the northern region of Brazil are polarized. On one side are those who defend conservation of the Amazon, the sustainable use of the forest, and bioeconomy; on the other side are those who see the forest as an obstacle to economic growth. Thus, those who love the forest support bioeconomy, the economy for the common good.

But in spite of its long-standing roots in the Amazon, the bioeconomy fails to succeed because the short-term economic gains generated by unsustainable practices such as cattle ranching and soy cultivation are very high, and because most Brazilian public and private financial resources support the unsustainable economy.

One such example is the Constitutional Fund of the North/Fundo Constitucional de Financiamento do Norte (FNO), which in the 2020/21 agricultural year contributed more than 50% of the R\$ 6.5 billion to rural cattle raising, which in general is not very thrifty in land use and is frequently associated with deforestation, as can be seen in this [Plenamata article](#).

Even resources aligned with the bioeconomy contribute little or take a long time to reach the region. The CERTI Foundation, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme evaluated 52 Brazilian funding mechanisms, public funding instruments, philanthropy, and other support for impact businesses, which together hold R\$ 15 billion in assets. The [CERTI Foundation study](#) identified that, of this total, R\$ 6.63 billion have institutional objectives partially or fully compatible with the bioeconomy. However, only about R\$300 million have been made available for the sector in the country.

But support for conservation and sustainable use is growing, and there are already viable alternatives that would allow for the conservation and sustainable use of about 80% of the Brazilian Amazon that is still preserved, while restoring the degraded landscape that has been left behind.

However, what has always surprised me in these thirty years of working with NGOs, governments and private companies in the Amazon, is how limited access is to financial resources that could keep the forests standing. This is particularly true for projects that are prepared by small, local environmental companies or producer associations of indigenous peoples and traditional communities.

In fact, the challenge of structuring a new economy based on bioeconomy is complex and involves a series of factors beyond the contribution of financial resources. It is important to consider local management capacities and investments in human resources, as well as functional and flexible institutional structures that can support the development of community and private businesses.

In addition, it is crucial to take into account the cultural and social particularities of the region in question, in order to create a stable and safe environment for growing and developing these businesses. This may involve the need to work collaboratively with local communities, in order to build trusting relationships and develop solutions that meet the specific needs of the region.

However, as mentioned, there are often imperfections of the democratic state that can create additional challenges for developing the bioeconomy. This can include issues such as corruption, lack of transparency, and political instability, which can make it difficult for businesses and third sector institutions to operate effectively in the region.

Despite these challenges, there are many companies and organizations that are working to build an economy based on bioeconomies that respect local particularities and promote sustainable development. With the support of appropriate public policies and a firm commitment to building

relationships of trust and collaboration with local communities, it is possible to overcome these challenges and build a fairer, more inclusive and sustainable economy.

Part 1a. Deforestation must end for bioeconomy to thrive

The newly elected federal government is making important changes in the environmental area, among them the creation of the National Secretariat for the Bioeconomy in the equally new Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.

A recent article by the [Amazon Environmental Research Institute \(IPAM\)](#) contextualizes the creation of the National Secretariat for the Bioeconomy in the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and makes important recommendations for the bioeconomy in the Amazon. The article indicates that it is "necessary for the new government and the Brazilian society to build a concept of Amazonian bioeconomy that serves as a catalyst for environmental protection, fair distribution of income and the preservation of millenary and secular rights and ways of life and production" It urges taking into account four guiding pillars: (i) zero deforestation: the new Brazilian government has committed to end deforestation by 2030, and because of this it should not support chains that promote deforestation, such as monocultures; (ii) the diversification of production methods, valuing biodiversity and sustainable productive systems aligned to the standing forest; (iii) production based on Amazonian sociobiodiversity, valuing local knowledge and the collective mode of production and (iv) the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the bioeconomy and knowledge of by local populations.

Illegal deforestation and wildfires in the Amazon limit the achievement of global climate goals and negatively affect the lives of millions of Brazilians, whether they live in the region or not. This environmental crime violates the Brazilian constitution, which guarantees to all citizens the right to live in a balanced environment. As a result, in 2020 IEA, with the support of the Environmental Defender Law Center (EDLC), filed a Public-Interest Action (ACP) seeking recognition for the right to climate stability for all Brazilians, as deforestation in the Amazon is the largest cause of greenhouse gas emissions in Brazil.

The [Technical Report](#), on which the ACP is based, reviewed the Action Plans for the Prevention and Control of Deforestation for the Legal Amazon (PPCDAm) implemented between 2004 and 2012 by the federal government. The PPCDAm significantly reduced deforestation, but focused on the granting of credits and technologies aimed at increasing the productivity of agricultural practices.

Because of this, the ACP suggests that the new PPCDAm be improved by adopting many practices that are directly linked to the bioeconomy, as can be seen below:

- Include Conservation Units and Indigenous Lands in all axes of the program as continuous priority targets, both for inspection mechanisms and for actions to encourage sustainable production initiatives for their inhabitants.
- Focus on sustainable production chains and promote the professionalization of the local populations linked to those chains.
- Organize technical assistance to go beyond agricultural and livestock production.

- Combat deforestation in agrarian reform settlements and prevent land trade in agrarian reform settlements involving illegal leasing and selling of real estate.
- Carry out continuous monitoring of municipalities that increase deforestation rates.

To control deforestation, it is necessary to expand the bioeconomy, which conserves the forest and exploits it in a sustainable way. To accomplish this objective, a wide-ranging economic transition is required in the region, emphasizing local development, diversifying land use to reduce monocultures and extensive pastures, and boosting the competitiveness of forest ecosystems. At the same time, it is necessary to improve the instruments that value local knowledge, remunerate biodiversity, and pay for environmental services, using the carbon market as a driver of this change.

Part 1b. Bioeconomies needs to be known in order to be adopted

Bioeconomy is a relatively new term and is still not well known in many parts of the world, including the Amazon region. Because of this, the *Concertação pela Amazônia* (Concerted Action for the Amazon), a group of more than 300 leaders active in the Amazon, has made a great effort to summarize [information on the subject](#), indicating that there are three main types of bioeconomy operating in the Amazon: (i) one based on sociobiodiversity, including the exploitation of non-timber forest resources allied to traditional knowledge and subsistence agriculture; (ii) one based on native forest management and; and (iii) one based on intensified production in planted forests and commercial agriculture, mainly soy and livestock. More recent studies on the [concept of bioeconomy in the Amazon](#), such as this one on Amazon 2030, reinforce the idea.

However, a large part of the Amazon population is still unfamiliar with the term bioeconomy and may even distrust the concept because it was introduced by "foreigners" or "Paulistas", as we are often called because we are from outside the region and use complex terminology to explain simple things.

As I said, I am from the South of Brazil, so I know what it means to feel like a "foreigner" in my own country. The nickname is not always used in a derogatory way, but it does feel strange. In 1995, I moved from New York to Amapá, a state located near the mouth of the Amazon River. I was eager to use concepts that I had learned in my master's degree in Social Forestry at Yale. I went to Amapá to advise the newly elected governor on environmental issues. We created, together with excellent local government technicians, communicators and researchers, the Amapá Sustainable Development Plan (PDSA), the first state-level sustainability plan in the Amazon. The concept of sustainability, which I presented many times to traditional communities and urban slum dwellers, was obviously strange to everyone. The same is happening now with the term bioeconomy.

A recent example of the complexity involved in using the term bioeconomy was the 4th edition of the [World Bioeconomy Forum](#), held in Belem from October 18-20, 2021, the first time the Forum held an event outside its headquarters in Finland.

The resistance of social movements to the term "bioeconomy" led social movements and indigenous leaders, of the National Council of Extractivists Populations (CNS) and the Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB), to organize a competing event, on the same days as

the international event. It was called the Amazon Sociobiodiversity Meeting and it published the [Amazon Charter](#) defending the idea of an economy capable of living with the forest, ensuring rights, and distributing income fairly. As can be seen, the term bioeconomy is heavily stigmatized in the Amazon region due to resistance from social movements.

Part 1c. How to attract new investments and philanthropy

If being successful in the Amazon region depended solely on unlimited financial resources, [Fordlândia](#), a project created by billionaire Henry Ford in the 1920s, and the [Jari Project](#), created by another American billionaire, Daniel Ludwig, in the 1970s, would be examples of success, and not of the failures that they actually were. More importantly, knowing the local reality, overcoming cultural barriers, attracting new investments and allocating them correctly, are relevant challenges to transform the local reality.

Historically the region receives little foreign investment – whether related to bioeconomy or otherwise – because many barriers have to be overcome. Some of these are common to the entire country, such as the complex Brazilian tax system, which consists of several duties, taxes and contributions that are collected by the government at all levels (federal, state and municipal). Some barriers are specific to the region, such as the limited infrastructure regarding internet coverage, power availability and transportation. Tax incentives for the bioeconomy could be created, and existing ones could be improved. There could be a reduction or exemption of taxes for bioeconomy companies. Or, specific investment funds could be created for companies that invest in sustainable technologies and processes.

The three main types of bioeconomy businesses in the region are: (i) community businesses, run by local producer associations, (ii) cooperatives, and (iii) private businesses, made up of startups and medium-sized companies that are already consolidated, as well as large companies (mostly located in the Manaus Free Trade Zone), which operate in an environment that is still far from being conducive to business.

The fact is that the Amazon generates a lot of curiosity, but it is still unknown to most global financial players, who therefore do not know how to mitigate risks and consequently do not invest. Minimal information about the Amazon is available outside of Brazil indicating a lack of transparency in commercial processes and public management, thereby creating legal insecurity, especially in terms of land title. This prevents the mobilization of private global investments that could conserve the forest and benefit Amazonian populations.

Global consumers know little about Amazonian products and therefore there is little interest on the part of large companies to buy supplies from the region. This is a pity, because large companies usually establish long-term contracts with their suppliers, which would allow local companies to better plan their investments and access better credit lines.

National and international philanthropy still contributes few resources to the Amazon bioeconomy. The [CERTI Foundation study](#) cited above estimated that in 2020 Brazilian philanthropy invested about R\$61 million in projects associated with the bioeconomy across the country. However, the study does

indicate that there is a growing trend in investments. Between 2021 and 2026, CERTI estimates that about R\$ 460 million will be invested in philanthropy in bioeconomy projects in Brazil. This will occur through new allocations to the [Fund for the Amazon](#) (part of which will come from international resources) and part from companies such as JBS and Vale, the latter doing so to meet its Forestry Target program.

International philanthropy still invests little in the Amazon bioeconomy because it prioritizes environmental conservation. According to the [Moore Foundation study](#), between 2013 and 2015 about \$1.07 billion was allocated to Amazon conservation, but only an estimated \$93 million was allocated to the bioeconomy related projects.

Part 1d. And where are the opportunities?

The Brazilian government has already initiated the institutional changes needed to control deforestation and other illegalities in the Amazon. Even if these changes take time to be fully implemented, they already positively affect environmental and impact-related businesses, especially the carbon market, as [one study](#) indicated, even before the presidential elections.

In the article ["Four Strategies to Build a Future for the Amazon"](#), Beto Veríssimo and Juliano Assunção, creators of the ["Amazônia 2030"](#) initiative, argue that the crisis caused by record deforestation, and poverty, can bring opportunities. They call for an opportunity to be considered in the Brazilian Amazon. While there is a significant population of young people searching for opportunities, there are some big needs that they could address: some agricultural areas need to be made more productive, some underutilized lands need to be restored, and some vulnerable regions of forest need to be protected.

The reduction in deforestation, the current bioeconomy plans in the states, the commitments of the Consortium of Governors of the Legal Amazon and the new administration of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, coupled with a new understanding of the Amazon by the Brazilian and international public opinion, are all beginning to create new investment opportunities in the region.

Matt Portman, Investment Director at AIC, believes that the opportunities in the Amazon are very good due to three factors: (i) the growth of the carbon market and biodiversity remuneration, financed by companies seeking to offset their emissions, supported by new technologies that allow existing carbon and biodiversity to be accurately measured and quantified; (ii) investments made in agroforestry systems restore degraded land, enrich soils, generate employment, produce food, and bring benefits to local communities that industrial monocultures do not; and (iii) the growth of two innovative financial systems: *blended finance*, in which philanthropic capital acts in tandem with commercial capital, providing seed funding until projects are profitable; and *offtaker agreements*, in which commercial agreements are made long term between a company producing a particular commodity and a buyer who agrees to purchase that commodity over a certain period of time at an agreed price.

In the article [Finance Amazonia Report](#), AIC has identified five areas in the Amazon with potential for rapid investment growth, summarized below:

- Land restoration and agroforestry: Ecosystem restoration, reforestation and agroforestry on cleared or degraded land, combined with carbon financing with agroforestry revenues.
- Forest biodiversity protection and wild harvesting: For thousands of years, indigenous and traditional peoples created livelihoods, medicines, and production systems by harvesting nuts and fruits from standing forests without harming them. The opportunity continues today.
- Carbon, biodiversity and ecosystem market development: The biggest buyers of carbon are turning to the Amazon to buy carbon credits at the scale of entire states and nations. Corporate demand to buy high-quality carbon projects has out paced the supply of investable projects. There are also rising biodiversity and ecosystem service payment markets such as water credits.
- Sustainable commodities: Sustainable commodity production can be achieved through several solutions, including supply chain interventions that track product origins and improve seasonal harvests. These interventions involve enhancing crop intelligence, innovating pasture management, intensifying production, and scaling precision agriculture, with the ultimate goal of halting the degradation of natural resources and improving current land use practices.
- Infrastructure and enabling technologies: Businesses and technologies that facilitate market access can unlock the commercial value of the Amazon in ways that were never accessible before. There are many solutions. E-commerce platforms unite buyers and sellers. Product tracking blockchains create transparency. Fintech innovations allow last-mile financial transactions.

Part 2. What do wild harvesting Amazonians, or “extractivists,” expect from philanthropy?

"Those who are born in the forest are not seen, but the Extractive Reserves give visibility to the people who live in the forest. This is strategic to prevent deforestation pressure from increasing, and also to guarantee the safety of the residents."

Atanagildo Matos (Gatão), National Council of Extrativists Populations (CNS)

One of the most promising ways to conserve the Amazon is through the creation of Conservation Units that allow the sustainable use of the forest, creating a reliable basis for business, research, and innovation, as well as serving as a source of inputs for most companies operating in the region.

In the Brazilian Amazon, there are four main types of Conservation Units that allow sustainable exploitation: Extractive Reserve, Sustainable Development Reserve, National Forest, and State Forest. The most recent public information compiled by IEA is from 2018 and indicates that there are currently 146 of such sustainable Units, covering 54 million hectares, and conserving 10.78% of the Amazon region.

According to IEA, [Extractive Reserves](#) are forest and aquatic areas inhabited and traditionally protected by extractive communities. The Brazilian government formally authorizes local communities to collectively manage their forest resources by granting the local association a long-term use concession. The creation of Extractive Reserves represents an unprecedented success both in terms of social mobilization and environmental policy-making in the Brazilian Amazon. They serve as an important forest conservation strategy, while also providing sustainable economic returns to local populations.

However, recent studies on Extractive Reserves, such as this [study by Embrapa](#), indicate that these conservation units have suffered pressure from deforestation due to the increase of agriculture and cattle ranching in the surrounding areas. Invasions take place to steal timber and commit land grabbing. The protected areas are facing several problems due to the state's failure to implement public policies for sustainable development, land title registration, and environmental compliance. These problems include a lack of electricity, sanitation, logistics, and internet infrastructure, which affect both the residents' quality of life and the production and processing of raw materials.

The commercialization of most extractive products, with the exception of açaí, is still very dependent on either institutional markets or on *aviamento*, an informal trading system in which consumer goods and supplies are advanced to producers in remote areas, who are then expected to pay back their debt with products extracted from the forest at the end of the harvest or crop cycle. Other forms of payment for the communities are still limited, such as payments for environmental services, biodiversity protection, and carbon market related activities. Given this lack of new income sources, deforestation has increased in many "*colocações*", as the family production units in the Extractive Reserves are called.

To better understand the situation of the Extractive Reserves and the demands for philanthropy, we have conducted several consultations with leaders of the National Council of Extractivists Populations (CNS), the Chico Mendes Memorial, the Chico Mendes Committee, and the technical team of the Institute of Amazonian Studies, who reported the following:

(i) The social movement of the extractivists populations of Amazonia understands that they must continue resisting in defense of the means of production, the territories and human rights, and fight for transversal public policies that reach the forest peoples, investing in education adapted to the reality of the Extractive Reserves;

(ii) The market does not remunerate extractive production fairly in view of the role played by communities. It is therefore necessary to identify companies that are willing to pay more for the environmental attributes of forest products. Community production must be organized so that it can meet demands, especially international ones;

(iii) To advance sustainable production in the Amazon, support from the national and international community is needed, but donors need to understand the reality of the Amazon, respecting the time of nature, which is different from the time defined in contracts. In addition, the grassroots organizations in the Amazon understand that there are many barriers to accessing resources from

donations, such as: difficulties in understanding foreign languages, many requirements for the preparation of proposals, and excessive bureaucracy to accessing public bidding processes;

(iv) External resources must support the social movement that defends the forest, in order to strengthen the territory and work with children and young people through education, because the new generation must understand the struggle involved in the process of fighting for and creating the Extractive Reserves;

(v) Not enough projects are directed at productive issues and when they do appear, community organizations have to compete for these resources with large NGOs. The foundations should also support strengthening the resident and producer associations in the Extractive Reserves, which are strategic for the maintenance and management of the territory, while their weakening increases the risks of invasions and deforestation.

Part 3. What do Amazon entrepreneurs expect from philanthropy?

AIC organized two workshops in 2022 to discuss strategies for entrepreneurship in the Amazon with some focus on the role of philanthropy. The events were attended by foundations, local entrepreneurs and institutions that support the bioeconomy.

Some of the suggestions made include recommendations for new investments in science and technology, financial incentives, market infrastructure, management training and the development of new investment strategies.

Three other main points were also emphasized:

(i) Philanthropy for bioeconomy in the Amazon is limited and is still often allocated in a dispersed, uncoordinated way, which leads to a diluted impact and a vision dissociated from systemic challenges and goals. Therefore, there is a need to better understand the main bottlenecks that limit the flow of catalytic philanthropy so that it can help increase the supply of available resources in the Amazon and integrate new philanthropists into Amazon agendas. Philanthropic resources can also attract other co-funding resources, such as *blended finance*, or act as a catalyst in the use of public resources by working together with ongoing initiatives;

(ii) Philanthropic resources for Brazil, from international aid, are becoming scarcer, as many funds were reallocated to other countries due to the growth of the Brazilian GDP registered a few years ago. Therefore, it is necessary to better define what the bottlenecks are, in which areas resources may be lacking, and how these resources can be tailored strategically to better meet local needs. It is important, therefore, to lend visibility to the philanthropic resources that have already been allocated to projects, as well as to identify the results achieved and how to improve them. The mechanisms for monitoring resources and accountability must be strengthened, increasing the transparency of the use of capital;

(iii) Brazil does not yet have a well-structured culture of philanthropy, with most of the resources coming from outside the country. Attracting new philanthropists could come about by engaging players from São Paulo (where Brazilian philanthropy is concentrated), along with Amazonian and international players. This would reduce the distance between people from the Amazon and philanthropists interested in contributing to the region.

Part 4. What are Amazon Community Funds?

It has been said that big philanthropy is like an ocean liner sailing the sea. This big ship must sail down the Amazon river, but to reach the igarapés where the communities are, it will need smaller boats.

While international philanthropy is able to mobilize large financial resources and attract global attention to important issues, it often takes smaller organizations and initiatives to reach specific communities and address local needs. The so-called "smaller boats" may be community funds, local organizations, community groups, or initiatives that are closer to the people and communities that require help. They may have a deeper understanding of local challenges and needs, and may be more effective in identifying and implementing solutions that actually work for the people they serve.

By working together with international philanthropy, these "smaller boats" can help amplify the impact of global initiatives. Together they form a stronger support network, capable of addressing the social and economic challenges affecting communities around the world.

However, there are several reasons why large foundations may choose not to pass funds directly on to communities, as follows:

Scale: Large foundations may have significant financial resources, but often do not have or choose not to build the infrastructure necessary to handle large-scale distribution of resources to multiple communities. This can be quite complex, so they end up choosing to allocate significant resources to the large international NGOs already based in the region.

Local knowledge: Foundations may not have the local knowledge needed to identify the needs and priorities of each community, and thus may believe that it is more effective to work with local organizations that have this knowledge.

Risk management: Foundations may be concerned about risk management and ensuring that funds are used appropriately, transparently, and efficiently. By working with intermediary organizations, foundations can have more control over how resources are used.

Sustainability: Some foundations may be more interested in supporting projects that promote long-term sustainability, and therefore may want to work with organizations that have a sustainable business model and can continue to work with communities even after funding ends.

Bureaucratic difficulties: In some cases, direct distribution of resources can be hindered by bureaucratic or legal issues, such as tax laws or government regulations.

However, it is important to note that many foundations work in partnership with local organizations that have in-depth knowledge of community needs and priorities, and can help ensure that resources are used effectively and transparently. This [article](#) from the Fundo Casa Socioenvironmental points out important ways to improve donations to the communities.

Several indigenous and traditional communities have sought their independence by organizing community funds to receive resources directly from philanthropy. These funds are managed directly by the communities, which raise, manage, and redistribute the financial resources to support actions in their territories, operating from a rights-based agenda that they themselves have built.

Among the existing funds in the Brazilian Amazon, the following stand out: the Dema Fund, created at the request of the Transamazon movement; the Babaçu Fund, created and managed by the babaçu coconut breakers movement; the Podáali Fund and the Rio Negro Indigenous Fund (FIRN), created by the indigenous movement; and the Puxirum Fund, created by the National Council of Extractivists Populations (CNS).

The Dema Fund is a social and environmental justice fund created in 2003 that supports collective projects of the Forest Peoples, including indigenous peoples, quilombolas (descendants from escaped slaves), extractivist and river communities, and small-scale family farming. The Fund has received support from the Amazon Fund and is managed by the Federation of Organs for Social and Educational Assistance (FASE) in conjunction with the Steering Committee.

The Babaçu Fund was created in 2012 by the Interstate Movement of Babaçu Coconut Breakers (MIQCB) as a result of the movement's experience with the Microcredit Revolving Fund. The fund is managed in a participatory manner by the Steering Committee, which involves several partner organizations of the movement. Since its creation, the Babaçu Fund has launched four calls for proposals, obtaining funds for socioenvironmental projects by community groups and organizations of babaçu nut breakers. Among the supporters of the Babaçu Fund are: ActionAid, Ford Foundation, Fundo Babaçu Livre, Amazon Fund, Brazil DGM FIP Project, MISEREOR, World Action for Solidarity (ASW), and the Institute for Climate and Society (iCS).

The Podáali Fund is an organization of the COIAB network, created in 2019 as the first Amazon-wide mechanism for raising and redistributing resources to indigenous peoples, organizations, and communities. Its partners include: the Ecumenical Service Coordination (CESE), Brazil Fund, and COIAB. Donors include: Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, Pawanka Fund, Instituto Clima e Sociedade, Tamalpais Trust, Casa Socioenvironmental Fund, and the Norwegian Embassy in Brazil.

The Rio Negro Indigenous Fund (FIRN), created in 2019, works with the indigenous peoples of Rio Negro, as part of the activities of the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of Rio Negro (FOIRN). Among its partners are the Norwegian Embassy in Brazil and Instituto Socioambiental (ISA).

Community funds allow local communities to have more control over how money is used, and can help ensure that projects are more relevant and effective to the specific needs of each region.

In addition, community funds can also support local organizations working in the region, helping to strengthen them and increase their capacity to take action. This, in turn, can help ensure that the supported projects are more effective and sustainable in the long term. By channeling philanthropic resources into community funds, it is possible to expand investment in the Amazon region, drawing on resources from different sources and investing in projects that have a positive impact on the region.

In summary, community funds are a powerful tool to expand philanthropic resources in the Amazon, as they allow local communities to have more say and active participation in choosing supported projects, taking advantage of local knowledge, strengthening local organizations, and increasing investment in the region.

Part 5. The vision of managers involved in Amazonian bioeconomy philanthropy

The panel "Developing a collaborative roadmap for catalytic philanthropy to boost the Amazon bioeconomy", held at the [2nd Global Summit on Investing in the Amazon](#), aimed to assess the current situation of philanthropy supporting the bioeconomy in the Amazon region, develop collective strategies, enhance ongoing experiences, and bring new perspectives to the topic. For this article, the panel's speeches were organized by theme and by their relevance to the Amazonian bioeconomy.

The panel was moderated by Carolina Suarez, CEO of [Latimpacto](#) and featured the following panelists:

- Andrea Azevedo, Program and Project Director of the [JBS Fund for the Amazon](#);
- Maria Amália Souza, Founder/Strategic Development of the [Casa Socioenvironmental Fund](#);
- Marcia Soares, Partnership and Networking & Communications Leader for [Vale Fund](#);
- Paula Ellinger, Director of Climate Action at [Avina Foundation](#);
- Renata Piazzon, Executive Director, Climate Change, [Arapyaú Institute](#)
- Rosa Maria Lemos de Sá, General Secretary of the Brazilian Biodiversity Fund - [FUNBIO](#).

Below is a brief summary of the institutions participating in the panel, along with a brief description of their recent activities in the Amazon:

Arapyaú Institute

Instituto Arapyaú was created in 2008 with the aim of connecting different initiatives and sectors –social, private, public and academic – for the collective construction of innovative solutions to collaboratively address complex contemporary challenges related to social, environmental and economic well-being.

Recent activities in the Amazon are: (i) supporting Brazilian civil society engagement on climate and development issues through the project "Uma Concertação pela Amazônia" (A Unified Proposal or Concerted Action for the Amazon) and the "Coalizão Brasil Clima, Florestas e Agricultura" and (ii) working with WRI Brasil and the Amazônia 2030 research group, started the process to change the MapBiomas platform into an independent organization.

Vale Fund

The Vale Fund was created in 2010 as a voluntary private social investment and promotion fund focused on environmental conservation actions in endangered biomes, with special attention given to the Amazon. Its goal is to promote a fairer and more inclusive economy through business operations with social and environmental impact.

Recent activities in the Amazon are: (i) philanthropic resources to: Apuí Agroforestry Café; PPA; Latimacto; Amazon Lab; Covid-19 Response Plan; The Amazon Journey and PrevisIA (ii) investments with expected financial return: AMAZ Accelerator & Impact Investments, the Vale 2030 Forest Goal and the Conexsus Socioenvironmental Fund.

Funbio

The Brazilian Biodiversity Fund (FUNBIO) was created in 1996 and is a national, private, non-profit financial mechanism that works in partnership with the government, private sectors, and civil society to allocate strategic and financial resources to effective biodiversity conservation initiatives.

FUNBIO has 12 ongoing programs or projects in the Amazon biome: (i) ARPA; (ii) Tradition and Future in the Amazon (TFA); (iii) Copaibas; (iv) REM-MT; (v) Amapá Fund (vi) Kayapó Fund (vii) One Million Trees for Xingu; (viii) RRF Amazon; (ix) Eastern Amazon Fund (FAO); (x) Legal Amazon Consortium; (xi) Climate Working Group; and (xii) Pro-Species Forests.

Casa Socioenvironmental Fund

The Casa Socioenvironmental Fund works to promote environmental conservation and sustainability, democracy, respect for socioenvironmental rights and social justice throughout South America. One of the pillars of the Casa Fund is the participation of civil society. The

Casa Fund works as a mediating bridge institution, connecting philanthropic institutions and community groups in need of resources.

Recent activities in the Amazon are: (i) Casa Fortalecendo Comunidades: preparing communities to face periods of drought and climate emergencies caused by forest fires and (ii) Casa Amazônia: support to indigenous, extractivist, riverine and small-scale farmer communities for production and income generation allied to the standing forests, defense of territorial rights, legal and political impact, environmental and territorial management and institutional strengthening.

JBS Fund for the Amazon

The fund seeks to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the forest. One of the foundation's main goals is to improve the quality of life and the development of the forest-dwelling population using technology and applied science.

Recent activities in the Amazon are: (i) implementation of Agroforestry Systems; (ii) strengthening the Pirarucu and Açaí Chains; (iii) investments and mentoring for startups; (iv) facilitating the release of credit for small-scale farmers, ensuring technical assistance and access to financing, increasing production without deforestation, and (v) developing research and technologies, together with Embrapa, to increase the value of forest products, such as açaí, cocoa, manioc, nuts, fruit, and fish.

Avina Foundation

Avina Foundation is a global organization promoting collaborative processes that seek changes in the status quo. Its area of operation is the southern hemisphere, where it seeks to generate positive impacts, in a collaborative way, in favor of human dignity and care for the planet.

Recent activities in the Amazon are: (i) the agreement with the Green Climate Fund to increase the climate change adaptation capacities of small-scale family farmers in Marajó by means of climate resilient agroforestry techniques and (ii) the implementation of the project Voices for Climate Justice (VCA) which aims to expand and improve the performance and visibility of quilombolas, indigenous peoples, agrarian reform settlers and agroextractivists in the defense of their rights and adequate public policies.

The summary of the panel discussions on philanthropy for the Amazon bioeconomy is divided into three topics, which are presented below:

Part 5a. Why do the major philanthropic institutions operating in the Amazon support bioeconomy?

The Vale Fund reports that after 11 years of working with conservation projects in the Amazon, it started to work on a specific bioeconomy strategy after realizing that the previous initiatives were not enough to conserve the biome. Currently, among several other initiatives, it supports agroforestry systems in the recovery of areas with the aim of scaling up the region's bioeconomy.

The Arapyaú Institute understands that it is necessary to go beyond the environmental agenda. Philanthropy has historically paid attention to the command and control agenda, which is essential, but it is necessary to talk about an economic and social inclusion agenda based on a new vision of development and structuring projects in the Amazon. For this reason, the Institute has prepared an integrated agenda for the development of the Amazon, so that the well-being and prosperity of the people who live in the Amazon region are valued, and the reduction of deforestation becomes a consequence of this improved quality of life.

Avina Foundation sees the strengthening of a bioeconomy in the Pan-Amazon as an essential element for a response to the global climate crisis, because it is impossible to respond to the climate crisis, either from a mitigation or adaptation perspective, without a wholistic view of the region. For this reason, the bioeconomy pace must be faster than that of deforestation.

Part 5b. Main recommendations to structure the Amazonian bioeconomy, organized by theme

Science, technology and human capital

"We have a lot of research about biodiversity of the Amazon, about the potential of some products, but, this has not necessarily been converted into business operations to value the standing forest". Marcia Soares, Vale Fund

"Looking at Amazon 4.0, we massively need a robust science and technology plan for the Amazon which, preferably, actually takes in all our traditional knowledge, which is a wealth of knowledge, so that we really have robust knowledge and robust solutions. Andrea Azevedo, JBS Fund for the Amazon

For the areas of science, technology and human capital these managers believe that:

(i) It is necessary to develop a robust science and technology plan for the Amazon that includes the traditional knowledge originating from native indigenous peoples and traditional communities;

(ii) One of the bottlenecks to be overcome is that even though there is a lot of research on the subject of bioeconomy, this has not been converted into viable business solutions to add value and maintain the standing forest;

(iii) Developing human capital is important, providing support for people and their abilities in the biome, as well as an entrepreneurial culture capable of transforming environmental wealth into

income generation and economic change. In addition, the expertise of the communities to manage their business operations must be improved.

Regulation and tax incentives

"I think the most important recommendation for the federal government would be to create tax incentives so that this bioeconomy can be established and developed in all the Amazon states." Rosa Maria Lemos de Sá, Funbio

"In addition, we have identified the issue of regulation and tax incentives as a major gap, and at the same time, as a lever. We cannot advance in any economic model if we don't have incentive policies from the government and also from the regulating organizations". Marcia Soares, Vale Fund

For the areas of regulation and tax incentives the participants state that:

(i) It is not possible to advance in any economic model if the government and the regulating organizations do not provide incentive policies for the bioeconomy, reaching as far as the municipal level;

(ii) The standing forest economy is still incipient, so the development of new markets for the forest economy must be supported, although this is only possible with the support of government incentive policies for bioeconomy, and by creating regulations and fostering organizations in all Amazonian states. This includes carbon, a promising market that could support bioeconomy, but which is unregulated, thereby leaving communities unprotected.

Infrastructure

"We have stopped talking about an economic agenda, an agenda of social inclusion. So we really need to build this vision of development and consider structuring projects for the region." Renata Piazzon, Arapyaú Institute

"At this moment there is great visibility for the Amazon, and this transition of government in Brazil is drawing a lot of attention from the world, so now everyone comes with this hope that we now at least have a chance to take care of the Amazon, and we didn't see this opportunity until very recently." Maria Amália Souza, Casa Socioenvironmental Fund

For the infrastructure area, the managers present at the Panel stated that:

(i) The limited infrastructure, such as energy, connectivity, logistics, prevents local production from reaching a volume and regularity that is needed to compete in the market effectively. There are, for example, regions in the Amazon, such as along the Transamazon highway, where the cocoa chain is being built up by small-scale family farmers, but there is a lack of seedling nurseries, agricultural machinery, and other essential resources.

(ii) Technology can shorten paths, if applied well. Fast internet helps forest peoples and small-scale family farmers to attract philanthropic resources. In addition, there are other innovative ideas such as the use of solar batteries in motorized boats (*“voadeiras”* - which are the main means of transport on the Amazon rivers), or the use of artificial intelligence to identify areas of higher risk of deforestation in the Amazon.

Strategic Management

“At Arapyáú, we do nothing on our own, because we really believe that the way to do things, whether in the Amazon or anywhere else, is to network. So, we are well known for incubating transformative networks.” Renata Piazzon, Arapyáú Institute

“Investing in the Amazon has a real impact and is much more than environmental conservation, it also means preserving biodiversity, reducing social and territorial inequalities, and promoting human resources.” Andrea Azevedo, JBS Fund for the Amazon

For the strategic management area, the managers of the foundations understand that:

(i) Investments should consider the chain as a whole, going beyond isolated community projects, which are important, but alone will not be able to change the economy of the Amazon. Isolated projects do not create the possibility of external financing to give continuity to projects. In the Amazon, doing things in isolation doesn't work, it is necessary to act as a network. It is necessary to build an integrated vision that values these partnerships between philanthropy, the public sector, the private sector and civil society;

(ii) To develop a new ecosystem, as is the case of the bioeconomy in the Amazon, it is very important to involve the private sector which invests a lot in the region, working together with traditional populations and partnering with accelerators, business incubators, and non-governmental organizations that are already operating in the territory and know the reality;

(iii) It is necessary to recognize the plurality of the biome. We should not fall into the trap of homogenizing and creating false collectives that fail to recognize the region rich local sociocultural diversity. There is no such thing as a single bioeconomy, just as there is no single Amazon;

(iv) The Amazon presents the challenge of geographical scale, where everything is large and distant, as well as the economic scale, which should be planned in terms of what is possible and what is sustainable. The scale should focus on the quality and not the quantity of initiatives, and not necessarily on the size of production necessary for a certain business to have impact. For there is often no point in bringing in large volumes of money, with very large price tags for local businesses that are not yet ready.

(v) Another rationale must be created to think about scale and transform this economy, taking into consideration the local culture, the question of traditional indigenous peoples and their way and means of living. Plans to get out of Amazonia 1.0 and move into Amazonia 4.0 will be required, a

proposal by renowned Brazilian scientist Carlos Nobre that aims to generate added value to Amazonian products.

(vi) Lessons learned should not be forgotten, since investments in bioeconomy are not new in the Amazon, such as the international resources for the [Pilot Program for the Protection of Forests in Brazil \(PPG7\)](#) in the 1990s. However, what prevented these initiatives from advancing was their local character, which did not consider the production chain as a whole, and this did not make it possible for external financing to allow for the continuation of the projects.

Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Communities

“You maintain biodiversity strong and you keep improving the livelihood of these people, so that they are able to face the challenges and improve their lives. And that is what is going to continue protecting the Amazon and even recovering it. So, as far as I’m concerned, this is the great vision, which has to do with philanthropy and with investing in bioeconomy. And nobody will question us when we say that the Amazon is worth more standing than destroyed. But, at the same time, we have to recognize the role of these communities. They have to be the protagonists.” Maria Amália Souza, Casa Socioenvironmental Fund

“There are some studies that show that when you lose an indigenous language, you are losing a lot of knowledge about medicinal plants that are known only in that language. So, to value indigenous cultures and indigenous people in the midst of a transition, that would be our main recommendation.” Paula Ellinger, Avina Foundation

Regarding Indigenous Peoples Origins and Traditional Communities the managers state that:

(i) Investments required to stimulate the forest economy are still scarce and not adapted to the local reality in terms of taking into consideration the local culture, the native indigenous peoples' livelihoods and traditional communities;

(ii) Local populations need help to manage their own small business operations and improve their living conditions. If the market demands certain commodities, the communities, who need resources, end up not managing biodiversity anymore and instead focusing only on a few products. But if there is no longer interest in a certain product, or the purchases take too long, more than a year to be carried out, the way of life of those communities is compromised.

Capital

“I think what is needed is to look at the chain as a whole, to have philanthropic investment to organize and eliminate the existing bottlenecks. And then prepare to scale this product with financing from banks and investments.” Rosa Maria de Lemos Sá - Funbio

“If we manage to make a clearer case here – for many of us it’s already intuitive and obvious that investing in bioeconomy is investing in climate response – we think we can mobilize more resources for the transition, and philanthropy has an important role here, due to the characteristics of funding, to break these bottlenecks and thus leverage more resources.”
Paula Ellinger, Avina Foundation

With respect to capital, the managers understand that:

(i) Investments to stimulate the forest economy should pay special attention to the challenging issue of scale, as it is often not feasible to apply large monetary resources to certain businesses, which could generate overproduction or over-exploitation of the Amazon;

(ii) Before directly supporting certain businesses it is necessary to make pre-investments in the Amazon economy, to break the bottlenecks and establish infrastructure. This type of resource is extremely valuable, though difficult to obtain because it is not a direct investment in bioeconomy, but in its underlying foundations:

(iii) Big agribusiness has always had favorable financial incentives and policies for its growth. By comparison, loans for bioeconomy companies are expensive, difficult to access and very bureaucratic. A specialized loan modality for the bioeconomy sector must be created, because the Amazon time frame is different from the time frame expected by traditional investors and depends on long-term capital. Therefore, to reach the Amazon 4.0 paradigm we need to add value to the products and services offered. In order to do this, we need technical assistance, rural extension programs and credit. [Pronaf](#) could be an option, as an important subsidized debt resource, but the program is very difficult to access.

(iv) It is important to make sure that financial resources go directly to local organizations. During all these years when there has been talk of protecting the Amazon, a large part of the resources ended up at large international environmental and conservationist organizations.

(v) Climate finance could be a great opportunity to boost bioeconomies in the Amazon, but few resources reach local organizations, especially in the forested areas, because there is still a big debate about what a climate response really is. It needs to be clearer that investing in solutions led by local organizations and indigenous peoples means investing in a climate solution.

Part 5c. Recommendations for Amazonian bioeconomy philanthropy

“I think that adequate philanthropy and in amounts that really make a difference now has to go hand in hand with bioeconomy investment, because we all want the Amazon standing and the Amazon populations healthy and living well.” Maria Amália Souza, Casa Socioenvironmental Fund

“Philanthropy has a very important role in making sure that resources can reach the local level, responding to local needs and conditions, through relationships of trust and strengthening a social capital that allows for innovation and making sure that all traditional

knowledge can effectively become an economic basis driving the Amazon as a protagonist in the climate response.” Paula Ellinger, Avina Foundation

“The scale in the Amazon is different from that observed in other biomes. Because everything is big in the Amazon, everything is far away, the scale is already given, and there cannot be a single solution to improve the region. But it’s not only the geographical scale, there is also the economic one, which has to be thought of on a scale of what is possible and sustainable.” Marcia Soares, Vale Fund

“The Amazon is very diverse and there is no silver bullet, something that can solve everything”. Andrea JBS Amazon Fund

“We really believe we have to build an integrated vision that values these partnerships between philanthropy, between the public sector, the private sector and civil society. So, having a diverse group helps a lot in this vision of development for the Amazon.” Renata Piazzon, Arapyaú Institute

The managers’ main recommendations for philanthropy are as follows:

(i) To change the current destructive economy of the Amazon to a new economy based on forest products, it is necessary to create new economic opportunities and organize arrangements to attract other investments and support the impact chain. Philanthropy can support initiatives not only financially, but also through human resources and mentoring, and provide the necessary connections;

(ii) The Amazon's time frame is different from the time frame expected by traditional investors, whose investments rely on long-term capital. In these cases, philanthropy can contribute to the design of innovative financial vehicles and the structuring of innovative models to raise robust investments that have a major impact;

(iii) Philanthropy in the Amazon must be properly implemented and in amounts that really make a difference, supporting the standing forest and its populations;

(iv) Philanthropy can accelerate transitions and catalyze bioeconomies in two ways: (a) by making direct investments in local productive arrangements and value chains, solving bottlenecks and, especially, making sure that the resources get into the hands of the protagonists of this transitions; and (b) by making more systemic investments that break down barriers so that these resources (financial, technological, and human) can reach the local level.

(v) Philanthropy can help to scale bioeconomy projects, to structure pipelines that can receive more private capital. The more flexible resources coming from philanthropy help these ventures to access larger volumes of conventional resources. In cases of *blended finance*, philanthropy comes in as a facilitator to overcome bottlenecks, creating the necessary conditions for projects to reach maturity and access financing from banks with lower interest rates.

(vi) Philanthropy can also support the resolution of structural, regulatory and knowledge barriers that impede the attraction of capital, such as: (a) supporting initiatives aimed at formulating a nationwide plan for bioeconomies; (b) organizing measures to encourage public funding; (c) establishing a regulatory structure that fosters investor confidence; (d) investing in legal frameworks that generate sector-relevant data, build capacity, support the rule of law, and complement the efforts of leading organizations; and (e) assisting local communities in accessing carbon markets and other financial mechanisms.

Part 6. Suggestions for expanding Amazonian bioeconomy philanthropy

Philanthropy is in a unique position to support the Amazon bioeconomy because, compared to other forms of capital, it often has greater flexibility and agility to provide financial resources that can reduce the risk of private investment and turn currently incipient projects into bankable ones.

These resources can be part of a broader strategy and can support promising economic initiatives that need so-called "patient capital." It can act in an integrated way with investments and corporate purchases, while leveraging private capital for a sustainable and scalable bioeconomy agenda.

Along with new resources, philanthropy can also bring a new vision of development to the region when, through its initiatives, it supports the rule of law, education, gender parity, racial equality, and indigenous peoples and traditional communities. This helps the local society, as a whole, changing its opinions of bioeconomy and reducing the risks of investments.

Part 6a. How can improving philanthropic infrastructure help the Amazon bioeconomy?

One of the most important aspects for philanthropy to help bioeconomy is to increase the resources destined to the Amazon. This can be done in several ways, the most relevant of which are listed below:

Developing new relationships

Based on the experience with [NEXUS](#), AIC understands that new donations to the Amazon bioeconomy will come not only as a result of new research or information, but by developing new relationships between donors and Amazonian populations. This can be accomplished in the following ways: (i) structuring mentorship programs between staff of professional grantmaking foundations already active in the Amazon and new philanthropists interested in operating in the region; (ii) organizing study trips for donors and investors to the Amazon; (iii) promoting road shows in Europe and North America presenting opportunities for philanthropy, impact investment and buyers; (iii) creating learning groups focused on the Amazon with universities, unions and other institutions;

Another way is to create venues in which large foundations, and private investors that are already active in the Amazon region, can share information with bilateral agencies, representatives of the private sector and organized civil society, located outside the region and abroad.

Communicating the importance of bioeconomy for the Amazon must also be improved, expanding awareness of the subject in all media, disseminating the results of good projects currently underway, and preparing promotional materials and educational videos on philanthropy, investment, and corporate procurement in the Amazon.

Structuring and implementing new financial instruments

There are already some experiences in Brazil that are structuring and implementing [new financial instruments](#). But, other instruments can be used in the Amazon region, such as [Forest Bonds](#) or wild forest products bonds, a bond idea yet to be created that would be focused on non-timber forest products, such as Brazil nuts or açaí. These bonds could be financed by carbon markets, payments for environmental services, and long-term procurement contracts made by large companies.

Facilitating support for the grassroots of bioeconomy chains

Community funds can facilitate access to resources for indigenous and extractivist communities in the Amazon, supporting the grassroots of sociobiodiversity in bioeconomy chains and using these resources more efficiently, since local communities have in-depth knowledge of their needs, which allows them to identify projects that are more relevant and effective for the region.

We have to promote other catalytic philanthropy of community-run businesses to derisk investment routes and make early projects more bankable. Large grantmakers avoid the burdens of due diligence minutiae, ignore small dollar grant requests, and prefer to make a few large grants, but often struggle to find qualified partners in the Amazon because most locals are small operators. In addition to the community funds outlined earlier in this article, there are nearly a dozen international regranters that help to facilitate Amazon grantmaking by offering would-be donors their expertise as well as facilitating financial transfers between countries. [Here is a list of Amazon-active regranters](#) for reference.

Finally, we can also encourage individuals who want to support conservation by loaning money to Amazon bioeconomy businesses but do not have the time, networks or language skills to do it well.

Systematizing and sharing philanthropic knowledge about the Amazon

At the global level, there are dozens of donor associations focused on climate change, yet few of them have institutional knowledge about the Amazon forest. The Biodiversity Funders Group is one. It hosts a working group called Funders of the Amazon Basin which is dedicated to sharing information privately with small group of professional funders.

Latimpacto, the Latin American chapter of the International Venture Philanthropy Association, hosts Pan-Amazon Learning Labs educating funders, featuring experts, and producing research. GIFE, the leading association of grantmaking institutions in Brazil, developed [a comprehensive map](#) of Brazilian grantmakers and their work in the Amazon.

These groups help to foster fundraising and facilitate communication and collaboration among grantmakers from diverse sectors. However, there is still a long way to go to fully professionalize the philanthropic sector in South America at large. The culture of philanthropy is limited and needs to be expanded. For every high net worth family that gives philanthropically at a high level, there are many more that have the capacity to do so, but that have not yet started to figure out how. A lot needs to be done to scale philanthropy in the region, and especially to the Amazon. The AIC, as a global philanthropic learning and collaboration platform associated with NEXUS, believes we can help overcome these obstacles, but not necessarily lead the process.

Several other possibilities exist to improve philanthropy for the Amazon and the bioeconomy. Before scaling them, however, we believe systems need to be developed, together with the leading foundations, NGOs, and private sector actors in the region. A system is needed to help systematize current strategies, share discoveries, identify gaps, outline priorities, and build common strategies moving forward.

By developing systems for philanthropic knowledge consolidation and sharing we can understand how donor institutions are differentiated by geography, language, issue-focus, expertise, size, and more. Donors could more effectively work together to develop shared Amazon-focused media, advocacy, marketing strategies, and more. With such systems, grantmakers could collaborate on future donor briefings and explore shared impact metrics.

Building a Small Amazon Bioeconomy Grant Evaluation Facility

In line with these observations, the AIC is building a program to invite bioeconomy-related grant proposals from local Amazonians for presentation to donors around the world. The proposals will be reviewed and voted upon by an advisory group of local entrepreneurship support organizations. The process hopes to mobilize new philanthropy for the sector by vetting quality requests and liaising with donors who wish to rely on local expertise and keep the option of their anonymity. To learn more about the program [here](#).