



BRAZIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT FY 23





Cooperation between USFS and the Brazilian government steps up initiatives to tackle the climate crisis

Amid the challenge of the government transition and restructuring of the environmental agenda in Brazil, the strengthening of partnerships is a milestone towards the advancement of activities

The environment, especially in the Amazon, has been one of the priorities of the current Brazilian government since the beginning of 2023. The resumption, improvement and development of policies aimed at conservation in the Amazon, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and sustainable development of traditional peoples and communities, with the new National Bio-Economy Policy, and increased efforts to combat and prevent forest fires with the Integrated Fire Management Policy, were the focus of intense work in the first six months of this government. The federal government has gone through a period of restructuring and strengthened dialogue with other countries, seeking alignment and partnerships, with the understanding that these issues are relevant to the entire planet.

Within this context, USFS has been building on more than **50** years of technical cooperation with Brazilian environmental agencies, with a focus on promoting

Meeting between Ibama and USFS to discuss partnership planning and firefighting and prevention actions. Photo: Priscila Steffen / USFS IP Brazil Program





development and nature conservation, especially in the Amazon, through the Forest Management and Fire Prevention Program in Brazil, with support from USAID. One of the highlights in 2023 was carrying out strategic planning together with various teams and coordinators from the environmental agencies.

Interagency coordination

- Collaboration with **12** Coordination Offices and **10** General Coordination Offices (including regional coordination offices of FUNAI and ICMBio)
- Coordination with **2** secretariats of the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

This collaboration has helped to strengthen the agencies, train their technical teams and improve actions to prevent, manage and combat forest fires, as well as supporting the restoration of degraded areas and the development of fairer value chains for extractive products. USFS played a fundamental role in mediating and facilitating dialogue during the period of transition between governments and reorganization of the agencies, as well as dialogue between the coordination offices and directorates. In total, the activities supported by USFS and USAID have contributed to the management of more than 19 million hectares of forests and rivers in **29 Indigenous Lands** and **38 Conservation Units**

Leila Nápoles, from ICMBio, shows the area of activity in monitoring the Amazon forest at the base of the Anavilhanas National Park. Photo: Priscila Steffen / USFS IP Brazil Program



“Caring for the Land and Serving People”

Seven words that reflect our mission in Brazil... and around the world and that shape the activities carried out by the USFS Brazil Program with Brazilian organizations and the participation of partners in international events, such as seminars, conferences and technical visits. This year, eight international seminars offered by USFS, with support from USAID, provided benefits and opportunities for mutual learning, collaboration, understanding of global environmental issues and the development of innovative solutions on a broad scale.

These seminars play an important role in building networks for knowledge and collaboration, positively influencing natural resource management and environmental conservation in Brazil and other partner countries. In 2023, fifteen people from Brazil took part in specific seminars focused on climate change, disaster management, protected area management, natural resource law enforcement, and sustainable tourism. The design of most of these events is aimed at forming a community of practice, which guarantees continuous interaction between participants, establishing a dynamic and permanent network for exchanging knowledge. Of note was the significant participation of thirteen women in these events, reflecting our commitment to diversity and inclusion, which are necessary to promote a variety of approaches to natural resource management.

USFS partners exchange experiences in a technical visit on communication and fire. Photo: Colorado State University





Marina Kluppel, an environmental analyst at the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio), shows how the partnership between USAID/USFS and the Brazilian government can have a positive impact on the technical training of public servants and the promotion of conservation policies. Despite the lack of resources and personnel, she believes that in the area of visitation, huge progress has been made in the last 15 years, especially owing to this type of technical support. And according to Lorena Brewster, USFS specialist in Public Use, Communication and Management of Protected Areas, “international seminars provide unique moments that influence and inspire the individual and professional growth of each person involved, including the hosts from foreign organizations, such as universities and USFS itself. After all, it is only by knowing and understanding the perspectives, challenges and expectations of our partners that we will finally arrive at the solutions we seek for ourselves, our countries and our planet.”

International Collaboration

Fiscal Year 2023

- Coparticipation of **15** people from Brazil.
- **8** different USFS international seminars.
- Themes: climate change, disaster management, protected areas, natural resources law enforcement and sustainable tourism.
- Community building: formation of a community of practice, which guarantees continued interaction between participants, establishing a dynamic and permanent network for exchanging knowledge.

Participants of Sustainable Tourism Seminar, in partnership with Colorado State University, during the course in Colorado, U.S. Photo: Cintia Brazão/ICMBio



How diversity and inclusion improve firefighting and prevention

Indigenous women integrate ancestral knowledge and technical know-how about the use of fire, but they still face discrimination and gender barriers.

Respecting the diversity of indigenous cultures, who approach the issue of fire based on their spiritual beliefs and local cultural contexts, the movement of indigenous women’s groups seeking training as firefighters has been growing over the last year. The Brazilian government’s Federal Brigades Program, for example, has trained and hired indigenous brigades to act against forest fires in their own territories, but indigenous women still face barriers to participation.

USFS and USAID, in partnership with FUNAI and Prevfogo/Ibama, have been working to strengthen the gender inclusion agenda, focusing on groups of indigenous women from four ethnic groups in the states of Maranhão and Tocantins. They give visibility to their crucial role in im-

plementing integrated fire management strategies. Over the last year, they have taken part in training in technical courses, drawn up projects and raised funds to buy equipment and materials for environmental education activities. As well as acting with greater safety and knowledge in fire prevention and firefighting activities, they have also created a community of practice among the groups of indigenous women firefighters to exchange experiences, which has inspired more women to become firefighters.

Indigenous women’s groups supported by USFS and USAID are becoming transformative agents in forest fire prevention efforts, expanding environmental education strategies and forest restoration activities. These women work with other firefighters in their territories, becoming allies of local communities and other organizations in actions to combat climate change.

Apinajé Indigenous women volunteer fire crew during a training course in Tocantins. this photo won the people’s choice category of the “Peoples connected to earth” photography prize, promoted by Fundo Casa. Photo: Bruno Kelly / USAID.



Empowering diversity through technical cooperation

- Formation of a representative committee to organize the 1st Meeting of Indigenous Women Forest Firefighters
- Workplan developed in consultation with the Xerente all-women volunteer fire brigade
- Curso de formação de brigada voluntária de mulheres indígenas
- Release of the OnFire Podcast series focusing on Brazilian female firefighters working in Integrated Fire Management
- Participation in the inter-institutional study group on gender and Amazonian socio-biodiversity product value chains.

By the numbers

- **40** Apinajé indigenous women trained in wildfire prevention and suppression.
- **13** Xerente women firefighters attend and contribute to a Workshop for Tourism Planning on Xerente Indigenous Land.
- **\$ 6,000** granted by Fundo Casa for the purchase of personal protective equipment and tools for integrated firefighting and management activities for the Apinaje volunteer women's brigade.
- **3** Xerente women firefighters participate in the Motorized equipment instructors Cours.



Xerente Indigenous women volunteer fire crew working on restoration activities.
Photo: Andressa Anholet / USAID-USFS Brazil.

“ We invest in ourselves to be what we want, to feel like women. I’m a kindergarten teacher in the village, I work in the fields, I play ball, I’m the mother of two boys and I’m a volunteer firefighter.”

Rosineide Xerente, a volunteer firefighter in the Xerente Indigenous Territory.



Strengthening Volunteer Force in Integrated Fire Management in Brazil

Integrated initiative seeks regulation and safety of volunteer work in fire management

Volunteers play a fundamental role in environmental protection and in fighting and preventing forest fires in Brazil. With an increasingly broad network, in a country with many different biomes and complexities, this practice is gaining strength with the collaboration of various international institutions and organizations.

Providing opportunities for people who volunteer in Integrated Fire Management (IFM) in Brazil to have access to knowledge on the subject and to carry out their activities safely is one of the objectives of the support for volunteering in Integrated Fire Management in the country and the commitment of the initiative led by the Institute for Ecological Research (IPE), together with USFS, with support from USAID, the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (Ibama), the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio) and German Cooperation through GIZ.

One of the main activities over the last year has been the process of drafting a federal strategy to regulate the work of volunteers in fire prevention and fighting. This effort will represent a milestone in Brazilian public policy, allowing volunteers to act effectively and safely.

Volunteer brigade members and representatives of the partner's institutions working in the development of the national volunteering strategy in IFM during the 2nd workshop held in Brasília. Photo: IPE





To coordinate the strategy’s actions, the Ecological Research Institute (IPE) held three participatory workshops throughout this year, with the participation of dozens of institutions working on the issue of Integrated Fire Management. The expectation is that next year a draft regulation will be presented on volunteer work in IFM in Brazil, consolidating fire prevention and firefighting practices.

In addition to drawing up the strategy, USFS also supported the training of Brazilian volunteers through courses held in the country, such as Introduction to the Incident Command System (SCI-100), Introduction to Incident Information (S-203) and Motorized Equipment Instruction, in which volunteers associated with the National Volunteer Brigade Network (RNBV) took part.

Another highlight among the activities carried out is USFS support for the participation of Anderson de Freitas, a volunteer from Minas Gerais, in the world’s largest forest fire conference, Wildfire, held in May 2023 in Porto, Portugal. This opportunity allowed for technical and scientific exchange and the sharing of experiences related to Brazilian volunteer brigades who are organizing themselves into an association, as in the case of RNBV.

“The inclusion of the summary of my article in Wildfire has helped to show the world that Brazilian volunteer brigades are organizing themselves to form an association, RNBV, and strengthening the work of volunteer brigade members.”

*Anderson de Freitas
volunteer from Minas Gerais/ RNBV*

Volunteer brigade members and representatives of the partner’s institutions working in the development of the national volunteering strategy in IFM during the 2nd workshop held in Brasília. Photo: IPE.



Fire Management training progresses in Brazil

Interagency dialogue through Working Groups and courses such as SCI-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System strengthen the process of implementing new courses.

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standard tool for managing forest fires in the United States and in Brazil. Training on the subject is one of the objectives of the ICS Working Group (WG) formed by the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA), the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMbio), the Military Fire Brigade and Civil Defense with the coordination and technical support of USFS. Together, the partners aim to standardize and implement the ICS in their institutions so that they can communicate and work in an integrated manner during fires, especially complex wildfires, maximizing the resources available and minimizing the negative impacts on the climate, society and nature.

In its first year of operation, the WG, through regular meetings, has invested in adapting and providing access to courses on the subject. The first of these, SCI-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System, was translated, adapted and implemented by the WG. In the last year, it has trained around 400

Working group with participants from partner agencies during the SCI-100 course.
Photo: Suelene Couto / USFS IP Brazil Program



OS INCÊNDIOS FLORESTAIS ULTRAPASSAM FRONTEIRAS

Capacitação padrão permitirá a assistência mútua

Instituições e países atuando como uma força integrada

O mundo está vivenciando um aumento nas condições favoráveis à ocorrência de incêndios florestais. Grandes incêndios atravessam jurisdições e fronteiras. Portanto, há uma necessidade crescente de apoio e cooperação entre as diferentes instituições no Brasil e entre países para a prevenção e a supressão de incêndios florestais.

Para que diferentes instituições e países operem juntos, a USAID, o Serviço Florestal dos EUA e instituições parceiras no Brasil, estão colaborando para desenvolver um Sistema de Qualificação e Currículo Padronizado (SQCP) para treinar e credenciar brigadistas de acordo com os padrões internacionais.

Categorias e posições

Pessoal de comando:
6 posições

Operações:
5 posições

Operações aéreas:
2 posições

Planejamento:
1 posição

Logística:
1 posição

Despacho / Ataque Inicial:
1 posição

Prevenção e investigação:
2 posições

18
posições
≈
37
cursos

Rumo à aprovação:

Inscrição → Capacitação e treinamento → Avaliação → Aptidão física → Avaliação da experiência → Qualificação → Aprovação

Elementos para permitir a interoperabilidade entre países:



Aumentar a segurança, eficácia e eficiência das operações de manejo do fogo

Capacitação e elaboração da trilha curricular de aprendizagem

3 posições de operação nos próximos 2 anos

1. Chefe de Brigada (CHEB)

Qualificação prévia: Chefe de Esquadrão

Capacitação necessária:

- (SCI-200) Sistema de Comando de Incidentes
- (S-230) Chefe de Brigada (recurso único)
- (S-290) Curso intermediário de comportamento dos incêndios florestais

Aptidão física: Difícil

Capacitação adicional:

- (S-219) Operações de Ignição
- (S-270) Operações Aéreas Básicas
- (L-280) De seguidor a líder

Capacitação recorrente:

- (CR-130): Atualização anual do treinamento de segurança em incêndios florestais

2. Chefe de Esquadrão (CESQ)

Qualificação prévia: Brigadista de incêndios florestais

Capacitação necessária:

- (S-131) Chefe de Esquadrão

Aptidão física: Difícil

Capacitação adicional:

- (S-211) Motobombas portátil e uso de água
- (S-212) Motosserras para Incêndios Florestais

Capacitação recorrente:

- (CR-130): Atualização anual do treinamento de segurança em incêndios florestais

3. Brigadista de Incêndios Florestais (BRIF)

Qualificação prévia: Nenhuma

Aptidão física: Difícil

Capacitação necessária:

- (SCI-100) Introdução ao Sistema de Comando de Incidentes
- (S-190) Introdução ao comportamento de incêndios florestais
- (L-180) Fatores Humanos no serviço de Incêndios Florestais
- (S-130) Capacitação de brigadista de incêndios florestais

Capacitação adicional:

Nenhuma

Capacitação recorrente:

- (CR-130): Atualização anual do treinamento de segurança em incêndios florestais

Código associado à temática:

- S: Supressão
- SCI: Sistema de Comando de Incidentes
- L: Liderança
- M: Manejo ou gestão
- FI: Investigação
- RX: Fogo prescrito
- D: Despacho

Nível do curso:
100: Básico
200: Intermediário
300: Intermediário-avanzado
400: Avanzado



Sistema Interagências desenvolvido pelo National Wildfire Coordinating Group.

people, including civil servants, firefighters and volunteers, both in person and online, and is preparing to train the first group of ICS instructors in December as part of the framework of cooperation.

For USFS, training in the global language of fire is essential for a better understanding of interagency fire management strategies. According to Forrest Behm, a USFS firefighter, "Fire is fire and it doesn't respect barriers; it's important that we firefighters, whether from the United States, Europe or South America, use the same terminology, organization and tactical actions, so there's no confusion when fighting." The ICS reinforces fire terminology and facilitates the management of actions in the field, benefiting all institutions involved and affected populations.

In addition to the ICS courses, since February of this year, Brazil has been working through the Integrated Fire Management (IFM) Qualification Working Group on a proposal to standardize courses, including on ICS, in order to implement a single learning path in the future that would train, organize and classify the various categories and positions within the brigade programs, as well as making it possible to integrate resources between countries in the event of major incidents. The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MMA), Ibama, ICMBio and the National Foundation for Indigenous Peoples (FUNAI) make up the WG on IFM Training.

Infographic - Qualification System produced by Fire South America Regional Program.



Partnerships expand the role of traditional peoples and communities in the Amazon

Conservation of the Amazon depends on traditional peoples and communities, with their ways of life connected to the health of the forest, rivers and biodiversity

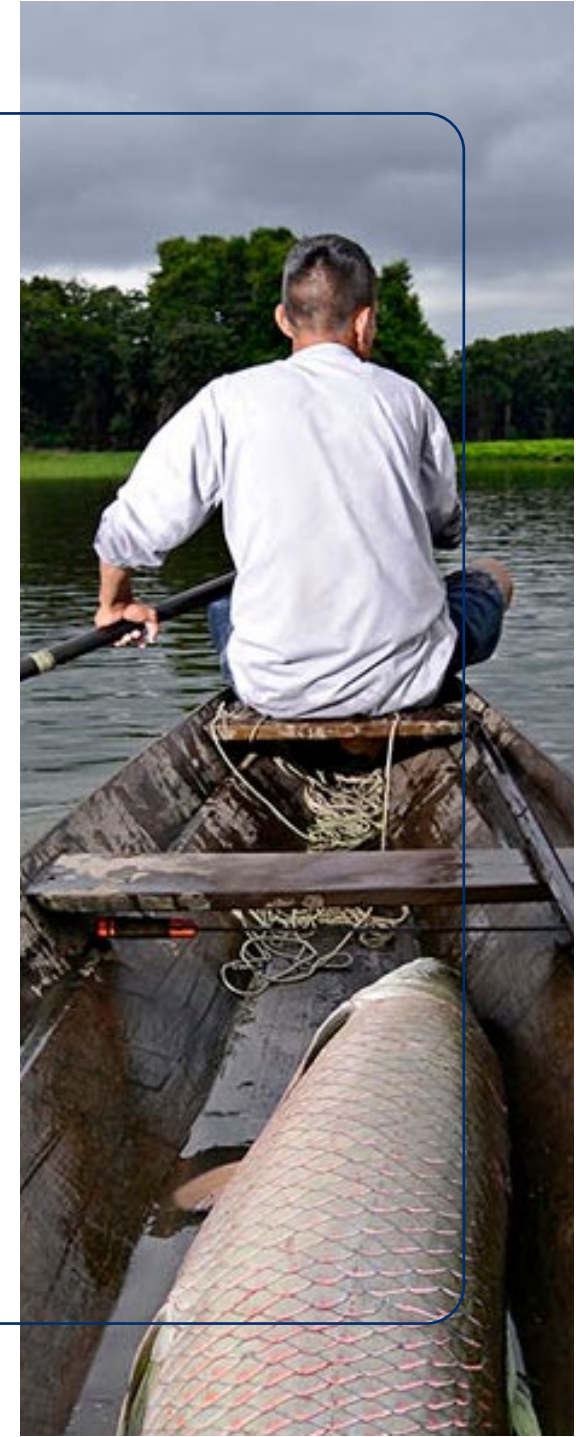
Promoting the well-being and appreciation of traditional peoples and communities integrated with nature conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources is part of the USFS mission in Brazil. In 2023, we worked in collaboration with **20** organizations representing indigenous peoples and traditional riverside and extractivist communities living in **33** protected areas in the Amazon, as well as seven NGOs working directly with the communities, **12** indigenous brigades and **6** volunteer brigades. We are improving the participation and governance of these groups in the value chains, restoring degraded areas in their territories and enhancing their efforts to prevent and combat forest fires.

The Rio Branco Indigenous Peoples' Cooperative (COOPIRB), in Rondônia, has improved the way it processes managed açaí, enabling the expansion of its fruit suppliers to the Igarapé Lourdes and Kwaza do Rio São Pedro Indigenous Lands. The purchase of **700** cans of açaí fruit generated a total of R\$50,000 for the açaí harvesters in 2023. COOPIRB also expanded its sales to the private sector beyond public

purchases, totaling more than **4,500** liters of açaí and generating revenues of R\$73,000.

The Beruri Agricultural Association (Assoab), which manages an Amazon nut production facility in the municipality of Beruri, Amazonas, began setting up a vegetable oil processing plant in 2023. In doing so, it has stepped up its work with extractivist communities, strengthening ties and maintaining fairer commercial ties with Brazil nut growers and encouraging the start of muru-muru extractivism. In an arrangement supported by Operação Amazônia Nativa (OPAN), in Lábrea (also in the state of Amazonas, but on the Middle Purus River), Brazil nut gatherers from two other Indigenous Lands and an Extractive Reserve sell the raw nuts to be processed by Assoab. The nuts produced by Assoab are sold to the Natura cosmetics company and other private companies.

In 2023, the activities of collective organizations of traditional peoples and communities working with socio-bioeconomic products were consolidated mainly in the areas of political negotiations and communication. The Pirarucu Collective, for example, held a series of presen-



Pirarucu Fishing. Photo: Adriano Gambarini



tations and meetings with federal government bodies. The results of these meetings, i.e. a pirarucu management program discussed with IBAMA, will bring more benefits to the lives of the pirarucu harvesters.

USFS support for the work of these organized groups enables traditional peoples and communities in the Amazon to have greater governance over their territories, their natural resources, local engagement and a leading role in the value chains of socio-biodiversity products.

“ The project opened the door for us to reach the communities, providing knowledge so that quality production could take place and people could work in an organized way. This wasn’t done before. People used to sell directly to the middlemen without knowing how much their products were going for. When we started doing this field work, it changed the reality for the Brazil nut growers of Beruri. ”

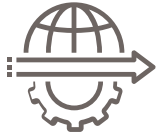
Sandra Amud, president of the Beruri Farmers’ Association (Assoab)



Check out the Value’s Chain videos on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0o0BOU8BwY>

Community working in Açaí collecting. Photo: Ana Catarina



It's all about people and nature

In the heart of the Amazon, USFS and USAID are working to support individuals, communities, and organizations to create a better today and a greater tomorrow for generations to come.

A thriving forest is not only vital for the environment but also for the people who call it home. This year we published some stories of indigenous women in the Amazon to illustrate the impact of our collaborative work.

Simone Xerente's journey is a testament to the transformative power of these initiatives. She made history by becoming the first indigenous woman from her ethnic group (located in the state of Tocantins) to join a fire brigade in her territory. Moreover, she is the first indigenous woman to become a part of the elite Pronto Emprego fire brigades, which serve the entire Brazilian territory. Simone was inspired after participating in the first female volunteer brigade training course in 2021.

Simone, a dedicated mother of five, trained tirelessly alongside her husband, also a firefighter, to fulfill her dream of protecting her territory. Her success was motivated by the women she met during her time in the volunteer brigade, Simone recalls. Today, Simone serves as an inspiration to others in her community, including her 17-year-old son and fellow brigade members.

Simone Xerente in her daily training for the brigade exam and her daughter in the background. Photo: Andressa Anholete / USFS IP Brazil





“ I set my mind into thinking I was going to pass the test even though I sometimes didn’t believe that I could do it. The women inspired me.”

Simone Xerente

Other women are breaking barriers and reshaping traditional gender roles. For example, Alcimara Karipuna, an indigenous leader from the state of Amapá who advocates for increased female participation in decision-making within indigenous communities in the Amazon. She holds the position of Deputy General Coordinator of the Karipuna People’s Indigenous Association (AIKA), becoming the first woman to hold such a coordination role since the association’s creation in 2010.

Alcimara’s mission is to promote women’s involvement in shaping the future of their communities. She emphasizes the unique perspective that women bring to environmental issues, stating, (destacar essa aspa) “We, women, have a very broad view of nature: we are careful and sensitive. Exchanging knowledge, learning, and experiences in training programs is very important.”

AIKA is one of the organizations selected to implement projects to recover degraded areas and restoration of native vegetation on indigenous lands. These women’s stories were shared within USAID and show the positive impact of USFS and USAID programs in the Amazon, fostering a brighter future for both the environment and the remarkable women who care about their home and their lives.

Learn more - [Simone Xerente’s story](#)

Learn more - [Alcimara’s Story](#)

Simone Xerente prepares for act in a wildfire. Photo: Andressa Anholet / USFS IP Brazil Program



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