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Innovation towards Sustainable Development  
Member of IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature

PRO-NATURA NEWSLETTER MAY 2010

## **PRO-NATURA'S ACTIVITIES TO TACKLE ILLEGAL GOLD MINING IN THE AMAZON**



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### **Pro-Natura International partners with Cartier in Amapa to offer alternatives to gold washing with mercury**



● Pamela Caillens, Director of Social and Environmental Responsibility at Cartier, said at the beginning of the project: "For many years, at Cartier, we have been working on the supply chains of gemstones and precious metals, seeking to improve our own practices and those of the whole chain from mine to retail. We are co-founders of the Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC), a not-for-profit organisation created in 2005 whose purpose is to advance the business practices of the industry ([www.responsiblejewellery.com](http://www.responsiblejewellery.com)). The RJC now has more than 200 members, who have all adopted its Code of Conduct and are undergoing external certification over the next two years.

● It was during a meeting of this organisation in 2005 in Antwerp, where a dozen NGOs had come to provide feedback on the emerging project, that we met PNI and were impressed with its very global approach to the environment and development, at the same time very practical and very innovative. By working with Pro-Natura in Amapa, a region of Amazonia so removed from our day-to-day operations and a victim to the terrible consequences of illegal mercury-processed gold extraction, we were sure that we had the right partner to help make a difference. Three years down the road, we are proud of the work that has been accomplished".

**Pro-Natura International**

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## **FIND THE MEANS TO LIVE NOT TO LEAVE**

### **Alternative local livelihoods for illegal gold miners**



In 2007, Pro-Natura launched with the support of Cartier a new community-driven sustainable development project benefiting around 3,500 persons in eight rural communities living around the world's largest protected tropical forest, the Tumucumaque Mountains National Park. Following 50 years of intensive manganese extraction and gold mining, environmentally friendly development projects are a necessity for the people living within this strategic mining area.

We started by creating a local NGO called Natureza da Amazônia (NDA, [www.naturezadaamazonia.com.br](http://www.naturezadaamazonia.com.br)) involving local experts in agriculture, health, scientific research, craftsmanship and ecotourism. This

NGO participates in the social technology network [www.rts.org.br](http://www.rts.org.br) in order to exchange methodologies and practices for solving different types of social, economic and environmental problems.

Today our integrated participatory development project attracts the attention of other actors such as the Amapá State Government that funds the training we provide in sustainable natural resource management. More than 2000 people have taken part in different courses including fish farming, craftsmanship using local materials, ecotourism, etc.



The plan is to scale-up our activities along the Brazil–France border by implementing the *Cross-Border Community Driven Sustainable Development Project French Guyana / Amapá* in collaboration with partners in French Guyana.

The socio-economic and ecological consequences of gold mining in that part of the world are attracting worldwide attention.

In such a strategic environment, the support of Cartier is crucial and highly relevant in the context of Cartier's commitment to responsible jewellery practices.

*Project beneficiaries at Riozinho village, Pedra Branca Municipality*



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## **BEYOND SURVIVING, LESSONS FOR THRIVING**

### **Objectives, major activities and results**

The specific objectives of the project are:

- Create employment and income for the local population to afford decent living conditions and reduce poverty-driven migration from Amapá towards French Guyana;
- Protect biodiversity and promote sustainable management of natural resources;
- Preserve traditional knowledge and know-how within communities;
- Focus on women and children.

### **So far, the main project activities have been:**



- Capacity-building and support to local associations, focusing on administrative procedures such as registering an association, accountancy, fundraising and partnership establishment. 100 people have benefited so far from this type of course organised in collaboration with SEBRAE (Service of Support for Micro and Small Brazilian Enterprises);
  - Setting up a health and environmental training programme benefiting 8 communities. Brochures about prevention of infectious tropical diseases have been distributed to

communities. Mainly children have followed the environmental training programme that includes: water and waste management, risks related to gold mining activities, biodiversity protection and nutrition. Five biosand water filters have been installed in the communities' schools;

- Training 112 artisans and facilitating marketing of their products via the Artisan's house in Macapá and through kiosks located at Macapá harbour during stops of tourist ships, and facilitating the stopping of cruise ships in Macapá;
- Supporting income-generating pilot projects such as valorisation of the Cipo-Titica liana or *liane franche* with members of the Agua Fria Extractivism association;
- Launching the On-Farm Agroforestry Training project to diversify agricultural production and conserve biodiversity. *Cutting boxes* have been constructed at the Cachorrinho Agricultural Family-School, at Rio Zinho and Cachaço villages. These simple and innovative tools are used to domesticate Amazonian native fruit trees and for massive production of threatened timber tree species.

Our collaboration with the Amapá State Government has been particularly fruitful. We played an active role in the establishment of the Brazilian-French Institute for Biodiversity that will be located in Oiapoque and Serra do Navio cities. Focus has been on capacity-building of community associations. Most of these training sessions integrate the concept of using locally available materials to add value to natural resources in a sustainable way.



### **Health and Environmental Education**

Communities are facing a wide range of environmental problems as the result of both natural and anthropogenic factors such as 50 years of intensive mining (mainly manganese and gold) and recent corresponding human migrations.

Because health, environment and human activities are interrelated and have a direct impact on the lives of our project beneficiaries, we have developed an environmental training programme for schools. It includes awareness-raising on risks related to gold mining activities. The programme has been developed in eight target villages using film, cartoons and brochures as the main teaching materials. This awareness-raising work amongst children is particularly important to improve understanding about the relevance of protecting the biodiversity of Tumucumaque National Park.



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### Practical agroforestry training



The "Cutting Box", an innovative low-tech mini greenhouse to propagate useful trees by cuttings

We launched the on-farm agroforestry training project in June 2008. Two trainings of trainers workshops were organised in Cachaço and Rio Zinho communities, focusing on the vegetative propagation of useful trees, multiplying them by small cuttings. The establishment of agroforestry demonstration plots is complementary to the *Super Vegetable Gardens* that we are now planning to establish in Amapá.

Registered local associations will be able to market Non-Timber Forest Products and vegetables through the Federal Government Acquisition Food Program. To restore degraded pastures and reduce deforestation, we are also encouraging cow breeders to practice agroforestry towards an ecological pasture system able to maintain the soil fertility.

One of the aims of the agroforestry training programme is also to plant trees with seeds that can be used for craft-making.

### Craft-making

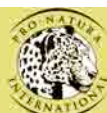


Four craft-making workshops took place in Cachaço and Pedra Preta communities, involving mostly women. Amazonian Non-Timber Forest Products are used to design "bio-jewels". For example, seeds and fibres are used to create rings, key-chains, bracelets, collars, belts, earrings, etc

The Natureza da Amazônia kiosks at Macapá harbor

### Amapá State Public Policy

This State has severe problems stemming from immigrant gold miners. In 2005, there was a massive immigration flux to Serra do Navio due to the start of industrial gold mining in the neighbouring city, Pedra Branca. Before that, the city of Serra do Navio, founded by Icomi Company to take advantage of the region's manganese deposits, was considered in its time as one of the most futuristic cities of Brazil. In 2003, manganese exploitation ended and the city was transferred to Amapá State Government. Immigration linked with gold has created social and environmental problems. In order to solve these problems, Natureza da Amazonia, our local NGO, has encouraged the State Government to set up a local development agency, the Serra do Navio Foundation. It is the gateway to the Tumucumaque Mountains National Park.



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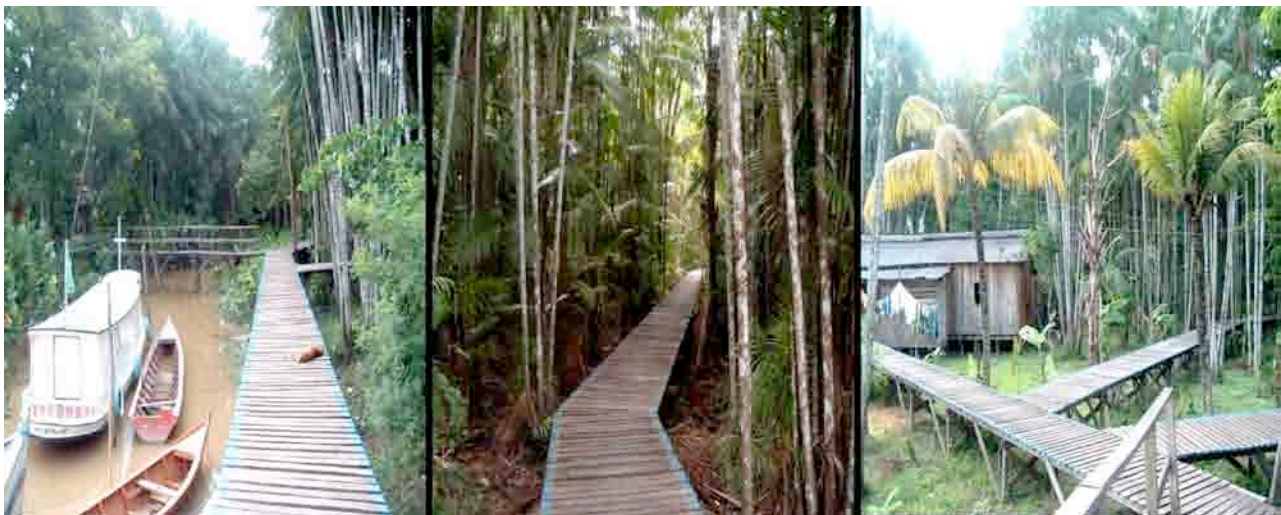
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## Professional Training Courses

The Federal and Amapa State Government formally signed a partnership agreement with Natureza da Amazônia in order to help targeted communities located in Serra do Navio and Pedra Branca municipalities, as well as other cities of the Amapa State. The aim is to reduce unemployment by providing professional training, particularly for the youth. From September 2008 to May 2009, 33 different courses were organised.

## **NEW WAYS FOR NEW HORIZONS**

### Community Tourism



SEBRAE (a governmental organisation that assists SMEs) is supporting the implementation of our community tourist project in an environmentally protected area surrounding Macapá, in partnership with the Amapa State Government ([www.apadafazendinha.com.br](http://www.apadafazendinha.com.br)). The project started in August 2009 and has the following objectives:

- To strengthen fair trade initiatives and align local culture with social, economic and environmental sustainability;
- To improve the marketing of handicrafts produced by local communities located;
- To develop community-based tourism and ecotourism through organised tours.

Eco-tourists will have the opportunity to walk trails, discover small workshops and local production systems such as shrimp farms, vegetable gardens, açai palm tree plantations, the regional shipyard, etc.

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