

2024/2025

PROJECT REPORT

PROTECTING ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS, AMAZON REGION



SAVING RIVERS AND LAKES ORG.

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Defending Those Who Defend the Amazon

Throughout 2024–2025, the Protecting Environmental Defenders project tackled two urgent crises in the Amazon: accelerating deforestation and the growing violence against those who risk their lives to defend nature. Across Bolivia and Peru, indigenous leaders, local activists, and conservationists face threats from illegal logging, mining, and powerful criminal networks.

To respond, four organizations — Saving Rivers and Lakes, DIB, Dialogos, and Aktion Amazonas — joined forces to strengthen safety, visibility, and advocacy for environmental defenders working on the frontlines.

The Change We Wanted to Create

The project focused on two clear goals:

- Build a Safety Awareness and Risk Reduction Strategy to better protect local communities, NGO staff, and Danish partners working in high-risk Amazonian areas.
- Conduct a Groundbreaking Study on Violence in the Amazon to provide NGOs and civil society with solid data for advocacy and policy influence.

Learn more by viewing the full project [here](#).

How We Took Action

The consortium designed a comprehensive safety framework tailored to the Amazon's realities — vast territories, scarce infrastructure, and high exposure to organized crime.

This strategy includes:

- Practical steps to prevent and reduce personal and collective risks.
- Emergency preparedness and crisis response plans.
- Legal guidance and recovery measures for those affected by threats or attacks.

In parallel, the study on violence documented how illegal economies and weak institutions fuel both deforestation and violence against environmental defenders.

By working with local organizations, researchers, and community members, the study brought new visibility to an often-overlooked human rights crisis.



What We Achieved Together

- A Safety and Risk Reduction Strategy published in English and Spanish, giving communities and organizations concrete tools to improve security and preparedness.
- A data-driven study that exposes the connection between environmental destruction, organized crime, and the persecution of human rights defenders.
- Greater awareness and advocacy in Denmark and internationally, highlighting the courage and vulnerability of those protecting the Amazon.
- Stronger transnational collaboration between Latin American and Danish partners, creating a network that continues to defend nature and human dignity beyond project borders.

Beyond the Project: What Comes Next

Although the project has officially ended, its legacy continues. The published materials remain freely available to organizations, journalists, and policymakers. The findings are now guiding new collaborations to extend protection strategies to other high-risk regions — ensuring that defending the environment also means defending the people who care for it.