

NONPROFITS

LVMH, UNESCO expand on Amazon project

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LVMH continues in its effort toward Amazon sustainability. Image credit: LVMH

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

French luxury goods conglomerate LVMH Mot Hennessy Louis Vuitton and nonprofit organization UNESCO have unveiled two new sustainability initiatives within biosphere reserves in Bolivia and Ecuador.

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With a budget of \$6.1 million over the course of five years, the partnership aims to reconcile environmental protection and sustainable development, while respecting local cultural contexts. Two major issues were identified: reforestation and rehabilitation of degraded lands and the creation of sustainable employment and alternative sources of income for local communities.

Initiatives for the environment

In Bolivia, the Tsimane indigenous people and local people living along the Maniqui river practice small-scale subsistence and commercial agriculture, based on rotational fallow systems. However, the forests in the surrounding area have been heavily logged in recent decades, with the result that many native timber species have been depleted.

The objective of LVMH and UNESCO's initiative is to provide families living in four communities of the Beni Biosphere Reserve with seeds of high-quality native timber species and crops, thus enabling them to create plots under agroforestry systems based on fallow areas.

Not only does this initiative aim to promote a sustainable, long-term economic activity for indigenous and local communities, but it will also contribute to the prevention of fires by avoiding slash-and-burn cycles in further areas.



Mr. Amault and director-general of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay at the "Our Planet, Our Future" forum. Image credit: LVMH

In Ecuador, LVMH wants to empower the youth in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve of Yasun. People from the reserve's Limoncocha community have no access to basic services, such as water, sanitary systems and waste treatment, while plastic pollution has become a significant problem in the area's rivers.

The Mushuk Sacha Recycling Association collects and transforms plastic into new materials, generating jobs and income for local and indigenous youth, while also raising awareness of the importance of waste treatment for the protection of the ecosystem.

With the support provided by LVMH and UNESCO, the association will be able to diversify its production of recycled plastic products by strengthening its technical and marketing capacities while improving its collection and transformation infrastructure. A four-day training program will be developed and delivered to young participants, with the initiative directly benefiting and providing jobs for 23 young people in the community.

These efforts are part of LVMH's Life 360 program ([see story](#)), as well as its involvement with the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) program, which aims to help rehabilitate 5 million hectares, nearly 20,000 square miles, of habitat for flora and fauna by 2030 ([see story](#)).