



Climate Protection in the Peruvian Rainforest

Munich's membership of the movement "Climate Alliance: Municipalities in Europe with the Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Region" was, in 1997, the catalyst for a partnership with the Asháninka people; a community of around 70,000 in the central Peruvian rainforest. Munich supports the Asháninka in their preservation of the rainforest as the "green lung" of the planet, and also as their own home.

This support is bearing rewards. Munich's main involvement is in cooperating with the Asháninka's own autonomous organization (known as ARPI) for the central Peruvian rainforest region, and with the office for the sustainable development of the Asháninka village community in the Rio Negro district, also in Peru's central rainforests. This office is the first of its kind in the area, and allows the indigenous inhabitants of the region to have a direct influence in local politics. Also new for the area of Rio Negro, is the introduction of so-called "participatory budgeting", whereby local people can take part in deciding how public money is spent.

Donations from abroad are important for projects in the rainforest. As yet, most cities and provinces in Peru's jungle

areas have given very little public money to support initiatives by the indigenous population. In the Rio Negro region, the city of Munich has reached an agreement with local municipal decision-makers: Donations from Munich for concrete activities in Asháninka villages (e.g. education, women's support, replanting of trees, nutritional support), will be bolstered by funds from the local administration. That can mean a doubling or tripling of the donation, or the provision of crucial technical assistance.

The following are examples of how this money is spent:

- Birth certificates for Asháninka children, so that they can officially attend school.
- Conversion of state schools, in which all teaching is carried out only in Spanish, into bilingual institutions. Supplementary teaching in the Asháninka language is provided from indigenous teachers, who are aware of the situation in the rainforest.
- Replanting of destroyed areas of rainforest with indigenous tree species.
- Support for indigenous organizations in the fight against increasing destruction of their rainforest home, caused by illegal logging activities and oil companies.

This partnership is strongly assisted and encouraged through the direct involvement of Munich's citizens. An example of this is the municipal kindergarten in Waxensteinstrasse, which has been involved with the project "We are Friends of the Asháninka" for more than ten years and is supporting the creation and upkeep of a school for indigenous children in Peru's rainforest. Through events such as children's parties, auctions and bazaars and the commitment of the kindergarten's children, parents and staff, around 3000 Euros have been raised for the school so far.

Munich Chocolate

"Munich Chocolate" is the newest initiative to help support the Asháninka; a fine, milk chocolate with at least 40% organic cocoa content, made with cocoa beans farmed ecologically in the Pangao valley of Peru's jungle. The 35 gram bar has been developed by the association "Nord Süd Forum München", and can be purchased at various locations in Munich, including "Fairkauf Handelskontor eG" (Brecherspitzstrasse 8), "Weltladen" (Weissenburger Strasse 14) and "Ei-neWeltHaus München" (Schwanthaler Strasse 80). Five cents from each bar sold goes towards preserving the rainforest in the Asháninka's region.