

# ...ROUTE TO PROTECTION



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We've been working to ensure that the Pasto-Mocoa road becomes Colombia's first forest-friendly road – and a positive benchmark for future road building.

We carried out crucial research and supported a strategic environmental assessment of the road's local and wide-scale implications. And we helped draw up a comprehensive management plan to safeguard affected forest areas. Working with our conservation partners, we made sure local communities were able to voice their concerns, by helping them take part in discussions with both regional and national governments and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), who are funding the road.

### The Pasto-Mocoa road plan now contains the strongest-ever environmental protection safeguards in Colombia

The IDB agreed to allocate 6% of the entire loan for the road to social and environmental concerns (compared to 1% on equivalent projects). All of this funding was transferred up front, so that the environmental elements can be in place before the road is built, rather than at the end. This sets a huge precedent for future infrastructure development

The funding will help protect two national parks, and increase a network of nature reserves around the road. The forests will be monitored and managed, the needs and knowledge of local people respected, and local conservation organisations will continue to be fully involved in the future of the region.

### We need to fight on

**Construction could begin any day now, and the Government wants the road completed as quickly as possible. We need to ensure the environmental agreements we've worked so hard for are implemented. And we must push for more forest-friendly road plans like this one. Your support will help us do exactly that.**

# PLEASE GIVE US YOUR SUPPORT

Thanks to the exceptional generosity of the Guardians we have funded a range of crucial projects stretching from Colombia's forests to its seas. But with so many complex pressures to deal with, it's vital that we continue our work here.

### Forests of hope

We need to take urgent action now, to ensure that future road plans in Colombia contain strong measures to protect forests for the people and wildlife that depend on them. We must go on supporting local conservation organisations so that communities like that of Conchita Matabanchoy can live sustainably and have a real say in the future of their local environment.

### Seas of change

We need to carry on supporting the work of Diego Amorocho and his colleagues to protect turtle nesting sites. We must continue pushing for sustainable fishing practices, and better management of Colombia's seas and coastlines. And we must ensure more national parks like Malaga Bay are created.

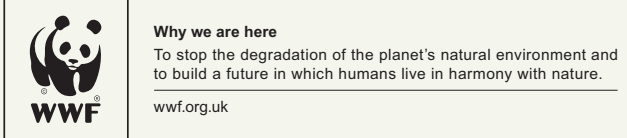
Read more about Conchita and Diego in the accompanying booklet 'Colombia's Living Landscape'.

**We need to do all of this and more, but we can't do it without you. Please help us raise the £200,000 we need to ensure our work can continue by donating at least £1,000 today. We're very, very grateful for your support and generosity.**

*Thank you.*

## Your gift could help fund all kinds of crucial projects

- £1,000** could help us create more protected areas of forest, preserving the habitats of vulnerable species like the spectacled bear.
- £1,500** could help purchase a camera trap monitoring system to track and monitor Amazon wildlife.
- £2,000** could help local conservationists like Conchita plant trees in their private nature reserves, to protect the fragile forest ecosystem.
- £5,000** could buy and equip a motorboat to monitor and protect humpback whale breeding areas and vulnerable turtle nesting beaches in Malaga Bay and along the Pacific coast.
- £10,000** could help us continue our work with local communities to restore 250 hectares of forest affected by the new Pasto-Mocoa road.



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Conservation Climate Change Sustainability

# Towards a better future

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## ROAD TO DISASTER...



© HANNAH WILLIAMS / WWF-UK

Many people have lost their lives on the treacherous, mountain road that connects the town of Pasto with the state capital Mocoa, in south-west Colombia. Edged by terrifying sheer drops, and little more than a single lane in places, it's known locally as 'the springboard of death'.

### Progress, but at a price

Any day now, construction of a new road will begin. It will create a safer route for people, but will cut across pristine forest and nature reserves that are home to animals like the spectacled bear and indigenous communities.

The road is just one small part of a much larger scheme to link the Amazon with ports on the Pacific and the Atlantic coasts. It will make the forest more accessible, and vulnerable to exploitation from farming, mining and illegal logging, which in turn will lead to further deforestation. In fact mining companies are already exploring the area for gold, copper and marble deposits.

**Local people are really worried – and they have good reason to be. Studies show that 95% of deforestation in the Amazon occurs within 50 kilometres of a road.**

This new road sums up what's happening all over Colombia, as human expansion takes its toll on forests, rivers and coastlines. Without proper environmental protection in place, increasing development could spell disaster for Colombia's wildlife and local communities.

## BEAR AT A CROSSROADS

The shy and elusive spectacled bear avoids contact with people, yet human activity means it faces an uncertain future.

These sturdy little bears get their name from the distinctive markings around their eyes. They eat mainly fruit, and climb high in the treetops to find the choicest pieces. In fact spectacled bears are thought to be the best climbers of all bear species. They're excellent swimmers too, and bathe frequently in the mountain ponds and streams of their cloud forest homes.

Today, populations are limited to around 100 fragmented patches of wilderness across Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador. As more forest is destroyed, the bears are becoming increasingly isolated, which affects breeding. And with their natural food source depleted, they're more likely to feed in crop fields, which can lead to them being killed in retaliation by farmers.

**We're working at government and community level to protect the spectacled bear's forest habitat and identify priority sites for conservation. With your help we can continue making progress.**

**THE SPECTACLED BEAR IS SOUTH AMERICA'S ONLY BEAR SPECIES**



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## REDUCING PRESSURE ON THE FORESTS



© DIEGO M. GARCÉS / WWF-CANON

Latest United Nations figures show that Colombia loses nearly 3,600 sq km of natural forest every year.

The biggest threats are from large-scale agriculture for crops such as oil palm, along with illegal logging, mining, oil and gas developments, and infrastructure expansion.

### ILLEGAL LOGGING

**Colombia has 50% of its original forest cover still intact, mainly in the Choco-Darien and Amazon ecoregions, while the global average is less than 30%. But this vital resource is under threat from illegal logging, which now accounts for at least 42% of timber felled for wood.**

We're working with local communities in these areas to strengthen forest management processes and certification schemes, and to help fight the trade in illegal timber that can devastate forests and the species and people that inhabit them.

### OIL PALM PLANTATIONS

Palm oil is used in around half of all packaged products sold by supermarkets. Often listed as 'vegetable oil', it's found in everything from bread to shampoos.

In parts of Colombia, vast areas of forest are being cleared and converted to create oil palm plantations. As well as loss of vital wildlife habitats the methods used, such as uncontrolled burning, have huge ecological impacts. Residues from poorly managed palm oil production mills, can pollute rivers and streams. And soils can become so leached of nutrients that little else will grow there in the future.

We helped set up the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), which brings together producers, traders, financiers and social and environmental organisations, to ensure palm oil is produced and used responsibly. We're working with the National Federation of Oil Palm Growers of Colombia to improve palm oil practices, get plantation owners to adopt RSPO certification of sustainable palm oil, and identify suitable sites for both oil palm plantations and important conservation areas. Your donation will help us continue this crucially important work.