

NATIVE LEADERS SUPPORT PALM OIL COMPANY OCHO SUR DURING THE V AMAZON CONGRESS 2024

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Ocho Sur, a business group engaged in the sustainable production of oil palm products and derivatives in Ucayali, arrived in Pucallpa 7 years ago, in 2016, with the idea of building a different business based on three pillars of benefits: economic, social and environmental, “three important and necessary axes for sustainability.”

This was shared by Michael Spoor, executive director of the palm oil group, during his presentation on “Sustainable and Inclusive Business Models in the Amazon”, at the recent V Congress of Amazonian Entrepreneurs 2024, held in Tarapoto on June 5-6.

“To date we have invested 160 million dollars, which represents the largest foreign agro-industrial investment in the Peruvian Amazon, with which we have managed to achieve the objective and success of a transformative business, always supported by these three pillars of sustainability”, said the senior Ocho Sur official, also highlighting that it is the largest formal employer in the region with up to 2,000 jobs.

Likewise, he specified that “Within the framework of our social responsibility policy, we support the sustainable development of 24 neighboring communities, benefiting more than 10,000 residents and we work with them, hand in hand, on essential infrastructure projects, education, health, improving 200 kilometers of roads and, now, we are connecting them with the world through the internet,” he said.

In relation to the environment, Spoor added that Ocho Sur has entered into innovative agreements with native communities for the conservation of more than 2,000 hectares of primary forests since one cannot expect to take care of forests without providing the economic resources to do so. Likewise, he highlighted that the oil palm company is the largest producer and user of renewable energy with solar panels and biomass in the region; and applies 100 % the circular economy in its industrial operations.

At the end of his presentation, the executive director of the business group announced that Ocho Sur's exports have come to represent 60 % of the economic value exported from Ucayali to the rest of the world, connecting markets, better practices and values throughout the production chain.

MASSIVE SUPPORT OF ATTENDING NATIVE COMMUNITIES

Moments before ending Michael Spoor's presentation, the leaders from three native communities took the stage: Amelia Pacaya (Kokama - Curimaná Ecological Unit), Wilson Barbarán (Santa Clara de Uchunya), Bruno Tangoa and Marcelino Ramírez (Shambo Porvenir), who, amid the applause from the public, confirmed the substantial improvement in the standard of living of their communities as a result of the business work that Ocho Sur provides to all its neighbors.

Likewise, they rejected the demonization of oil palm by certain interests and expressed that these crops, on lands already deforested and that were even planted with illegal coca leaves, today offer a better quality of life for their residents, allowing them with the possibility to even pay for college education for their children, something unimaginable a few years ago.

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