

August 2026—Project Update
Field Partner: Native Future

Wounaan-led Conservation in the Majé Mountains

Our efforts in eastern Panamá with Native Future and Wounaan communities in continues to make great headway, thanks to your support!

Background: We are working to maintain environmental law within the four most threatened untitled Wounaan community lands – Rio Hondo, Rio Platanares, Majé and Aruza. Community monitoring teams now report environmental damages to Panamá's environmental authorities. This program continues to demonstrate how environmental justice is possible for Indigenous communities in Panamá.

Key Achievements during the first 6 months: The number of people accused of environmental crimes and misdemeanors increased from 49 to 67 in the last six-months. Nine additional cases are being prosecuted by Panamá's environmental authorities for the same cumulative 195 hectares of damage reported by Wounaan at the end of 2025; four of these involve criminal charges.



*Territorial Monitors inspecting
camera traps for illegal activities*

Communities like Rio Platanares can pursue criminal proceedings against illegal loggers when the damages exceed a \$10,000 threshold. For Rio Platanares, this is bringing five more illegal loggers to justice, while in Majé, three more individuals are being prosecuted.

In January, the FUNDEPW (Foundation for the Development of the Wounaan People) and Native Future initiated the nine-month Panamá Green Fund. The project is designed to carry on work between the Ministry of Environment and Wounaan Territorial Monitoring team to strengthen and formalize their collaborative environmental monitoring and enforcement.

Development of a Wounaan-managed database for evidence of environmental impacts on their territories

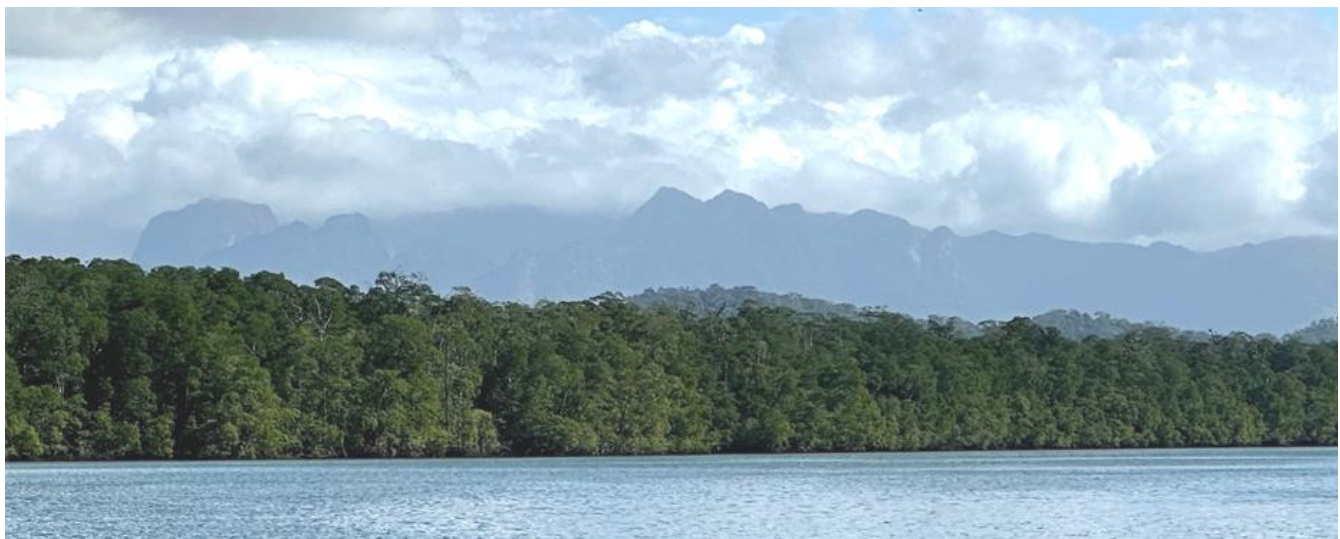
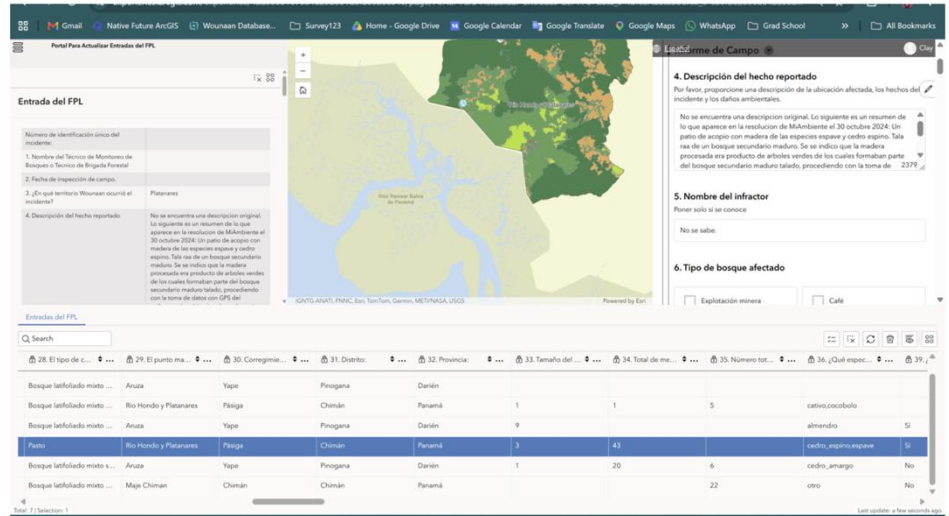
In 2025, Wounaan communities began to develop a Wounaan-administered database (*screenshot right*) to better consolidate, analyze and communicate the environmental impacts of illegal logging and colonization of their territories. The database also tracks results of the territorial monitoring program.

In May, the FUNDEPW hired a Database Manager, Royer Mepaquito. Royer, a Wounaan from the community of Aruza, inputs data into the ArcGIS portal, which includes validating data from the monitor's reports and legal documents. The database will make it easier for Wounaan communities, lawyers, and leadership to track and support the environmental complaints submitted by communities, and to provide for permanent records. In the plans is reporting environmental impacts to a public webmap, in development by Geo Indigena, who is also developing a strategy to engage target audiences and users.

Thank you for your support for this project! Please let us know if you have questions or would like to discuss this project or receive further information.

Biome's Project lead for this project:
Andre Boraks, andre@biomeconservation.org

SEE PHOTOS NEXT PAGE



Bay of Panama Wildlife Refuge (mangrove forest) with Maje Mountains



Top: Clay Mosolino, conducts training for the new ArcGIS database with the Wounaan.

Middle: Environmental complaint training workshop.

Below: Drone pilot training.

