Latam Business Leaders' Principles Against Environmental Crime

Rio de Janeiro - November 4th, 2025

We, in our personal capacity as leaders in the private sector, acknowledge the urgency of the climate and biodiversity crises and the irreplaceable role of the Amazon Basin for global ecological balance. We recognise that companies and financial institutions can play an important role by taking concrete actions that reduce environmental crime and accelerate the transition toward green, transparent, and sustainable business models.

Over 50% of global GDP depends on ecosystem services, therefore, environmental crime poses material risks to companies, markets, and communities.

Environmental crime – illegal logging and mining, wildlife trafficking, land grabbing, and agricultural and livestock farming activities involving illegal practices – is driving deforestation, biodiversity loss, and land system change across the Amazon and in other tropical biomes. Deforestation and degradation release CO2 and reduce the capacity of forests to sequester it. As a result, some of the world's largest carbon sinks are becoming, in parts, net emitters, contributing to and accelerating climate change. Climate change, in turn, is creating the perfect conditions for wildfires, which further devastate forests and nature, speeding up CO2 emissions.

We acknowledge that this vicious cycle needs to stop. Many of our organizations participate, along with civil society and governments, to implement sustainable initiatives at landscape scales. In light of what we learn from these initiatives, and in support of global goals for climate, nature, and economic development, we offer the following principles to guide the business community in our efforts to ensure a robust and fair economy that generates sustainable opportunity for all.

The Principles

1. Companies must endeavor to ensure the legal origin of their products and services. This includes adopting monitoring technologies, publishing open data where possible, enforcing strict socio-environmental compliance, and working with transport providers and enforcement authorities to fight environmental crime through human and digital intelligence, and the adoption of sustainable practices and technologies to support investigations. Companies must also endeavor to progressively phase out suppliers engaged in illegal practices, while supporting smallholders and partners to transition to compliance.

2. The financial system needs to adopt strategies that prevent environmental crimes by integrating environmental, social, and territorial risks into compliance, credit, and insurance policies. Financing and investment must be based on credible, sustainable standards, by applying rigorous due diligence and aligning with international best practices.[1]

[1] Examples of standards are: the 30x30 initiative of the Global Biodiversity Framework, the Equator Principles, Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) and The Royal Foundation's Mansion House Declaration.

3. The private sector has a key role in promoting just and sustainable nature-based economies by investing in inclusive bioeconomies, high-integrity restoration, and regenerative agriculture practices. This includes empowering local communities and small producers, creating risk-sharing mechanisms for green ventures, and expanding markets for high-integrity carbon credits and other innovative uses of finance for nature. It also includes expanding both offset and compliance carbon markets that integrate high-integrity Nature-based Solutions credits globally.[2]

4. The private sector must advocate for strong, clear, and predictable regulatory frameworks that safeguard the environment and provide legal certainty for responsible business. We support engagement with governments to strengthen environmental agencies and enforcement capacities where appropriate.

5. Business leaders and the private sector can lead and engage in multi-sector coalitions, including public-private and multi-stakeholder partnerships to advance a bold, collective agenda against environmental crimes. Voluntary commitments that go beyond legal requirements and the work with peers, governments, and civil societies to scale solutions and share best practices are timely and most effective.[3]

By signing these principles, we reaffirm our responsibility as agents of transformation. We see this declaration as a stepping stone toward the design of private sector commitments to practical, measurable actions that reduce environmental crime, strengthen markets, and build a prosperous, just, and sustainable future for business, people, and the planet.

[2] The Mansion House Declaration convenes the financial sector to adopt strategies to prevent environmental crimes and integrate environmental, social, and territorial risks. United for Wildlife – Financial Taskforce

[3] United for Wildlife regional chapters bring together local experts across sectors to address region-specific challenges in the illegal wildlife trade. United for Wildlife – Regional Chapters