

# TReeS News No.82

## May 2019

The **TReeS** newsletter provides an update to its members and for those interested in rainforest related issues in Amazonia, specifically in Madre de Dios, in south-east Peru, and the small-scale projects TReeS supports there.

This edition focuses on the projects supported by TReeS members: the reforestation project; the small grants programme and news of the recipients for 2019, plus feedback from a past recipient; and recent indigenous meetings and congresses which TReeS co-funded. There is also a summary of a Forest Peoples programme talk about the pressures facing indigenous Amazonian peoples.

### Reforestation project update

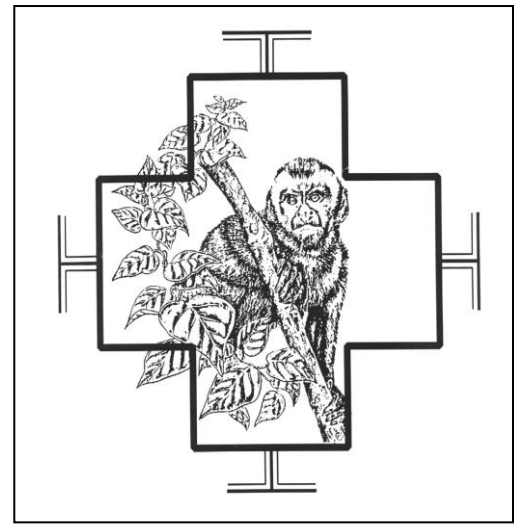
Thanks to the generosity of TReeS supporters, a further 2+ hectare area of the abandoned ranch has been replanted. It was essential to plough it first, to remove plant species that had flourished since grazing ended that were incompatible with the reforestation. The new area lies between the previously reforested plot and a small stand of existing forest.

In two days over 2,000 seedlings were planted. A couple of rows of pineapples and frames for growing passionfruit (*maracuya*) were installed along the access track to provide some fairly immediate income from fruit sales. The citrus, cacao, brazil-nut tree and other timber species seedlings were then planted across the remaining area. Each seedling was planted with a small quantity of *guano* (bird excrement fertiliser) and the majority of them appear to have taken well. In the initial phase many are planted in rows for ease of maintenance but, in due course, natural growth will change this arrangement. Within a few weeks a significant amount of ground vegetation cover had appeared which is another reason for the need for regular maintenance.

**Appeal:** please see the attached flyer.

Due to the new GDPRs, TReeS can no longer solicit non-members for funds and, therefore, distribution of this appeal by TReeS members to friends, family and colleagues is essential for the future of the project.

*Two months after planting with maracuya frames installed © TReeS*



*The new plot post-ploughing, prior to planting © TReeS*



*Seedlings a month after planting © TReeS*



## TReeS small grants programme awards 2019

The small grants programme is a, potentially, very important contribution to the career development of young Peruvian scientists. Over 60 grants have been awarded over the last 10 years and a survey of past recipients shows that many have gone on to work in a variety of roles in Amazonia, including Madre de Dios. TReeS funding assists them to gain the field work skills to complete their University studies.

In 2019 fourteen applications were received and four applicants were able to accept the offer of a grant as follows -

**\*Benita Bautista (UNSAAC):** '*Diversidad de Ciempiés (Chilopoda) de Manu, Alto Madre de Dios*' – will investigate the diversity and abundance of centipede species in the vicinity of the Manu Learning Centre, to produce a Madre de Dios Centipede guide.

**\*Pedro Castillo (UNALM):** '*Recuperación de la fertilidad y filoextracción del mercurio con cultivos de cobertura en suelos degradados por la minería aurífera aluvial en Madre de Dios*' – will study areas previously affected by illegal gold mining and how the soil fertility and vegetation cover is recuperating through the planting of leguminous plants. The study is located in the native community of San Jacinto and is being undertaken in conjunction with IIAP (Instituto de investigaciones de la Amazonia Peruana).

**\*Jessica Pisconte (UNAMAD):** '*Incidencia y ambito de afectación del mercurio en aves expuestas a minería ilegal en la Tambopata National Reserve (TNR)*' – will study mercury levels in birds living in areas of illegal mining within the TNR and, potentially, exposed to mercury contamination. Feathers, blood and bone samples will be studied.

**\*Gorki Flores (UNAMAD):** '*Efectos de calidad de sitio en la producción de pulpa de Huasaí en dos tipos de habitats en el sector Loboyoc, distrito de Las Piedras, Madre de Dios*' – will investigate two different habitats to determine the factors that affect the quality and production of pulp from the *huasaí* palm fruit.

UNAMAD: University of Madre de Dios, P.Maldonado.

UNALM: University of La Molina, Lima.

UNSAAC: University of San Antonio de Abad, Cusco.

## TReeS small grants recipient feedback

**\*S.Rengifo & R.Mamani (UNAMAD) (2015)** – the investigation looked at the physiological quality of *shihuahuaco* (*Dipteryx Micrantha*) seeds from two areas of high terrace forest after the application of a 'forcing' process.

A large number of seeds were collected at each site. At the Las Piedras site the average was 526 seeds per kilo with an 80.13% purity while at the Tambopata site the average was 531.5 seeds per kilo with 86.51% purity.

The seeds were categorised according to several factors including their purity, humidity and size.

A mix of seeds were then prepared in three ways –

-some were left untreated;

-some were forced by being heated to 40°C for 48 hours to encourage germination prior to planting;

-some were forced by being heated to 40°C for 96 hours to encourage germination prior to planting.

The most successful germination occurred with the seeds heated to 40°C for 48 hours. 81% of the seeds from Las Piedras germinated, almost all within 9 days while only 72% of those from Tambopata did so, within 11 days.

The seedlings were then measured 60 days after planting and assessed according to several factors including their height, dry weight, Liquefaction index, Robustez index and Dickson quality index. However, the most successful plants were those that had been prepared without any treatment.

Such investigations are significant to be able to assess survival rates, optimum densities and productivity levels.

**Appeal: £25+** donations towards the **2020 grants programme** so that a similar number of grants can be awarded. **TReeS members support is hugely important in maintaining this programme.**



Shihuahuaco seeds © All S.Rengifo/R.Mamani



At the base of a mature shihuahuaco tree



Measuring the trunk diameter of seedlings

## **FENAMAD & COHARYIMA Congresses**

TReeS gave small grants to the recent FENAMAD (Federation of native peoples of Madre de Dios) and COHARYIMA (Council of the Harakbut, Yine and Matsigenka peoples living in the upper Madre de Dios) congresses. Both organisations offer essential support to indigenous communities and peoples, and have growing reputations.

The XVIII FENAMAD congress was held in the small community of Kotsimba, on the upper Malinowski river. Over 300 people attended of whom over 200 were delegates from the 36 communities representing the seven different ethnic groups, in Madre de Dios. It was agreed in advance that at least one delegate from each community must be a woman.

The Congress is an important occasion for native communities to meet up and discuss the issues that face them and for FENAMAD to -

- review its strategic plans to coincide with those of the Regional government (2019-2023). In the regional elections last year, the new governor offered to have greater links with FENAMAD;
- modify its statutes;
- elect a new Council. Julio Cusirichi and his team were re-elected.

FENAMAD also participated in the latest UN climate change meeting held in Poland - COP 24. A representative joined the delegation of indigenous peoples.



*FENAMAD committee members addressing the Congress*

© A.Garcia



*CN Tsirerishi (a NC within Manu NP) members discussing their needs with an assessor* © A.Garcia

In December TReeS co-funded a meeting of the Mesa RIA (REDD+ Indigena Amazonica) Madre de Dios. The RIA initiative is funded by Rainforest Foundation Norway & IWGIA (Denmark) under the 'Promotion, retention and protection of indigenous community rights in REDD+, Peru' programme. MESA RIA is currently chaired by the President of COHARYIMA. RF Norway also fund a project with FENAMAD entitled 'Indigenous strategies for climate action in Madre de Dios' (CLIMA), which is run by ex-TReeS Peru representative Claudia Galvez. The meeting discussed -

- the rights of indigenous peoples according to ILO Convention 169;
  - the role of women and counteracting machismo.
  - climate change and ways of combating it in line with the REDD+ initiative. This included discussing whether some native communities should participate in a project to produce charcoal to increase their incomes rather than allowing outsiders to benefit.
- There was feedback from the COP 24 climate change meeting and a presentation was made by a representative of CARE Peru.

The XVIII COHARYIMA congress took place in the native community of Diamante in late February, after the FENAMAD congress. Representatives came from 12 of the 14 native community members, including all those from within Manu National Park.

The congress focused on -

- reviewing the activities undertaken in 2016-18; &
- developing the strategic plans for 2019-2021;

## **OSINFOR powers reduced ?**

In 2008 OSINFOR (Organismo Supervisor de Recursos Forestales) was created to supervise the use of forest resources and take action against illegal logging, etc. It has been a relatively effective body in controlling regional forestry authorities and logging interests but its powers may be reduced as a result of changes initiated under ex-President Kuczynski.

OSINFOR has been moved from the Prime Minister's office, where it could operate semi-independently, to the Environment Ministry where many consider that its powers will be weakened. However, confirmation is awaited as to whether this is permissible under the Peru/USA Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA).

The UN's first specific Climate change annual report identified deforestation as contributing 17% of global CO2 emissions. However, a recent Environment Ministry report suggested that 90% of deforestation was due to small-scale agriculture, though many disagreed with it. Under COP 15, held in Copenhagen, Peru did agree to eliminate deforestation by 2021 in line with the UN Framework on Climate change.

In Peru studies show that 75% of forest loss occurs within 20kms of a main road such as the InterOceanic highway. Unfortunately, many foresters also see plantations as being more productive than the natural forest and are in favour of them.

(More details in the next TReeS News)



### Peruvian government acts against illegal mining

In mid-February the Peruvian government launched a land, river and air operation - Operation Mercury - in a renewed attempt to deal with illegal gold-mining in La Pampa, in the Tambopata National Reserve buffer zone. Firstly, a state of emergency was declared for 60 days in the districts of Tambopata, Iñambari, Las Piedras and Laberinto. Then 1,200 police were sent in to La Pampa for two weeks while 300 military personnel went to Puerto Maldonado to protect government institutions. The troops will remain for six months to set up security posts in La Pampa.

The Operation had two main objectives –  
-to close down illegal mining operations to greatly reduce the mercury contamination of local rivers;  
-to stop and deal with child slavery and sex trafficking prevalent in the area;

In 2018 it is estimated that about 10,000 hectares of forest was lost due to illegal mining undertaken by approximately 6,000 miners, who support 20,000 other workers in the wider area.

The authorities were invested with the powers to confiscate equipment, destroy temporary shelters, and send people back to their place of origin.

The final stage of the Operation is a management plan to grant licenses to some miners with an established claim in the area and to establish a range of sustainable activities to provide alternative employment as well as protecting the remaining forest and reforesting degraded areas.

The initial budget for the Operation was s/100 million (approx.£25 million) rising to s/250 million (approx.£60 million) by 2025.

### Peru News

In mid-February, most of the western side of the Andes which rarely receives any rainfall, was hit by heavy rainfall. The far south was especially badly hit with Tacna receiving double its annual rainfall in one week. The severe floods cut the Panamerican highway in several places as bridges were washed away and thousands of hectares of farmland were covered in water. Over 10,000 people were affected.

With Keiko Fujimori on remand in prison, several members of her party - Fuerza Popular (FP) - have resigned. As a result, FP has lost its majority in Congress enabling President Vizcarra to take greater control and introduce anti-corruption measures. In particular, he has focused on the judiciary leading to the sacking of many judges found to have accepted bribes and the resignation of the FP appointed Head of the Judiciary.

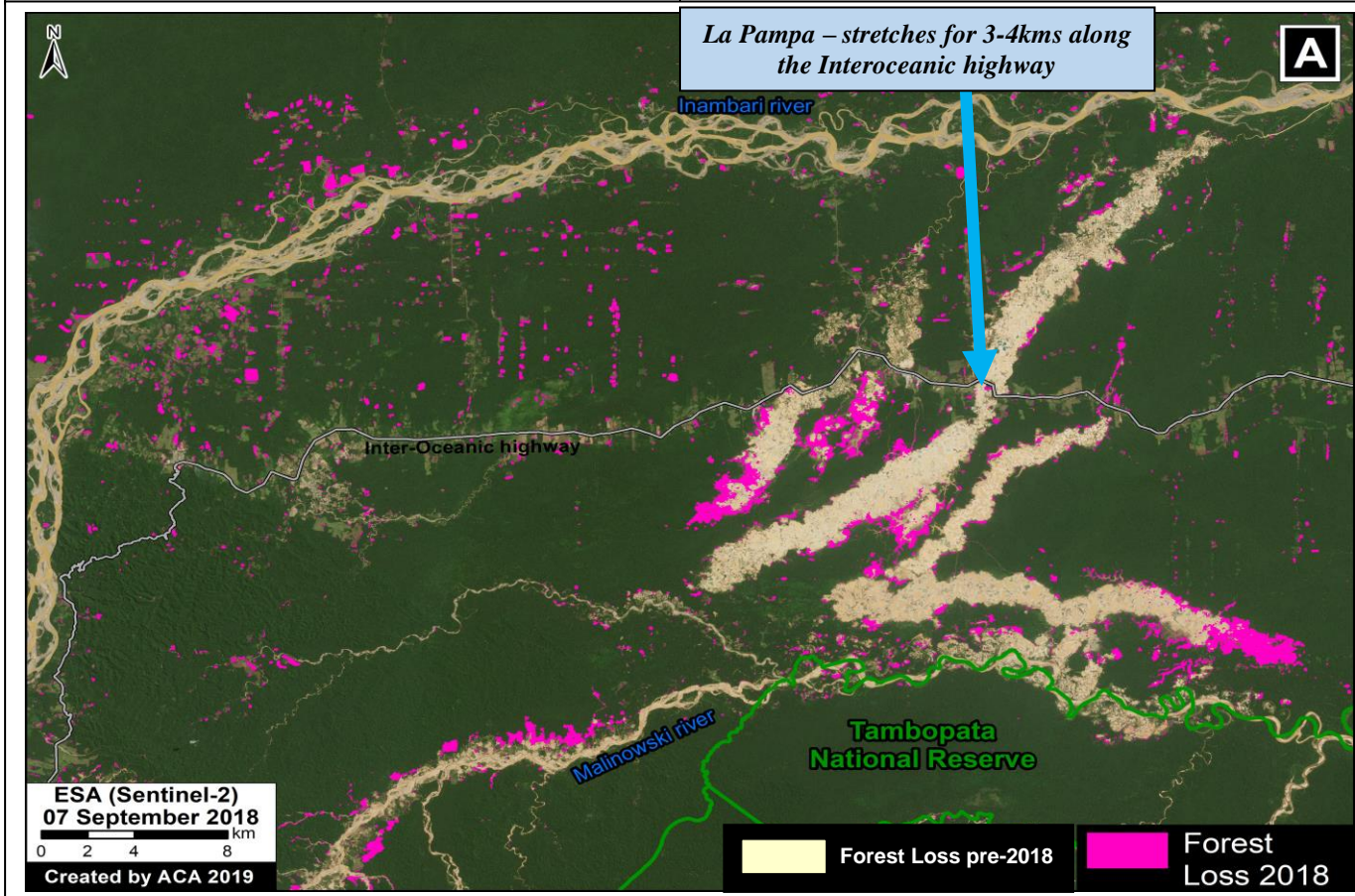
Economic growth improved to 4% compared to 2017 (2.5%) as the value of copper exports rose (up 8%). However, the percentage classed as living in poverty remains close to 20% of the population.

In the on-going corruption scandal involving the Brazilian construction company Odebrecht, a fine of \$200m was imposed for the bribing of government officials over the totally commercially unjustifiable construction of the Interoceanic highway through Madre de Dios.

We are grateful to the Peru Support Group (PSG):

[www.perusupportgroup.org](http://www.perusupportgroup.org)

for the sourcing of some details in TReeS News.



### **What is happening to indigenous peoples' territories in the Peruvian Amazon?**

This article is based on a talk given by Conrad Feather of the Forest Peoples programme to the Peru Support Group.

#### **The negatives –**

Deforestation has increased from 120,000 hectares/year in 2012 to 160,000 hectares/year in 2017. This is despite a Ministry of the Environment commitment in 2008 to reduce deforestation to '0' by 2025.

10 million hectares of indigenous lands are recognised across Peru but indigenous peoples consider another 20+ million hectares in the Amazon and Andes regions, to be their ancestral lands. Currently 1,300 indigenous communities are applying for land title despite land titling procedures date back to the 1970s.

The law of Prior Consultation (2011) has proved ineffectual. There is almost never any 'prior' consultation before large-scale development projects commence, most are still controlled from above and imposed 'top down'. Consequently, most extractive projects still have an adverse impact on the environment and health of local people. Human rights and environmental defenders are often placed in positions of risk.

A lot of land is exposed to legal (via government concessions) and illegal (invasions) land grabs as has happened with gold-mining in Madre de Dios due to a lack of due diligence on the part of the authorities. Peruvian Forestry law is very lax by international standards. The State 'owns' all forests – indigenous peoples are only granted a right to use them which can be withdrawn or restricted. New indigenous land titles are increasingly restricting access and use, for example, trees cannot be cut.

There remains a lack of co-operation between government departments such as the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Energy & Mines. Regional governments can now create ACRs (Regional conservation areas) but they have not been properly established in most cases in terms of local consultation.

Primary forest clearance is, officially, not permitted as long as the forest is classified as 'primary' but the problem is that much of the forest has never been classified. Potential developers have been using their own forestry engineers to self-classify the forest – usually stating that it is not primary forest – and the government has accepted these declarations.

Secondary forest can be cleared for specific uses but numerous permissions should be obtained. Often developers use locals – though the company may provide the equipment – to clear the forest. They can then declare it as 'non-primary and cleared' where-upon they buy it from the locals. This is proving to be a particular problem with new oil palm plantations in central Peru.

The Peruvian rainforest is especially attractive to exploit because –

- no-one other than the State 'owns' it;
- much of it has not been classified and lacks a 'primary forest' restriction;
- timber obtained through clearance is very valuable;
- primary forest soil is often fairly fertile, for at least a few years;

In many areas the local Ministry of Agriculture and other agency representatives have been found to be compromised by big business interests. Officials have been willing to grant concessions, turn the other way, etc to allow developments to proceed. Recently, two high ranking officials in Loreto were arrested for corrupt land acquisition practices. Their case could set an important precedent.

#### **The positives –**

Several foreign governments: Norway, Germany, ..... have 'invested' a lot in Peruvian forests to try to mitigate against climate change and thereby exert some pressure on the Peruvian government to protect the rainforest.

Indigenous peoples have had some successes with more cases coming to court and more questions of the rights of indigenous peoples being raised. They have been pursuing the concept of 'indigenous nations with ancestral territories' rather than their rights only being based around small native communities. The Ministry of Culture is opposed to this idea while AIDESEP (Interethnic Association for the development of the Peruvian Rainforest) is supportive but has been pursuing the government to title more indigenous lands while there appears to be a willingness to do so.

Peru is aiming to reduce its nett carbon emissions by 30% by 2030 and reducing deforestation is an important component of this. The UK is supporting actions via the World Bank.

### **Peruvian Population census (2017)**

In the latest official census, held in 2017, the population was recorded as 29.4 million, up from 28.2 million in 2007. This is only a 1% growth rate, the slowest ever recorded. However, the true figure is thought to be closer to 31.5 million. In addition, it is estimated that 3 million Peruvians now live abroad.

The population profile shows that 26.4% are aged 0-14 years, 61.7% 15-59 years, and 11.9% 60+ years while the population distribution shows that 58% live on the coast, 28% in the Andes and just 14% in the Amazon region, which covers over 50% of Peru. A small shift from the Andes to the coast was again detected.

The Lima/Callao conurbation accounts for 9.6 million, almost 30% of the total population of Peru. The second city remains Arequipa (1.1 million).

More details can be found at - [www.onpe.gob.pe](http://www.onpe.gob.pe)



**TReeS Library:** the following articles, documents and reports about Tambopata and Madre de Dios have been received/ sighted over the last few months. Many of them can be traced via the internet while some directly linked to TReeS will be placed on the TReeS website.

The following reports have been received from those who were awarded a **TReeS small grant** -

-‘*Evaluación de la calidad fisiológica de semillas de shihuahuaco (Dipteryx Micrantha) de bosques de terraza alta de dos procedencias, a través de la prueba de envejecimiento acelerado*’, S.Rengifo & R.Mamani, (Beca 2015 – thesis);

The following publications can be accessed through the ‘MAAP’ website: [www.maap.org](http://www.maap.org)

-‘*Gold-mining deforestation at record high levels in southern Peruvian Amazon*’, MAAP 96, Jan 2019;

-‘*Deforestation Hotspots in the Peruvian Amazon*’, MAAP 98, March 2019;

The following publications can be accessed through the ‘RAINFOR’ website: [www.rainfor.org](http://www.rainfor.org)

-‘*El sumidero de carbón en los bosques primarios Amazónicos es una oportunidad para lograr la sostenibilidad de su conservación*’, E.Vicuña et al, Folia Amazonica, Vol.27 (1), 2018;

-‘*Compositional response of Amazon forests to climate change*’, A.Esquivel-Muelbert et al, Global Change Biology, 2019, 25:39–56;

The following publications were also sighted by TReeS –

-‘*Tres décadas de deforestación por minería aurífera en la Amazonia suroriental Peruana*’, J.Caballero et al, CINCIA, 2018;

-‘*Mesa REDD+ indígena amazónica (RIA) Madre de Dios*’ report, FENAMAD, 2018;

-‘*The Forest Avengers: why Peru’s pioneering forest inspection agency OSINFOR should have its independence restored and its powers extended*’, Global Witness, 2019;

-‘*Fishes from the Las Piedras river, Madre de Dios basin, Peruvian Amazon*’, T.Carvalho et al, Check List 8(5): 973–1019, 2012;

-‘*Forest Dynamics in the Peruvian Amazon: Understanding Processes of Change*’, K.Marquardt et al, Small-scale Forestry, 2018;

### **STOP PRESS: ex-President Alan Garcia commits suicide**

At the end of April Peruvians were shocked to hear that Alan Garcia, one of the most significant but controversial politicians of the last 40 years and twice President (1985-89 & 2006-2011) had committed suicide.

Garcia came to prominence in the 1980s as the charismatic leader of APRA (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance), a centre-left party that had been trying for 50 years to gain power.

In 1985 Garcia was elected President in the hope that he would bring a fresh new approach and was labelled by some as the ‘Latin American Kennedy’. However, despite boosting public spending and trying to reduce the leakage of foreign reserves, his regime struggled to control the growing bloody threat from the maoist terrorist group: Sendero Luminoso. Inflation reached an annual rate of 7,650% and the military were accused of unnecessary violence as they battled Sendero Luminoso.

He spent mostly of the Fujimori era (1990s) in exile in Colombia and France. In 2000 he narrowly lost the Presidential race to Alejandro Toledo but by moving to the centre-right he regained the Presidency in 2006. On the back of huge growth in the mining sector to meet Chinese demand, the economy did much better. By now Garcia had left behind the original political and social ideals of APRA and was aligning himself with the USA and major transnationals (TNCs).



on indigenous land, in the northern Amazon. In the resulting indigenous protests at Bagua, 100 indigenous people were killed and fourteen police, leading to major international criticism. Garcia showed little interest in Amazonia during his Presidencies – referring to it as an ‘under-exploited resource’ and showing little respect for Amazonian peoples.

Recently, like all five living previous Presidents, Garcia found himself having to answer bribery charges linked to the Brazilian TNC Odebrecht. In his case, they were linked to the construction of the first Lima metro line. Despite evidence to the contrary, Garcia vehemently denied involvement and shot himself when police arrived to arrest him.

### TReeS Membership Renewal

Members are reminded that your annual membership fee is due in **January** each year.

Banking apps. now allow on-line banking to take place anywhere, anytime.

TReeS annual membership (£15) and merchandise details can be found on the TReeS website.

Payments can be made to the TReeS bank account –

Bank: Lloyds Bank PLC

Sort code: 30 99 83

Account no. 00574637

### TReeS small grants programme reviewers

We are always on the look out for more spanish speaking reviewers with different specialities and field work experiences who could cast their eye over a few of the small grants applications we receive each year from Peruvian students.

Please send us a brief email detailing your relevant experience, if you would like to join the review team.

### TReeS website

The TReeS website is being updated and now many more past newsletters and reports from Peruvian students who were awarded a small field grant can now be accessed on it.

During the second half of 2019 we hope that all 80 newsletters will appear on-line as well as all the small grants programme reports received so far from students over the last 10+ years.



### TReeS T-shirts: Summer is coming!

**NEW** – ‘*Tarantula*’, based on a black & white line drawing by Laurel Hanna.

**TReeS member price: £9.00 (M) /£10.00 (L)**

Our stocks still contain a few –

‘*Tambopata satellite image*’ – featuring a Carnegie Scientific Institute (© G.Asner) brightly coloured image of the confluence of the La Torre and Tambopata rivers.

**TReeS members price: £10.00 (M & L)**

‘*Earth warrior*’ – design based on a Nazca lines drawing, in dark red. High quality, unbleached cotton T-shirt.

**TReeS members price: £10.00 (XL only)**

All prices include P&P.

### TReeS Membership

The basic TReeS membership rate is still just **£15 / annum.**

Membership is due on the **1<sup>st</sup> of January** each year.

We would be most grateful if members could amend their standing orders, if necessary.

All cheques are payable to – ‘**TReeS**’.

**TReeS Membership:**  
**£15 per annum.**

**TReeS contact details –**

**P.O.Box 33153,  
London NW3 4DR**

### TReeS USA

TReeS USA covering the USA and Canada is run by Bud & Margaret Widdowson –  
PO.Box 842,  
Shasta Lake,  
CA 96019-0842.

### TReeS committee 2018-19

*Sally Edwards*

*John Forrest*

*Dr Helen Newing*

*Huma Pearce*

*Elizabeth Raine*

*Rebecca Warren*

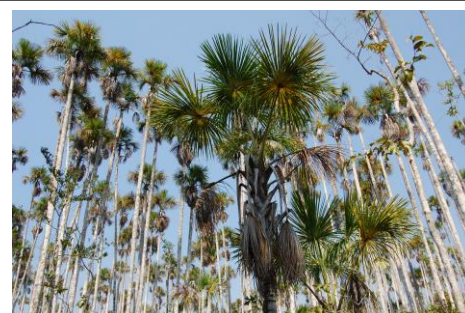
### TReeS website

Details of **TReeS merchandise** can be found at the website:

[www.tambopata.org.uk](http://www.tambopata.org.uk)

If you would like to receive the TReeS Newsletter in future by email, please send a request to –

[treesuk1@gmail.com](mailto:treesuk1@gmail.com)



*Aguajal at La Estancia © TReeS*