

# The integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge for the conservation of the Amazonian rivers in Peru

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## Abstract

The rivers in the Peruvian Amazon basin are the veins that feed the largest rainforest on the planet. They connect habitats and ecosystems and are considered a source of high biodiversity. Since before the conquest, many indigenous peoples have settled along riverbanks to be supplied with water, food, and many other ecosystem services. Furthermore, the Amazonian rivers have been the basis for the sociability of those population groups. For many years, the indigenous riverine people, such as the Kukama and the Shipibo-Conibo, have developed an empirical knowledge about the rivers from their coexistence and lifestyle. Therefore, indigenous communities have learned how to be adapted under the physical dynamics by shaping their culture. It evidenced the great understanding of rivers that communities developed over the years, endowed with affective and spiritual links, which has allowed them to be preserved for many years. As part of a scientific study of the hydrogeomorphological characteristics of the main Peruvian Amazonian rivers, it was considered important to involve indigenous perceptions and knowledge. Recognizing these views is necessary for a holistic understanding of rivers; however, these have been absent from the plans and projects developed by government institutions. “River Stories” (<https://www.historiasdelrio.com>) is a digital storytelling platform that supports the dissemination of indigenous cosmovision in terms of experiences, in which the knowledge, memory and spirituality are displayed. It hosts more than 100 stories from indigenous people (including children and teenagers), students, local authorities, and scientists that reveal the importance of rivers in their daily life. In this way, different perspectives of the rivers from science, civil society, and the indigenous worldview are exchanged. Integrating this knowledge is essential to highlight the vital role that rivers play at the social, cultural and environmental areas. This, especially in the current context, where multiple threats, such as infrastructure and energy projects, put Amazonian rivers at risk.

# THE INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS AND SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE AMAZONIAN RIVERS IN PERU

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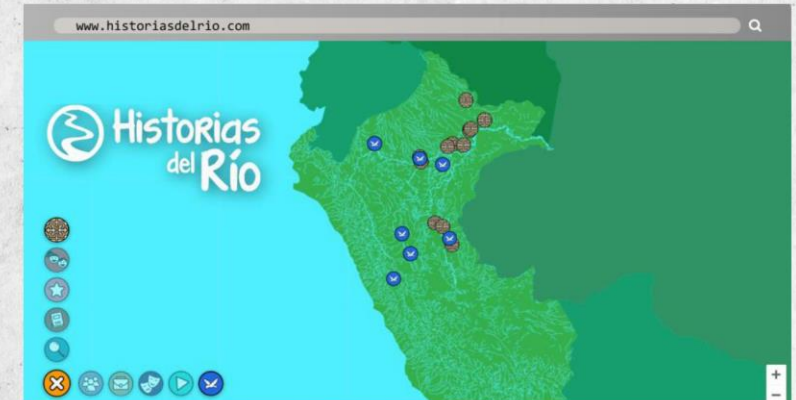
# River Stories: science and culture for conservation



**Interactive  
educational website**

**+ 120 stories**

**+40 videos**



**@historiasdelrio**





# What is a river?

Diverse responses,  
diverse people,  
diverse development models.



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communication

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