

ACTIVITY REPORT

Activity: IBAMA Firefighting Squadron Training
Financed by: OAS (Organization of American States)
Focal group: Communities of the Tumucumaque protected area, Brazil-Suriname border region
Execution: The Amazon Conservation Team (ACT), Virginia, USA; President: Mark Plotkin;
ACT Brazil Program Director: Vasco van Roosmalen
Counterparts: IBAMA staff and volunteers.
Dates: February 10-20, 2005

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity was to assist the firefighting activities of IBAMA, the Brazilian environmental protection agency, in training mobile firefighting corps to protect vulnerable areas both in and around the Tumucumaque Mountains National Park in the Brazil-Suriname border region.

COORDINATION

Activities were coordinated by IBAMA-AMAPA and PREV FOGO with support in the execution of the workshop by the ACT-Brazil Regional Coordinator Marcelo Segalerba.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were 40 volunteers and IBAMA staff, as well as IBAMA personnel from Amapá and the ACT-Brazil Regional Coordinator Marcelo Segalerba.

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Trainees were trained in the various methodologies of fighting forest fires as well as in safety and first aid. Trainees were familiarized with the equipment used to fight fires and practiced on controlled fires. The goal was to prepare them for the burning season of Amapá and to become practiced in fighting fires in conservation units. Training took place over ten days in the city of Cutia, Amapá (February 10-20, 2005).

CHALLENGES

Low pay and low availability of qualified personnel made it difficult to find sufficient recruits. In addition, there is low availability of more advanced firefighting equipment, and the areas where those trained will have to operate are very remote and require the ability to deal with very precarious living conditions.

FOLLOW UP

ACT will use the experience of the activity and work together with IBAMA to create a specific training course for indigenous peoples in order to extend firefighting capabilities beyond the conservation units and into indigenous areas. In addition, ACT will continue to work with IBAMA in upgrading the capabilities of national park units to deal with threats such as fires.