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## **Rivers and biodiversity**

The Amazon basin has the largest freshwater system in the world, discharging one fifth (**20**%) of the world's freshwater into the Atlantic.<sup>6</sup>

Rivers provide many **ecological, economic, and cultural benefits to the communities** that live around them, as fish are the main source of protein for local populations, and rivers are essential for energy production, transportation, and other ecosystem services.<sup>7,9</sup>

> In Colombia, the main tributaries of the Amazon basin are the **Putumayo-Iça, Caquetá**, **Guainía** and **Vaupés rivers**.<sup>8</sup>

The **Pirarucú** (Arapaima gigas) s an emblematic fish of the Amazon

and the basis of food security for hundreds

of communities and of

economic importance

for aquaculture.10



The Amazon is home to

13% of the world's

freshwater fish.<sup>7</sup>

Fish consumption in the Amazon is high, with commercial and subsistence fishing producing almost **425 000 tons of fish each year.**<sup>9</sup>

Cuainia river Vupës river Puturnayo river Caquetá river Amazonas river

Map of Colombia's Amazonian rivers

## Putumayo-Içá river basin:14

- It has an area of 121,201 km<sup>2</sup>
- It is **2,000 km long**
- It has a flow rate of 8,760 m3/s
- 45% of its territory comprises indigenous territories (153 communities and 60 reservations))
- Home to 68 thousand people
- Covers 4 countries: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Brazil.
- Forest and biodiversity

The Amazon is home to the largest tropical forest in the world and a great diversity of ecosystems

Forests are a source of **Non-Timber Forest Products** (NTFPs), such as açai (*Euterpe oleracea*), seje palm (*Oenocarpus bataua var. bataua*), and canangucha palm (*Mauritia flexuosa*). These fruits provide the communities with a livelihood and a source of income.<sup>13</sup>

Colombia has 42.6 million hectares of natural forest in the Amazon.<sup>15</sup> The **Jaguar** (*Panthera onca*) is one of the most emblematic species of the Amazon, culturally and ecologically important, as its **presence indicates the good health of an ecosystem**. However, it is threatened by the fragmentation of its habitat and hunting for illegal trafficking.<sup>7</sup>



The Amazon basin is one of the most important carbon reserves, with **123 billion tons of carbon** stored on its surface and below ground.<sup>11,12</sup>



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