



CANOPY
BRIDGE

TUCUPI NEGRO

Flavor from the Amazon for culture and biodiversity



KEY FACTS AND FIGURES



Livelihood
alternative for 1.7
million hectares of
conservation areas



Celebrates
and supports
indigenous culture



Served to 7,000
restaurant clients
per month



Potential to scale to
at least 14 nearby
communities

WHAT IS TUCUPI NEGRO?

Tucupi Negro is a delicious, flavorful sauce derived from the bitter or toxic manioc tuber (“yuca brava”) that is central to the cultural and farming traditions of indigenous people of the Ampiyacu area of the Peruvian Amazon: the Bora, Huitoto, and Ocaina.

Tucupi Negro is tied to critically important conservation areas that illustrate the potential of gastronomy to create new value chains for biodiversity. Tucupi Negro is currently used by chef Pedro Miguel Schiaffino in his renowned Lima restaurants (āmaZ Restaurant), which has introduced it to a new urban audience and created basic supply chains to connect rainforest communities to distant markets. These are now poised for expansion in specialty food markets as a next intermediate step, which in the medium-term can transition to much broader markets and landscape-level scales.



PRODUCTION CONTEXT

Tucupi Negro is widely produced in the 14 indigenous communities of the Ampiyacu River basin. Currently a group of 24 Bora women from the village of Pucaurquillo sell approximately 600 liters per year to Pedro Miguel Schiaffino's āmaZ Restaurant. Women from other nearby communities seldom produce Tucupi Negro and only for their own consumption. Production can be ramped up many fold using only surplus and subproducts from current, traditional farming systems.



Women in this community and others are eager to produce and sell more. With small improvements in water access, best management practices and processing, this increase can be materialized in a relatively short timeframe. As a byproduct of traditional yuca farming and processing, Tucupi Negro production has significant potential to expand without disrupting traditional systems.

Access to new markets is not only creating a new source of income for these indigenous women, it has led to a resurgence in cultural pride in this and other traditional foods.



POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT

With proper demand and price signals, Tucupi Negro has the potential to support up to 140 women from 14 communities in the Ampiyacu, representing about 21,000 liters that could generate at least USD 100,000 in yearly income.

By reaffirming traditional culture, sustainable agricultural practices and providing alternatives to unsustainable hunting and logging, Tucupi Negro can become a significant source of income for the communities surrounding the 1.7 million hectare complex of protected areas including the newly created Yaguas National Park and the Ampiyacu-Apayacu Regional Conservation Area.



TUCUPI NEGRO USES



As table spread, to be used on manioc bread, crackers, etc.



As a sauce for salad dressings, meats, fish and other dishes.



As ingredient for cocktail mixes (e.g. Bloody Mary).



RAMPING UP

Tucupi Negro is being positioned in the Lima market through a high-end, branded bottled product that conveys the value of its ancestral origins. A similar product presentation is being developed to reach the US market, which should significantly increase the market in line with the capacity of additional local communities to participate.

CANOPY BRIDGE'S ROLE

So far, in partnership with Forest Trends, āmaZ and Despensa Amazónica, we have:

- Established a baseline and monitoring protocol to ensure that farming and production are environmentally responsible and do not lead to deforestation;
- Strengthened and legally constituted a local producers' organization;
- Developed best practices guidelines for production and handling of product in community, working with the innovation agency of the Ministry of Production of Peru to ensure quality and safety;
- Worked to improve access to clean water and develop appropriate technology prototypes for fuel-efficient cook stoves and cassava grating;
- Designed launch-ready brand and packaging for product to be sold by Peruvian NGO, Despensa Amazónica;
- Supported process of communities registering their traditional knowledge of the product under Peru's intellectual property laws;
- Conducted nutritional analysis compatible with Peruvian and US legislation (with aim of 2018 export).

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Creating excitement and market demand for a new product
- Helping producers secure legal recognition of indigenous people's traditional knowledge
- Improving best management practices and hygiene for artisanal production
- Improving technology for clean water supply, fuel-efficient cook stoves and graters

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