

At the start of the second week of the Synod of Bishops, Catholic international social justice organisations hope that it will lead to the urgent change required to reverse the dramatic situation affecting the Amazon and its people, and as a consequence, all of humanity.

Rome, 14 October 2019.

“As we listen to the voices of the Amazon, we can sense the same urgency that we are hearing from youth to radically change our way of life and save our Common Home,” said Josianne Gauthier, Secretary General of CIDSE, at today’s Synod press briefing.

Representatives from the Amazon inside the [Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region: New Paths for the Church and an Integral Ecology](#) (Rome, 6-27 October 2019) have spoken from the heart to raise the alarm that the current global system is destroying land, water, local knowledge and culture and can only be halted by a collective effort to overturn individualism and consumption. Through this synod, the Church has an opportunity to set a new path towards a global ecological conversion.

“As I heard in the Synod hall, our faith needs to be stronger than our fear of change. By being such a big part of the problem, we from the North can really sense that we carry a responsibility to speak out and exercise our influence where we can so radical change can happen,” added Gauthier.

Indigenous representatives at the Synod are also emphasizing that the loss of their culture is a loss to all peoples. Their sustainable way of life offers inspiration to live in harmony with nature and move towards concrete alternatives such as agro-ecology and renewable energy systems. This requires a shift in our relationship with nature and with each other.

“The suffering of people and creation in the Amazon region are the consequences of an imperial way of life. The economy repeatedly outsources the consequences of its production to others. Not only to Amazonia. This model of development, however, upsets the earth’s equilibrium and cements global inequality. It has no future and we need to rethink our way of life and development,” said Msrg. Pirmin Spiegel, Director General of MISEREOR, CIDSE’s German member.

As Pope Francis highlighted in his opening remarks, participants must listen with humility and speak with courage. His guidance has infused the Synod with a spirit of dialogue, reflection and questioning that opens the door for the Church to reaffirm its commitment towards the most vulnerable of our world by calling for policies that promote human dignity and protect the planet.

CIDSE member organisations have worked in the Amazon for decades and see in this part of the world a clear case for systemic change and toward integral ecology, because this area has suffered all of the most common patterns of social and environmental injustice. The whole world is connected to the Amazon, hopefully the first of other biomes in Africa and Asia to be recognised for special protection from destruction.

UPCOMING CIDSE NETWORK ACTIVITIES DURING THE SYNOD

A CIDSE delegation will be present in Rome and will be involved in a series of activities during the three weeks of the Synod. Most of them are included in the special website created on this occasion “Amazon: Common Home” #AmazoniaCasaComún (<http://amazonia-casa-comun.org>). Please check www.cidse.org for the latest updates about our activities; Interviews can also be arranged on site in different languages (see details at the end of this press release).

MEDIA CONTACT - INTERVIEWS

Marta Isabel González Álvarez, Media and Communications Officer, CIDSE
gonzalez@cidse.org Mobile + 34 646 78 36 86 / + 32 491 39 54 75

MORE RESOURCES for Media

- [Flyer - "Fragile Amazon" Photo exhibition of Ana Palacios](#)
- [Flyer - Journalists and experts' panel "TALKING INTEGRAL ECOLOGY AND LIVING SUSTAINABLY" and official launch of the "JOURNALISTS' TOOLKIT ON SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES"](#)
- [Flyer - Documentary Screening "Energy to Change"](#)
- [CIDSE YouTube Channel](#) - 17 interviews about the Amazon with [EN](#) / [FR](#) / [GE](#) / [ES](#) / [PT](#) / [IT](#) subtitles.
- **PICTURES FROM THE AMAZON** or **PROFESSIONAL TV FOOTAGE** (available upon request)

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS CIDSE CONTACTS IN ROME

- Marta Isabel González, Media & Communications Officer, CIDSE, gonzalez@cidse.org T + 34 646 78 36 86 / + 32 491 39 54 75
- Giulia Pigliucci, Press Officer, FOCSIV comunicazione.add@gmail.com T +39 335 615 7253
- Kelly Di Domenico, Director Communications, Development and Peace Kelly.DiDomenico@devp.org T +1 (514) 226-9620
- Corinna Brückmann, Media and Communications Officer, Misereor Corinna.Wuerzberger@misereor.de T +49 170 4812211

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