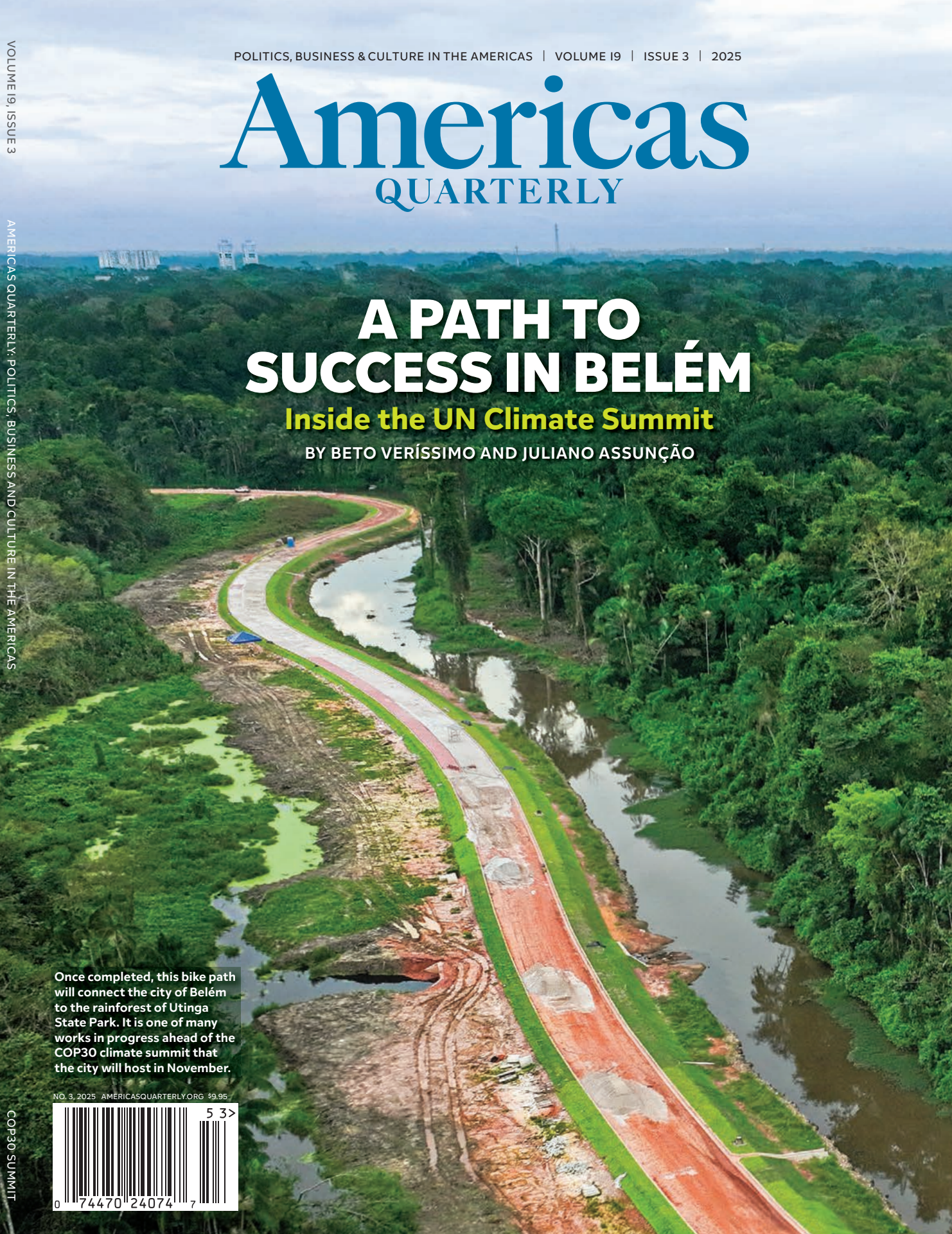
POLITICS, BUSINESS & CULTURE IN THE AMERICAS | VOLUME 19 | ISSUE 3 | 2025

Americas QUARTERLY

A PATH TO SUCCESS IN BELÉM

Inside the UN Climate Summit

BY BETO VERÍSSIMO AND JULIANO ASSUNÇÃO



Once completed, this bike path will connect the city of Belém to the rainforest of Utinga State Park. It is one of many works in progress ahead of the COP30 climate summit that the city will host in November.

NO. 3, 2025 AMERICASQUARTERLY.ORG $9.95

0 74470 24074 7 53>

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 3

AMERICAS QUARTERLY: POLITICS, BUSINESS AND CULTURE IN THE AMERICAS

COP30 SUMMIT

COA/COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS SYMPOSIUM | COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS BRAVO/BUSINESS AWARDS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Latin America's PREMIER BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT AND DIALOGUE PLATFORM

REGISTER TODAY:
www.as-coa.org/bravo2025

October 16, 2025
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Ritz-Carlton Coconut Grove
Miami, FL

In Partnership With

CAF DEVELOPMENT BANK OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Gold Sponsors

amazon | CHUBB | LLYC

Silver Sponsors

ATLAS RENEWABLE ENERGY | BANK OF AMERICA | CASTILLO HERMANOS | MOODY'S | salesforce

Bronze Sponsors

aes | BlackRock | FedEx | MARIPOSA

Knowledge Partner

McKinsey & Company

Media Partners

Americas Quarterly | Bloomberg Línea | CNN allá vamos | EL PAÍS | exame.

For more information, contact:
| Group Access: **bravoprogram@as-coa.org** | Sponsorship Opportunities: **cballadares@as-coa.org** |
| Thought Leadership and Engagement: **lsabillon@as-coa.org** |

Glasswing
INTERNATIONAL

Transforming Public Schools into Centers of Community

Schools face major challenges providing students what they need.

- 8 in 10 students living in poverty lack basic math skills (IDB, 2024)
- Close to half of students have trouble reading (UNESCO)

How do we change this?

sponsor a school

By mobilizing community strengths and applying innovative models, we provide:

- Remedial learning, extracurricular, and job readiness programs
- Necessary mental health support for all
- Safe and inspiring school environments

Sponsor A School - be a critical part of its transformation

info@glasswing.org

Americas
QUARTERLY

For subscriptions call 866-456-0398 or visit our website at www.americasquarterly.org

Americas Quarterly: Politics, Business and Culture in the Americas (ISSN 1936-797X) is an independent publication of Americas Society and Council of the Americas (AS/COA). AS/COA are nonpartisan, not-for-profit organizations founded to promote better understanding and dialogue in the Western Hemisphere. The positions and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors or guest commentators and do not represent those of AS/COA.

A Small Window for Change

The world has a chance to take on climate change, and Brazil has a chance to take a leadership role, at an upcoming UN summit.

In November, the world's eyes will turn — momentarily, at least — to Brazil as global leaders gather in the Amazonian city of Belém for the COP30 UN climate summit.

The window for delegates and the host government of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to grab attention will be small. Previous COP summits have so far failed to convert years of climate promises into actionable policies. The international community is not on track to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. And the climate movement itself seems to be struggling at a time when Donald Trump is in the White House and so many countries have other priorities.

In our cover story, Beto Veríssimo and Juliano Assunção present a straightforward proposal that has Lula's support: restoring tropical forests, such as the Amazon, either by planting trees or allowing natural regeneration. If restored, tropical forests can absorb vast quantities of carbon, and climate policies can help direct funding and resources to protect and sustainably manage these forests.

Brazil and the Amazon serve as a cautionary tale. Last year's drought, which affected almost 60% of Brazil's territory and was considered one of the worst in decades, led to higher energy prices and hurt the country's agricultural production. In the Amazon region, rivers such as the Rio Negro dried up, forcing communities to rely on water trucks for access to drinking water. Wildfires spread throughout the country, cloaking major cities in smoke.

As both a climate leader and a major oil producer, Brazil will face pressure to lead this forum credibly. Nations remain divided on the $300 billion annual commitment that rich countries pledged at COP29 in Baku to combat climate change. And there is still skepticism about the agreement reached in Dubai at COP28, which for the first time called on the world to transition away from fossil fuels.

All eyes will be on Belém to see if COP30 can deliver on one of the most urgent issues facing humanity: global climate action. AQ

Toward a Successful COP30

The world continues to fall short of the emissions targets needed to curb global warming and its increasingly visible effects. In November, the Conference of the Parties (COP) will convene in Brazil for its 30th annual meeting, offering a crucial opportunity to build consensus and address the persistent gaps in global climate action.

Our special report starts on page 18.

COVER: ALESSANDRO FALCO

Beto Veríssimo

Veríssimo is a co-founder of Imazon (the Amazon Institute of People and the Environment) and the director of the Amazon Entrepreneurship Center. He is also Brazil's Special Envoy for Forests at COP30 in Belém.

Juliano Assunção

Assunção is an associate professor of economics at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, executive director of the Climate Policy Initiative, and co-director with Veríssimo of the Amazônia 2030 initiative.

Lucía Dammert

Dammert is a professor at Universidad de Santiago de Chile and a specialist in Latin America's international affairs and security policy. Previously, she served as a member of the UN Advisory Board on Disarmament Issues (2017-2021) and was a Wilson Center Global Fellow (2013-2024).

Luiza Franco

Franco is a journalist and historian. She writes and edits features, profiles and analysis on Latin American politics and culture at *Americas Quarterly*. She also produces and edits the *AQ* Podcast.

Ricardo Ávila

Ávila is a senior analyst at *El Tiempo*, Colombia's top daily newspaper. Previously, he was editor-in-chief of *Portafolio*, deputy editor-in-chief at *El Tiempo*, and on staff at the weeklies *Cambio* and *Semana*.

COURTESY OF THE AUTHORS

Tell us what you think. Please send letters to managing editor José Enrique Arrioja at **jarrioja@as-coa.org**

Author and *New Yorker* staff writer Jon Lee Anderson (right) visits the Americas Society in New York City in May to discuss the most significant news stories unfolding in Latin America. Hosted by Americas Society/Council of the Americas Senior Director of Public Policy Programs Guillermo Zubillaga (left), the public conversation was part of an ongoing 60th anniversary membership drive for the Americas Society. An organization dedicated to examining the culture and current affairs of Latin America, it is one of two twin nonprofits that publish *AQ*.

COVERAGE OF *AQ*'S SPECIAL REPORT ON GUATEMALA

Interviews with *Americas Quarterly* managing editor José Enrique Arrioja on his cover story written from Guatemala City:

infobae

AMÉRICA LATINA

El editor gerente de Americas Quarterly destacó el progreso de Guatemala bajo la presidencia de Arévalo: "Hay una clara oportunidad de una Primavera Democrática"

En entrevista con Infobae, José Enrique Arrioja se mostró optimista sobre la situación en la nación más poblada y con la mayor economía de América Central, aunque reconoció que aún existen desafíos clave que serán determinantes para definir su curso en los próximos años

Por Ines Ehulech

República. NEWSLETTERS

José Enrique Arrioja: "Arévalo tiene, afortunadamente, un gran respeto por la institucionalidad"

Alejandro Palmieri | apalmieri@republica.gt 09 de junio, 2025

ANDERSON: FABRIZIO RICALDE

Americas Quarterly

Embassy of Uruguay in the USA
Government Relations Services
Washington, DC · 10K followers

From beachside jams to poetic candombe, Uruguay's La Serena Festival is a utopia of music and environmental thought. Americas Quarterly reports from La Paloma 🌊 🇺🇾 Read more:
https://lnkd.in/eutbU_us #Uruguay #Mu

Emmanuel B. Nyirinkindi
Vice President, Cross-Cutting Solutions
IFC - International Finance Corporation
· Makerere University

There's growing momentum in Guatemala, and good reason to pay attention.

A recent piece in Americas Quarterly highlights the country's positive growth outlook, rising investor confidence, and early moves to strengthen areas like infrastructure, education, and digital services, as well as PPPs.

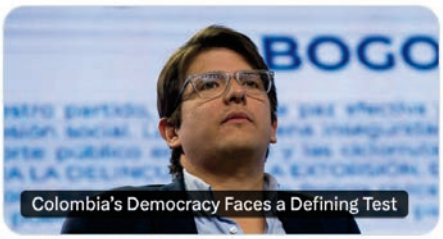
Guatemala has strong fundamentals and a young, entrepreneurial population. It's encouraging to see efforts underway to channel that potential into long-term, inclusive growth.

@AmerQuarterly

María de los Angeles Fernández Ramil
@Mangeles_HM
PhD CiPol, analista política, consultora y docente | Ex presidenta @ACCPChile (2000-2002), ex #IVLP y presidenta @Hay_Mujeres | Madre de 👫

La democracia colombiana enfrenta una prueba decisiva.

[Colombia's Democracy Faces a Defining Test], en @AmerQuarterly.
#Colombia



From americasquarterly.org

Amb Antonio Garza
@aogarza
Fmr US Amb. @whitecase @vianovolp . Lawyer, Corp Director; legal, business, political: U.S.A. #Texas #Mexico Visit: tonygarza.com. Opinions, mine.

.@AmerQuarterly - Xi Jinping appears to be aligning more closely than ever with #LatAm as the Trump administration pushes an agenda focused on migration, tariffs, & even expansionist ambitions.
americasquarterly.org/article/china-...
#China

From americasquarterly.org


EL VOTO
BRE Y SEC
DEPOSITE AQUÍ SUS BOLETAS
PODER JUDICIAL
PODER JUDICIAL
POD

Mexico's President Claudia Sheinbaum casts her vote at a polling station during the country's judicial elections in June. Mexico became the first country ever to select by popular vote all members of its judicial branch, from local magistrates to Supreme Court judges.

PHOTO BY RODRIGO OROPEZA /AFP/GETTY

The west chamber of the Panama Canal's Pedro Miguel Locks is fully drained during annual maintenance in late May. Over 300 workers were involved in the operation, which took place amid rising tensions over control of the canal. U.S. President Donald Trump claimed in January that China was operating the canal, which both China and Panama denied.

PHOTO BY DANIEL GONZALEZ/ANADOLU/GETTY

AQ

THE BIG PICTURE

Members of a teachers' union smash the glass doors of a federal building during a protest for better benefits in Mexico City in June. Mexico's leftist president, Claudia Sheinbaum, has been under pressure from public employees to raise wages, at a time when the country faces a constrained budget.

PHOTO BY ALFREDO ESTRELLA/AFP/GETTY

AQ

THE BIG PICTURE

Visitors view an exhibition by the late Sebastião Salgado in Recife, Brazil, on May 23, the day Salgado died, at age 81. The French-Brazilian photographer was known for his immense body of work depicting nature and the plight of workers, particularly in the Amazon.

PHOTO BY DIEGO NIGRO/AFP/GETTY

AS HEARD ON THE AMERICAS QUARTERLY PODCAST

Experts and policymakers join *AQ*'s contributing editor Brian Winter to discuss the issues currently shaping Latin American politics, economics and culture.

"There's been economic progress, especially with inflation, which many Argentines appreciate — Milei's biggest achievement. Politically, old parties have collapsed, leaving him with little opposition. Socially, while people are patient with his economic reforms, there's growing pushback against his cultural policies, like those affecting pensions and LGBTQ rights."

—Ana Iparraguirre, partner at GBAO, a Washington-based political strategy consultancy

"President Bernardo Arévalo is seen as a peaceful, democratic leader known for his honesty. His biggest weakness, according to polls, is his inability to effectively use power."

***—Claudia Méndez Arriaza, investigative reporter and editorial director of* ConCriterio**

"Raúl Castro's departure will be more impactful than Fidel's death, as Raúl is still very much involved and he is the bridge between the civilian leadership and the military, which in many ways runs more of the economy than the civilian leadership."

—Patrick Oppmann, CNN international correspondent and Havana bureau chief

Scan to subscribe on Spotify

Produced and edited by Luiza Franco

Available on Apple, Spotify, YouTube and other platforms

COURTESY OF THE GUESTS

Vicky Murillo

The political science professor explains why voters are shopping around in Latin America's 2025 election cycle.

Interviewed by Luiza Franco

AQ: This year Ecuador reelected President Daniel Noboa. Bolivia, Chile and Honduras are next, while Argentina holds midterm elections in October. What trends are emerging?
VM: There are different patterns. Voters in countries like Bolivia, Ecuador and Argentina are turning away from once-dominant forces that drove early 2000s growth but failed to sustain it, leading to fragmentation and openness to new options. Meanwhile, leaders delivering on security and the economy are being reelected in the Dominican Republic, Mexico and El Salvador.

AQ: What kind of messages resonate with voters today?
VM: Voters want promises that they can walk in the streets safely and that there will be economic improvement. Corruption and internal party fights make politicians seem disconnected. Leaders like Milei in Argentina or the opposition in Bolivia benefit from this climate. The region is moving toward a tough-on-crime approach — even leftists like Chile's Boric have adopted stricter stances.

AQ: Regional homicide rates have remained relatively stable in the past decade. Why is crime becoming more of a political topic now?
VM: Citizens have always been concerned about crime, but political elites were late arrivals to the topic. Different types of crime, like extortion, are on the rise. Due to the difficulty in resolving this issue, as a candidate, running on crime is great if you're in the opposition, but it's difficult if you're the incumbent. Except if you're Bukele.

AQ: What's your take on the region's upcoming presidential elections?
VM: In Bolivia, the split between Arce and Morales has fractured the MAS, opening space for many opposition candidates. It's the first real chance in years to defeat the MAS, so everyone wants in. A united anti-MAS vote could mirror what we saw in Ecuador against *correísmo*. Chileans are deeply dissatisfied, and the typical left-right dynamics may not hold. With Boric's low popularity, it's unclear if the left can reach the runoff. On the right, there's a battle between the more moderate Matthei, outsider Kast and ultra-outsider Kaiser. In recent years, Chile has typically chosen moderation.

AQ: What do you expect in Argentina's legislative elections?
VM: Milei will likely win. His party is small, so there's room to grow, and the election will serve as a referendum on him. The opposition is fragmented — Peronists, centrists and the traditional right are all divided. Even if Milei does well, it's unclear if it'll help with governability due to fragmentation. It may be like what happened to Macri in 2017.

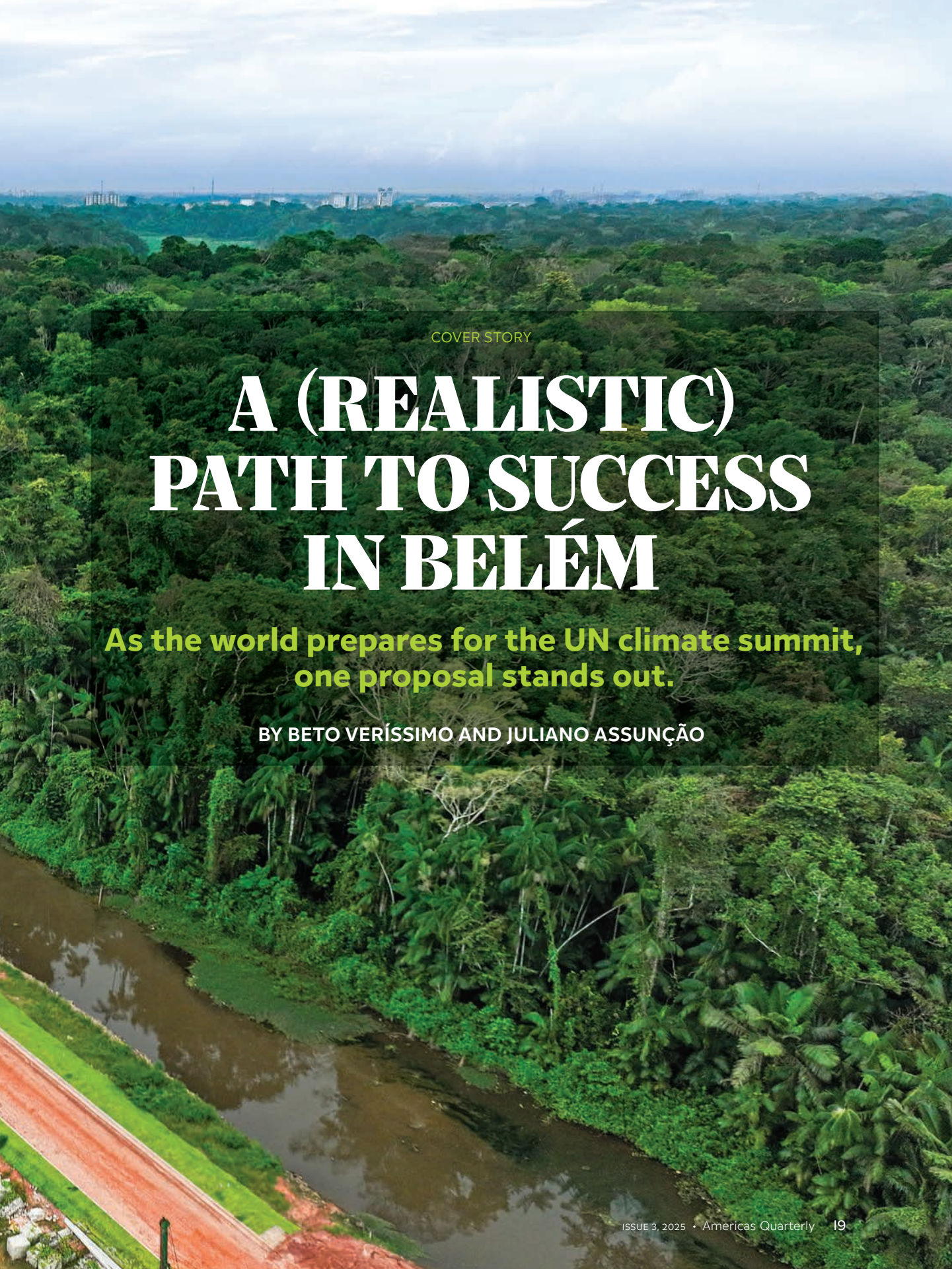
AQ: Does Trump's reelection significantly impact Latin American elections?
VM: Less so than in Canada. But he matters in other ways — economically, by influencing deals like the IMF loan to Argentina, and culturally, by emboldening right-wing populists in the region.

Murillo is the director of the Institute of Latin American Studies at Columbia University and a member of *AQ*'s editorial board

THIS INTERVIEW HAS BEEN EDITED FOR CLARITY AND LENGTH

An unfinished bike path extends into the rainforest of Utinga State Park as work continues in May on infrastructure projects in Belém.

ALESSANDRO FALCO



COVER STORY

A (REALISTIC) PATH TO SUCCESS IN BELÉM

As the world prepares for the UN climate summit, one proposal stands out.

BY BETO VERÍSSIMO AND JULIANO ASSUNÇÃO

BELÉM, BRAZIL — The world is falling behind in its efforts to limit climate change. The chances of staying below the key thresholds of 1.5°C or even 2.0°C are slipping away. In fact, global greenhouse gas emissions have continued to rise since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015, increasing from 49 gigatons of CO_2 equivalent (CO_2e) to 53 gigatons in 2023. While the annual United Nations climate summits — known as the Conference of the Parties, or COP — have created important frameworks for action, they have not moved fast enough or broadly enough. Transitioning to a low-carbon economy has proven difficult due to high economic costs and political challenges.

Against this backdrop, the upcoming COP30 meeting in November — taking place in Belém, in the heart of the Brazilian Amazon — could constitute a turning point. Brazil is uniquely positioned to help change how tropical forests are treated in global climate efforts: not merely as victims of deforestation and carbon emissions, but as vital assets in the fight against climate change. The Amazon, which accounts for half of the world's tropical rainforests, plays a vital role in absorbing carbon dioxide, regulating weather patterns, and preserving global biodiversity. Its health is not just a regional concern; it is a global priority.

The urgency is clear. To reach an effective climate solution, two major actions are essential. First, the world must drastically reduce new emissions and stay on a path toward net-zero emissions by 2050. Unfortunately, emissions continue to rise. Second, even if emissions are brought near zero, we still must remove massive amounts of carbon that are already in the atmosphere.

With more than 40,000 participants from almost 200 countries expected to attend COP30 and related events in Belém, there will be no shortage of quality ideas. But there is one proposal poised to take full advantage of the event's unique location as well as the support of the host government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. In short, Belém is a golden opportunity to increase the world's focus on restoring tropical forests such as the Amazon — either by planting trees or allowing nature to regenerate.

This proposal stands out as an immediate, cost-effective, and politically viable way to remove carbon from the atmosphere. Unlike expensive and unproven carbon-capture technologies, forest regeneration is affordable, scalable, and ready to deploy today. Focusing on forest restoration also brings other benefits: protecting biodiversity, conserving water, and supporting healthy ecosystem services. The Amazon forest alone holds a carbon stock comparable to the total historical emissions of the United States.

We need a new approach — one that recognizes the two-way relationship between forests and the climate. Tropical forests can absorb huge quantities of carbon if restored, and climate policies can help direct money and resources to protect and grow these forests. Instead of being sidelined, forests must become central to the climate solution.

BRAZIL IS UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO HELP CHANGE HOW TROPICAL FORESTS ARE TREATED; THEY ARE VITAL ASSETS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE.

Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Environment and Climate Change Minister Marina Silva speak at the launch in April 2024 of a federal program to combat deforestation and forest fires in the Amazon.

Two priorities for forest action

To unlock the full climate potential of tropical forests, two areas must be tackled at the same time: halting deforestation and restoring degraded lands.

First, stopping deforestation is urgent. Despite some progress in agricultural productivity, tropical forest loss remains high. These ecosystems, often overlooked in existing forest finance mechanisms, are even more delicate than some observers think. If we don't achieve near-zero deforestation by 2030, we risk losing one of the planet's most important tools for absorbing carbon. Forests help stabilize the climate not only by sequestering carbon but also by regulating rainfall, preventing soil erosion, and supporting agriculture. Preserving forests also helps prevent the spread of zoonotic diseases, many of which originate in disturbed wildlife habitats. Their destruction accelerates biodiversity loss and makes it harder for local communities to sustain traditional ways of life. Thus, protecting high-integrity forests that currently face low deforestation pressure is critically important.

Second, forest restoration is a powerful way to remove carbon from the air. In Brazil alone, the excessive deforestation has left behind a vast area, equivalent to the size of Texas, of bare and badly utilized land. These lands offer a huge opportunity to restore forest cover, boost biodiversity, and bring back crucial ecosystem services. Despite financial and institutional barriers that have slowed progress, restoration can be achieved by planting native species, encouraging natural regrowth, and integrating reforestation with sustainable livelihoods

TON MOLINA/NURPHOTO/GETTY

for local populations.

A smart forest strategy must address both fronts: protection and restoration. The right balance will vary among tropical countries, depending on local conditions and institutions. That's why any global forest strategy must be both adaptable and rooted in real-world contexts.

Brazil and other tropical countries have piloted policies to reduce deforestation, but political instability has often led those gains to be reversed over time. For forest-based solutions to succeed, they must be built to endure political changes. Creating resilient frameworks that are less dependent on the policies of any one administration will be key to long-term success.

That's what makes COP30 so important. It is a chance to move from scattered pilot programs to a unified global framework that treats forests as essential infrastructure for climate stability. With the eyes of the world on Belém, there is an opportunity to send a clear signal that tropical forests are not just a concern for environmentalists, but a foundational element of global climate security and prosperity.

A new financial model for forests

To support this shift, we need a financial model designed for the scale of the opportunity and the complexity of the challenge. One promising idea involves a framework with two complementary payment systems: one to reward regions for growing new forests and removing carbon, and another to reward the protection of standing forests.

The first model relies on carbon offset mechanisms, whether through regulated carbon markets or other frameworks. In this framework, countries, high-emitting sectors, or large corporations are required to compensate for their greenhouse gas emissions as part of their transition toward carbon neutrality. Under this approach, these actors

A worker with carbon credit company Mombak plants trees to reforest a former cattle ranch in the Amazon region near Mãe do Rio in the state of Pará in December.

PABLO PORCIUNCULA/AFP/GETTY

would purchase forest-based carbon offsets by paying tropical regions according to their net carbon balance—that is, the difference between the carbon absorbed through forest restoration and the carbon released via deforestation. Payments would go to regional funds that support a range of forest-related activities: enforcement, land ownership rights, Indigenous territories, and incentives for landowners who let forests regenerate. Such funding can also help resolve long-standing land conflicts and improve economic opportunities in remote areas.

In the Brazilian Amazon, where much deforestation is driven by low-yield cattle grazing, even modest payments for carbon could be transformative. This region could shift from being a major carbon emitter to a major carbon sink, removing as much as 18 gigatons of carbon over 30 years. Most of this would come from letting already-degraded land naturally regrow. Carbon payments create powerful incentives for farmers to shift from low-productivity cattle ranching to forest restoration, while also motivating governments to strengthen deforestation controls and promote ecosystem recovery in public lands. The potential is immense, especially when compared to costly engineered solutions that may take years to scale.

The second model, based on the proposed Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF), would offer annual payments to countries for each hectare of preserved forest. The proposal suggests $4 per hectare per year, with steep penalties for any deforestation — a system that effectively pays countries to keep forests standing. Though not tied to carbon credits, the logic is simple: Reward stewardship and penalize forest loss. This approach treats forests like infrastructure, worthy of maintenance funding, just like roads or power grids.

Together, these mechanisms form a comprehensive strategy. One supports active carbon removal; the other secures long-term forest conservation. Implemented together, they could shift tropical forests from a peripheral concern to a cornerstone of global climate policy. Forests would no longer be merely a backdrop for climate action—they would become a primary stage.

Making it work

To succeed, this system needs major funding and global coordination. Current climate finance tools are not up to the task. One key step is setting a more unified global price on carbon. Right now, carbon markets are fragmented and inefficient. A shared price would allow countries to work together and bring down the overall cost of climate action. Coordinated pricing would also signal to investors and businesses that nature-based solutions are a reliable and essential part of the future economy.

Monitoring forest carbon accurately and affordably is also essential. Fortunately, satellite technology and data analysis now make this possible. A global system for verifying carbon changes would build confidence in results and improve transparency. Open, real-time data would empower civil society, local communities, and investors alike to track progress and hold institutions accountable.

It's also important to keep the system simple. Instead of funding individual projects, payments would go to whole regions or countries based on outcomes — giving local governments the freedom to use funds according to their needs, while holding them accountable for results. This approach avoids red tape and honors national sovereignty. Countries would be rewarded for delivering measurable environmental benefits, regardless of the policy tools they choose to use.

Giant Victoria amazonica water lilies float on the grounds of Belém's Goeldi Museum after rains in May. The museum is home to a leading Amazon biology and culture research center.

Back to Belém

COP30 IS MORE THAN another summit. It is a chance to reshape how we think about forests in climate strategy. The old view — that forests are merely victims or side players — no longer fits. Tropical forests can be central to solving the climate crisis. Their protection and restoration can also bring economic benefits, especially as rural economies evolve and digital tools connect even remote areas to global markets.

With the right support, carbon revenues can help build infrastructure and services in emerging cities, linking environmental protection to economic growth. Investment in nature can go hand-in-hand with social development. In fact, it must. The path forward is not about choosing between the environment and prosperity — it's about designing solutions that secure both.

The path is clear. The question now is whether COP30 can deliver the action needed. The future of tropical forests — and of the global climate system — may depend on it. AQ

Veríssimo and **Assunção** are co-directors of the Amazônia 2030 initiative. **Veríssimo** is also Brazil's Special Envoy for Forests at COP30, and **Assunção** is the executive director of the Climate Policy Initiative/PUC-Rio.

ALESSANDRO FALCO

An X-Ray of the Amazon Region

The Pan-Amazon region covers a wide swath of South America, including all or parts of eight countries and one overseas department of France: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela. According to research initiative Amazônia 2030, the area is an estimated **8.3 million km²** and is home to **46.9 million people**.

Intensive agriculture, illegal gold mining, and wildlife trafficking are present in much of the region, and each country faces particular challenges. Drug trafficking in Bolivia, illicit crops in Colombia, land clearing for palm oil cultivation in Ecuador, illegal coltan mining in Venezuela, timber trafficking in Peru, and land grabbing in Brazil are just some of the environmental threats that abound in the region.

by Emilie Sweigart

	BOLIVIA	BRAZIL	COLOMBIA	ECUADOR	FRENCH GUIANA	GUYANA	PERU	SURINAME	VENEZUELA
Amazon area (km²)	714,834	5,016,478	506,181	132,292	84,226	211,157	966,190	146,488	470,219
Amazon area as % of total area	65.1	58.9	44.3	51.3	100	100	75.2	100	51.3
Amazon area as % of Pan-Amazon region	8.4	60.8	6	1.6	1	2.5	11.4	1.7	5.6
Estimated km² of Amazon deforestation, 2021-25*	10,881.0	138,066.2	6,143.3	1,684.6	51.0	117.0	7,843.3	161.0	745.7
Population in Amazon region (millions)	8.3	28.3	1.2	0.9	0.3	0.8	4.1	0.6	2.4
Amazon population as % of total	71.1	13.3	2.4	5.5	100	100	13	100	7.2

*DEFORESTATION ESTIMATES ARE UNDER A MODERATE SCENARIO.

NOTE: FIGURES ROUNDED TO NEAREST DECIMAL POINT. AREA FIGURES ARE FROM 2025 AND POPULATION FIGURES ARE FROM 2023, EXCEPT FOR BRAZIL (2024).

SOURCES: MAP, AREA AND POPULATION: "FATOS DA AMAZÔNIA-2025,"AMAZÔNIA 2030 (APRIL 2025); BRAZIL AREA AND POPULATION: IBGE; DEFORESTATION: "DEFORESTACIÓN EN LA AMAZONÍA AL 2025," AMAZON NETWORK OF GEOREFERENCED SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION-RAISG (SEPT. 2022); "STOLEN AMAZON: THE ROOTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME IN BOLIVIA," INSIGHT CRIME AND IGARAPÉ INSTITUTE (APRIL 2024); "DYNAMICS OF THE ECOSYSTEM OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES IN THE BRAZILIAN LEGAL AMAZON," IGARAPÉ INSTITUTE (AUG. 2024); "THE ROOTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME IN THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON," INSIGHT CRIME AND IGARAPÉ INSTITUTE (SEPT. 2021); "REBEL RAZING: LOOSENING THE CRIMINAL HOLD ON THE COLOMBIAN AMAZON," INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP (OCT. 2024); "STOLEN AMAZON: THE ROOTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME IN FIVE COUNTRIES," INSIGHT CRIME AND IGARAPÉ INSTITUTE (NOV. 2022); "EUROPE'S WEAKEST BORDER? SMUGGLING BETWEEN SURINAME AND FRENCH GUIANA," INSIGHT CRIME (MAY 2023); "THE ROOTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON," INSIGHT CRIME AND IGARAPÉ INSTITUTE (JUNE 2022).

GRAPHICS BY ANAIS GONZALEZ

COLOMBIA

506,181 km²	
44.3 %	
6 %	
6,143.3 km²	
1.2	
2.4 %	

VENEZUELA

470,219 km²	
51.3 %	
5.6 %	
745.7 km²	
2.4	
7.2 %	

GUYANA

211,157 km²	
100 %	
2.5 %	
117.0 km²	
0.8	
100 %	

SURINAME

146,488 km²	
100 %	
1.7 %	
161.0 km²	
0.6	
100 %	

FRENCH GUIANA

84,226 km²	
100 %	
1 %	
51.0 km²	
0.3	
100 %	

ECUADOR

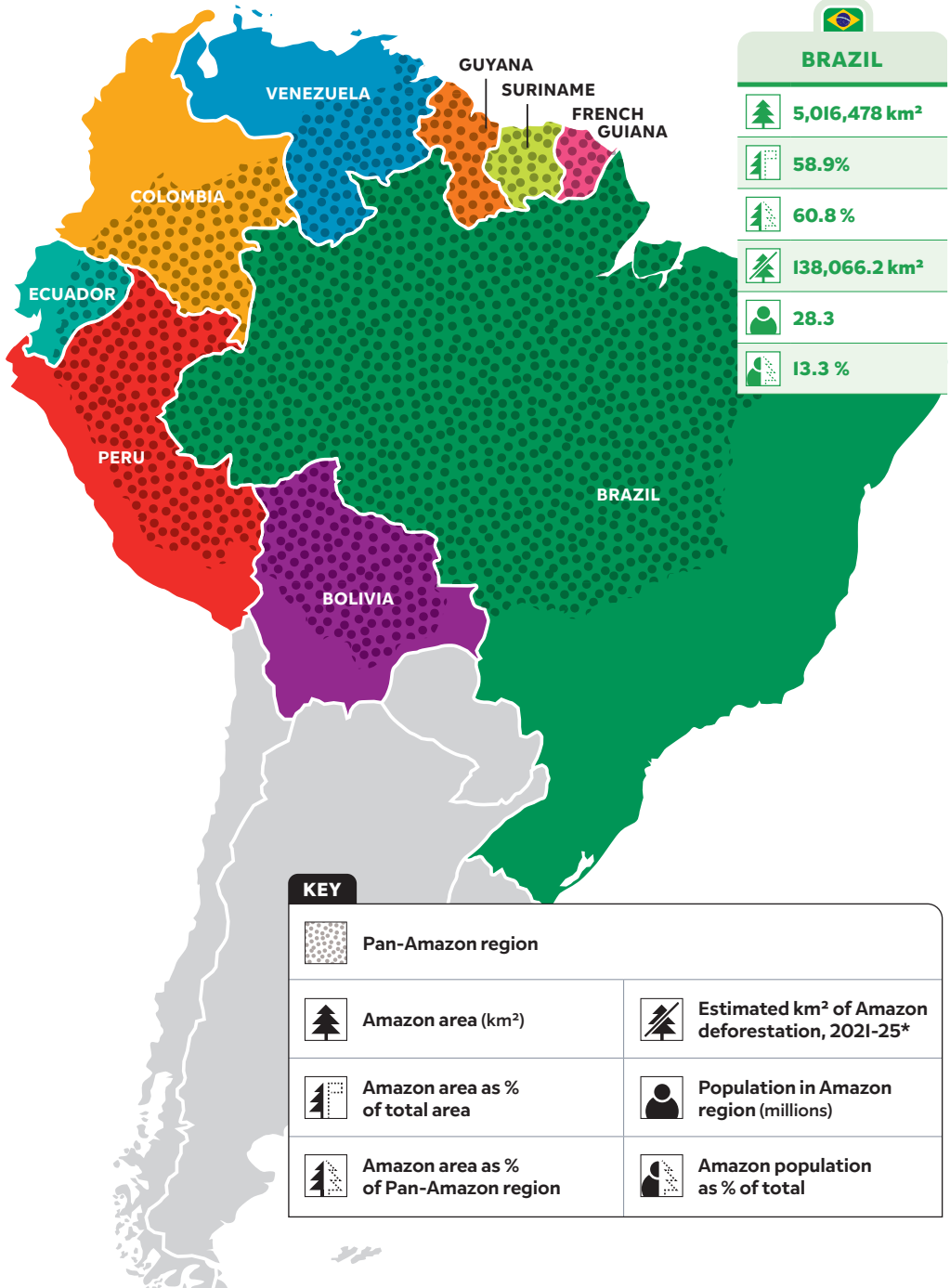
132,292 km²	
51.3 %	
1.6 %	
1,684.6 km²	
0.9	
5.5 %	

PERU

966,190 km²	
75.2 %	
11.4 %	
7,843.3 km²	
4.1	
13 %	

BOLIVIA

714,834 km²	
65.1 %	
8.4 %	
10,881.0 km²	
8.3	
71.1 %	



BRAZIL

5,016,478 km²	
58.9%	
60.8 %	
138,066.2 km²	
28.3	
13.3 %	

KEY

Pan-Amazon region	
Amazon area (km²)	Estimated km² of Amazon deforestation, 2021-25*
Amazon area as % of total area	Population in Amazon region (millions)
Amazon area as % of Pan-Amazon region	Amazon population as % of total

Spotlight on the Brazilian Amazon

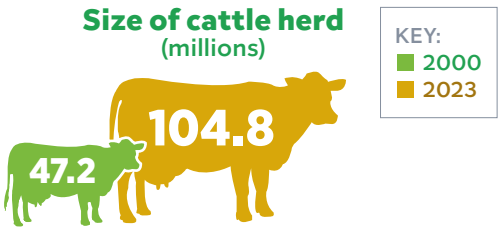
Known as the "Legal Amazon" in Brazil, this approximately **5 million km² area** accounts for almost 61% of the Pan-Amazon region. It covers **59% of Brazil** and includes the states of Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Mato Grosso, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima, Tocantins and more than half of Maranhão. Indigenous territories make up much of Brazil's Amazon, covering **1.15 million km²**. In 2023, the region produced 1.1 billion tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (**48% of Brazil's emissions**), concentrated in areas where deforestation and forest degradation occur.

Key socioeconomic indicators

Population (millions, 2024)	28.3
Share of Brazil's total population	13.3%
Population density (inhabitants per km², 2022)	5.3
Homicide rate (per 100,000 people, 2023)	32.9
Poverty rate (2023)	36.2%
Average monthly salary (USD) for formal workers (2023)	$468
Share of Brazil's GDP (2021)	10.1%

NOTES: POVERTY LINE AT $5.50 PPP 2011; BRAZIL'S LEVEL IN 2023 WAS 27.4%. THE AVERAGE NATIONAL MONTHLY SALARY IN 2023 WAS $556.

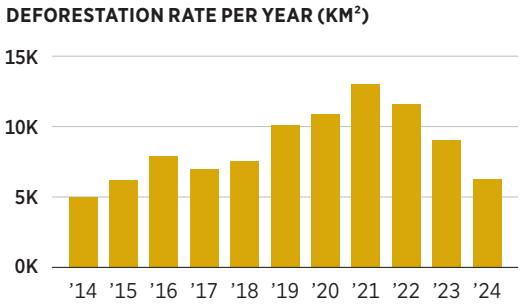
Size of cattle herd (millions)



Total harvest area for crops (millions of hectares)

8.5 | **29.3**

Amazon deforestation has decreased during Lula's third term, but remains above 2014 levels

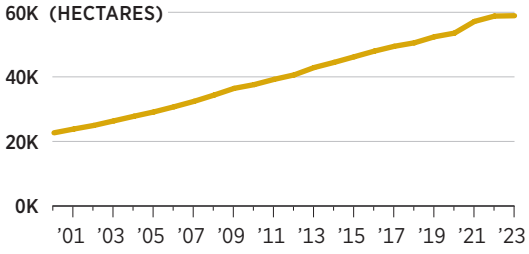


The Amazon's main crops in 2023

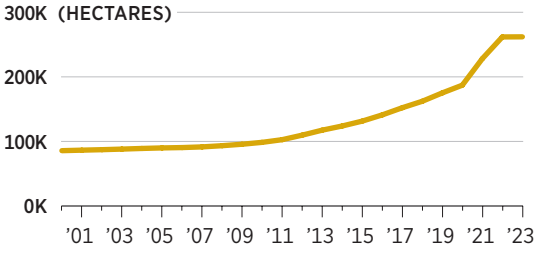
	Crop value (billions USD)	Share of Brazil's production (%)
Soybeans	$23.2	38.1%
Corn	$6.8	44.5%
Upland cottonseed	$3.8	74.0%
Manioc	$1.4	34.3%
Sugarcane	$0.6	3.3%

NOTE: VALUES ROUNDED TO NEAREST DECIMAL POINT.

Area used for industrial mining



Area used for illegal mining



SOURCES: "FATOS DA AMAZÔNIA-2025," AMAZÔNIA 2030 (APRIL 2025); IBGE (2024)

Belém by the Numbers

This city of **1.3 million** faces acute challenges, from traffic to water provision to sewage collection. Belém has seen a flurry of recent investment as it prepares to host **more than 40,000 people** at November's summit. There has been a major push to expand the city's accommodation capacity, and summit organizers announced in April that another 9,877 beds were in development. The government of Pará estimates that investments in preparation for COP30 will create 5,000 direct jobs, and that the state will have **3.5% GDP growth** in 2025.

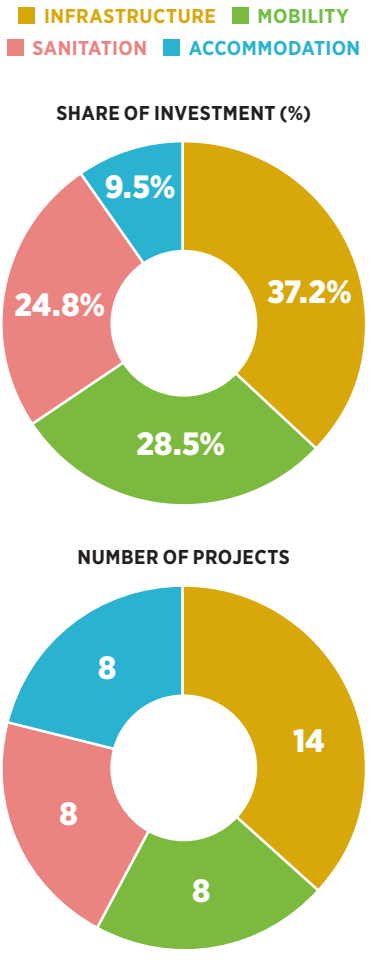
How Belém compares to the rest of Brazil

	BELÉM	BRAZIL AVERAGE
GDP per capita (USD) (Belém: 2021; Brazil: 2022)	$3,995	$8,596
Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births, 2022)	14.8	12.6
Homicide rate (per 100,000 people, 2023)	22.7	22.8
Share of population living in favelas (2022)	57.2%	8.1%
Average years of study (2022)	10.5 (men) 10.9 (women)	9.3 (men) 9.8 (women)
Share of households with public water supply (2022)	67.1%	83.9%
Share of households served by sewage collection system (2022)	59.9%	64.7%
Air pollution level: % higher than WHO guideline (2023)	172%	98%

NOTE: FIGURES ROUNDED TO NEAREST DECIMAL POINT. ANNUAL AIR PARTICULATE CONCENTRATIONS OF PARTICULATE MATTER OF LESS THAN 2.5 MICROMETERS PER CUBIC METER ARE 13.6 AND 9.9 MICROGRAMS PER CUBIC METER FOR BELÉM AND BRAZIL, RESPECTIVELY. ACCORDING TO WHO AIR POLLUTION GUIDELINES, THE ANNUAL AVERAGE CONCENTRATION SHOULD NOT EXCEED 5 MICROGRAMS PER CUBIC METER.

SOURCES: GDP PER CAPITA, INFANT MORTALITY RATE: INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA; HOMICIDE RATE: FÓRUM BRASILEIRO DE SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA; FAVELA POPULATION, YEARS OF STUDY, PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY, SEWAGE: 2022 CENSUS; CALCULATIONS BASED ON AIR POLLUTION DATA FROM PLATAFORMA VIGIAR-MINISTÉRIO DA SAÚDE.

As of April, Belém had approximately $1.3 billion in COP30 investments



SOURCE: G1 (APRIL 2025)

Belém Awaits with Hopes, Heat and Haste

The forum will highlight global environmental challenges, as well as the daily realities of the Amazon.

BY BRUNO ABBUD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALESSANDRO FALCO

A former community soccer field in the low-income area of Vila da Barca has been turned into a debris dump for waste generated by COP30 construction.

BELÉM, BRAZIL — At 2 p.m. on a sweltering May afternoon, the air at the famous Praça do Relógio is thick with heat, humidity, and the familiar rhythms of *carimbó* music pulsing from a vendor's speaker. Vultures soar above this downtown area near the iconic Ver-o-Peso market, as a construction worker, drenched in sweat, operates a power saw. Its sharp whine pierces through the sounds of the crowd, serving as a visceral reminder: The global climate summit, known as COP30, is approaching.

With just five months to go before the United Nations Climate Change Conference opens in the heart of the Brazilian Amazon, Belém is a city in transformation. Dust clouds hover over roads torn up for repaving. Sidewalks are being redone, and cranes dot the skyline. Since the announcement in December 2023 that Belém would host COP30, state and federal authorities, public banks, and companies, including mining giant Vale, have launched 38 infrastructure projects totaling over $1.3 billion, according to local media.

At one construction site near the port, workers labor under the sweltering sun. "We're about 200 now, but they're hiring. Another 500 should be arriving soon," Ricardo Brito, 42, told *AQ*. Brito was installing handrails and improving the pavement for passengers who would disembark there during COP30. He works for the construction company Pinheiro Sereni Engenharia, which was contracted for COP30-related projects. Not all of them are on formal contracts. "When this is over, we'll be back on the job hunt," added his colleague Dorivaldo da Silva, 48. Still, they expressed pride in being part of a transformation they hope will leave a legacy beyond the summit.

Nowhere is the frenetic pace more visible than at Belém's international airport. Its expansion, budgeted at nearly $85 million, aims to triple its capacity. But it remains open to the public, resulting in an overwhelming mix of noise and dust. Jackhammers compete with loudspeaker announcements as passengers dodge workers carrying planks and paint buckets. Hammering on the roof, a drill roaring nearby, and the whine of saws create a chaotic symphony as hurried couples, anxious elders, and visibly uncomfortable children navigate the modest two-story terminal. Ceiling panels are visibly misaligned, signs of the speed at which everything is moving. Yet for all the dust and delays, the ambition is clear: to prepare the city to welcome leaders from nearly 200 countries.

Under pressure

Farther downtown, a new park along Tamandaré Avenue features one of the most controversial COP30 installations: the "eco-tree," a metal frame meant to support climbing plants not native to the Amazon. The plants, however, have withered under the relentless sun, prompting online jokes. "Those plants can't handle this much sun," said 70-year-old Maria Oliveira, who sells medicinal herbs. Recently displaced from her longtime spot near Ver-o-Peso to make way for renovations, she said, "They moved us, and now our business is hurting."

Oliveira harvests plants from Belém's 39 river islands, but extreme heat has changed her work. "I used to restock three times a week. Now, just once. It's too hot." COP30, she said, has only added to the difficulty: "We used to sell 10 bundles a day. Now, sometimes, we don't sell one." Construction work in the neighborhood has pushed the vendors to a less visible area with less tourist traffic.

The sentiment is echoed by Ricardo de Souza, 59, who sells Amazon nuts. His daily gross sales dropped from $540 in December to $107 in May. Construction disruptions are partly to blame, but climate change also plays a role. Last year's drought, one of Brazil's worst, doubled nut prices. The drought affected around 60% of Brazil's territory, raising the price

"By 4 p.m., I feel like I'm burning. I have to go home, take a shower, and jump in the pool. I built one just to survive."

—**Maria Loura**, 57, an herbalist, poses in the temporary medicinal herb section of Ver-o-Peso. Herbalists are among the market's most iconic figures, selling traditional remedies deeply connected to Indigenous pharmacology.

of energy and affecting agricultural output more broadly. In the Amazon region, it dried up massive rivers, such as the Rio Negro, and left populations dependent on water trucks to access drinking water. It also intensified fires, which destroyed 17.9 million hectares in the Amazon in 2024.

Down at Pedra do Peixe, a riverside port, fishermen lounge in hammocks between shifts. "I came here when I was 11," said Manoel Trindade, 63. "There used to be more fish, and it wasn't this hot." At the nearby market, Maria Loura, 57, another *erveira* (herbalist), said she has had to reduce her hours due to the heat. "By 4 p.m., I feel like I'm burning. I have to go home, take a shower, and jump in the pool. I built one just to survive."

Still, she sees COP30 as a needed opportunity. "The world needs fixing. But real fixing. Not just people eyeing our minerals."

Climate conference meets everyday reality

For many in Belém, COP30 is still a vague concept. "I thought it was the Olympics," said Sara Alexandre, 54, laughing. A lifelong resident, she said climate change is impossible to ignore. "People are fainting from the heat. That didn't used to happen."

A federal initiative will add 6,000 cruise ship berths to accommodate guests, mirroring the city's annual religious pilgrimage Círio de Nazaré, which draws millions. Yet housing prices have already spiked. "Everyone's moving out to rent their homes," Alexandre said. "I heard someone's asking 2 million reais ($358,000) for an apartment. That's absurd."

Some are trying to capitalize on the conference. The Faraó Motel, once known for adult films and discreet rendezvous, has rebranded as "Hotel COP30." Rooms have been redecorated with caiman-themed art, and rates will soar to $1,000 per night. "We're adapting", said receptionist Joel Santos, 62.

Layers of history, layers of inequality

Founded in 1616, Belém bears the imprint of centuries of Indigenous, colonial, and immigrant histories. Ancient tools unearthed in the region date back 6,000 years. The city's neighborhoods still feature 200-year-old Belle Époque buildings with European symmetry, though now corroded by time and tropical humidity. In one forgotten square, a weathered plaque quotes 17th-century Jesuit priest António Vieira, who likened Belém's surroundings to the Tower of Babel. "There were only 70 languages there, but in the Amazon River, the tongues are so many and so diverse no one knows their names or number."

Modern Belém is home to 1.3 million people and a renowned food scene, but it faces serious challenges. Just four in 10 residents have access to treated sewage, placing it among Brazil's worst cities for sanitation. Ana Maria Corrêa, 38, lives beside the Murutucu Canal, where COP30-related sanitation works are underway. "They're paving the avenue, but our house

Rates are projected to soar to $1,000 per night at a former motel that rebranded as "Hotel COP30."

"They're paving the avenue, but our house still has no sewage."

—**Ana Maria Corrêa**, 38, who lives beside the Murutucu Canal, sits outside her home. Although the canal is under construction, her house still lacks basic sanitation services.

still has no sewage," she said. Her neighbor's house cracked from the vibrations. "The upper floor is sinking," said Maria do Socorro, 65. No repairs have been guaranteed by Consórcio Canal Murutucu, the consortium responsible for the works outside her house.

Elsewhere, in Gentil Canal and Vila da Barca, low-income areas face similar issues. A beloved soccer field is now buried under construction debris. "We don't play anymore," said Fernando Carvalho, 23, showing photos from past tournaments.

An environmental paradox

Belém is at the center of Brazil's climate contradictions. While preparing to host the world's foremost climate summit, the state of Pará is also home to the country's largest illegal gold mines, which poison rivers and devastate forests. In 2024, deforestation in this state reached 1,271 square kilometers — almost the size of two New York Cities. Wildfires cloaked much of Brazil in thick black smoke for weeks.

"We don't play anymore."

—**Fernando Carvalho**, 23, a local resident, stands where he used to play soccer. The field in front of his home has been transformed into a construction debris site due to COP30.

Belém is also seen as a logistical hub in Brazil's plans to drill for oil in 47 offshore blocks hundreds of kilometers out at sea, in the fragile ecosystem of the Amazon River's mouth — a biologically rich, poorly studied marine area. In May, Brazil's environmental regulator Ibama approved the final step before simulated seabed drilling.

Back in Belém, another COP30 project — the widening of Rua da Marinha, recently financed by a $45 million loan from Brazil's development bank BNDES — cuts through a preserved forest. The worksite is a red dirt clearing, with a felled log lying among Amazonian trees. "It's going farther into the forest," said a worker, pointing to a stream that will be buried and an açaí grove set for removal. Some of the cleared trees have been transplanted to the City Park, also under construction for the climate summit, including a 15-meter samaúma tree symbolically planted there by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in February.

According to engineer Beatriz Rosa, who oversees Vale's environmental compliance in the City Park, construction waste is being sent to the Aurá landfill on

"Our street's impassable, no asphalt, just mud. Cars slide off the road every day. Sometimes the school bus can't even get through, and class gets canceled."

—**Henrique Adriano**, 21, a recyclable waste picker, works at the landfill on the outskirts of Belém.

Belém's outskirts. There, 21-year-old Henrique Adriano, who has scavenged recyclables since age 10, described life near the dump: "Our street's impassable, no asphalt, just mud. Cars slide off the road every day. Sometimes the school bus can't even get through, and class gets canceled."

For Belém, COP30 is both an opportunity and a reckoning. The investments may bring lasting improvements, but also reveal long-standing neglect. The climate conference will spotlight not only global environmental challenges but also the daily realities of the Amazon's urban poor.

As preparations continue, Belém's people are bracing for change — hopeful, cautious, and determined to make sure their voices are not lost amid the sound of jackhammers and the promises of progress. AQ

Abbud is a journalist based in São Paulo. He has written recently for *Sumaúma*, *Ojo Público* and *Deutsche Welle*, and was an *O Globo* correspondent. **Falco** is an Italian photographer based in Belém who documents the issues shaping the Amazon.

The U.S. Can't Afford to Sit Out Brazil's Climate Summit

The global gathering presents the White House with an opportunity to enhance its leadership in the Western Hemisphere.

by Susan Segal

Susan Segal is the CEO of Americas Society/ Council of the Americas

In November, Brazil will host the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference — commonly known as COP30 — in the Amazonian city of Belém. This landmark meeting brings together nearly 200 countries to negotiate and establish global targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. For Brazil, a country rich in biodiversity and increasingly vocal on the world stage, the conference represents both a diplomatic and environmental watershed moment.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has made climate leadership a central focus of his foreign policy, and he has tapped seasoned diplomat André Corrêa do Lago to preside over the summit. While Brazil is deeply committed to strengthening multilateralism and building a consensus on global targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, skepticism around the topic has never been greater. Corrêa do Lago's task will therefore be a difficult one. He must develop an agenda that both accelerates emissions reductions, and counters pressure to postpone the global transition to a low-carbon economy.

The science is clear that this transition is vital for long-term economic growth and human well-being. Yet it is still uncertain whether the U.S. will send a high-level delegation to this pivotal summit. A low-profile presence — or worse, an absence — would represent a missed opportunity to strengthen U.S. leadership in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, China is poised to capitalize fully on the situation. Following President Xi Jinping's participation in the 2024 APEC summit in Peru, China has continued to deepen its relationships in the region. In fact, it has already overtaken the U.S. as the leading trading partner for most of Latin America's major economies, with Mexico and Colombia being notable exceptions. China will most likely use COP30 to strengthen its ties with Brazil and others.

So, whether we believe in climate change or not, we must ensure proper representation. This is essential to guarantee that broader U.S. economic and political interests are recognized and considered. The U.S. cannot allow China to be the only long-term player in town. AQ

COA/COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAS

COA/LATIN AMERICAN CITIES CONFERENCES

Every year, Council of the Americas organizes six to eight conferences and missions throughout Latin America, bringing together high-level decision makers from the public and private sectors to address pressing national and regional issues.

Join us at our next conferences:

BUENOS AIRES

Argentina: Economic and Political Perspectives

Thursday **Aug 21** | **Alvear Palace Hotel**
Buenos Aires

In partnership with Cámara Argentina de Comercio y Servicios

SÃO PAULO

The New Global Landscape and the Role of the Private Sector in Sustainable Development

Tuesday **Aug 26** | **FIESP**
São Paulo

In partnership with FIESP

Visit www.as-coa.org/lacc for updates.

THIS IS

CNN™

and we mean BUSINESS

CNN Dinero

PORTAFOLIO GLOBAL

OPPENHEIMER

Globo Economía

MERCADO SUR

MERCADO MÉXICO

PHOTO ESSAY

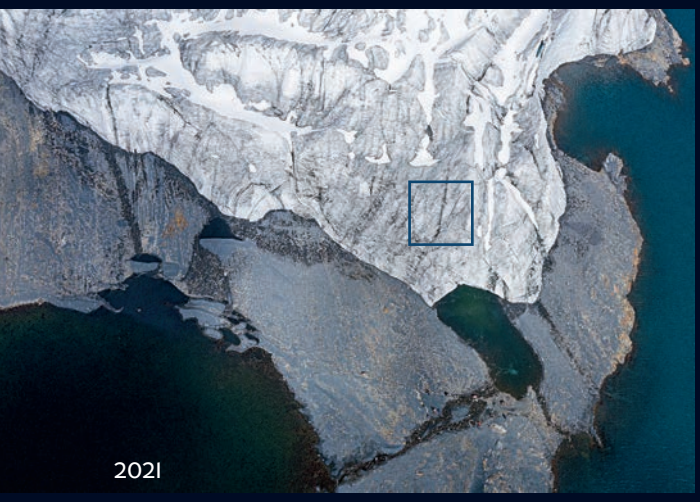
THE MELTING GLACIERS RELEASING HEAVY METALS

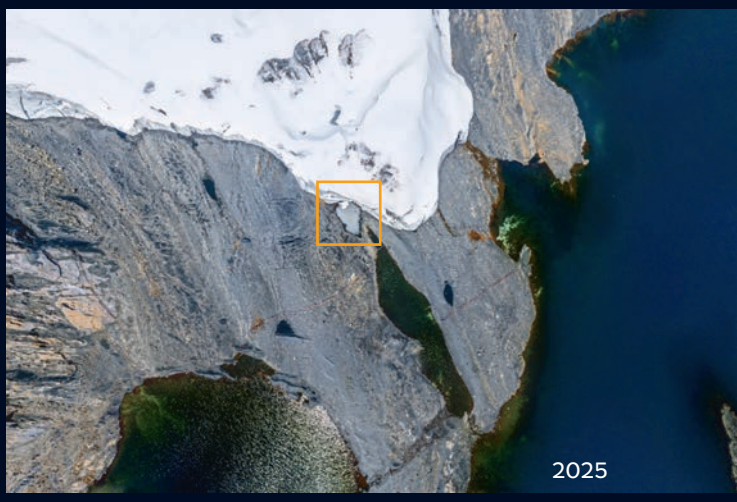
High in Peru's Andes, communities and scientists are racing against time to mitigate one more calamity wrought by climate change.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLAS VILLAUME

Text by Rich Brown

An ice cave at 16,000 feet above sea level, photographed in 2021, extends over Pastoruri Glacier Lake in the Cordillera Blanca range of the Andes. The giant cave has since disappeared.





CORDILLERA BLANCA, PERU — The glaciers of Peru's Andes are vanishing. They are at least 40% smaller today than they were half a century ago due to rising temperatures. New research indicates that ice loss in the Andes could eventually threaten water supplies for 90 million people, and reduce river flows in the Amazon basin by 20% with serious consequences for the Amazon's forests and the global climate.

But water shortages due to ice loss are already common in many mountain communities. Meltwater their crops and livestock have depended on for centuries is increasingly scarce. And as glaciers retreat, they leave another grave problem behind: acid rock drainage. When rock formations are uncovered for the first time in millennia, contact with water triggers chemical reactions. These reactions create sulfuric acid, which eats further into rockfaces and releases toxic heavy metals that were once trapped. All this ends up in local waterways, leaving streams, rivers, and lakes acidic and contaminated.

In Peru's Cordillera Blanca, acid rock drainage has taken a significant toll. Crops have failed, and fish and livestock have died. The city of Huaraz, the capital of Peru's Áncash Region with a population of around 150,000, has already been forced to turn away from two watersheds it used to tap for fresh water due to heavy metals contamination — only to see its third fallback option show signs of deterioration.

Now, scientists and local communities have joined in a race against time to develop bioremediation strategies that could turn the tide and produce clean water. These strategies use living systems of plants and microorganisms to filter out acidity and heavy metals in streams and wetlands. Their efforts to combine scientific measurement with ancestral knowledge of local plant life and water flows are showing promise. If they succeed, they could provide a model for the growing number of high-altitude communities around the world struggling to survive this new threat.

María Julia Gonzales Llontop, a microbiologist with Peru's National Institute for Mountain Glacier and Ecosystem Research (Inaigem), takes water samples from Pastoruri Glacier Lake.

Above left: Aerial photos taken four years apart show the rapid retreat of the Pastoruri Glacier. The orange box shows where the above photo of Gonzales Llontop was taken.


INAIGEM

> **"We have more than 8,000 lakes in our country, and we want to supply [all the information possible] to inform decision-making."**
>
> — Gladis Celmi Henostroza, Inaigem's glaciologist

Gonzales Llontop processes molecular plant samples in an Inaigem laboratory. Samples from Lake Shallap, once a source of water for Huaraz, have registered a highly acidic level of 3.2 on the pH scale—more acidic than tomatoes or black coffee.

Pipes carry fresh water from Lake Palcacocha to the city of Huaraz. Acid rock drainage has been detected around the lake, indicating that its water may also become unsafe for human consumption in the near future. With limited options, the city plans to build a costly $10 million water treatment plant.

Farmer Vicente Salvador of Canrey Chico helped to pioneer bioremediation efforts in the area as the president of a local agricultural research committee. "People are happy, but worried," he said in 2021. "We are not treating the water 100%, only 20% or 30%; we still have a long way to go." Later that year, Salvador died of gastric cancer, a sickness linked to heavy metals exposure.

A team of Inaigem researchers gathers samples where a mountain stream meets Lake Shallap. The waters of the lake are a brilliant green, an indicator of extreme oxidation caused by acid rock drainage.

Gonzales Llontop examines a bofedal—a high-altitude Andean wetland—to assess toxicity as well as the potential for surrounding arrangements of flora and microorganisms to combat it.

Inset: A community bioremediation project built in Canrey Chico guides water through a natural filtration system of plants and microorganisms.

***Villaume** is an award-winning photographer and National Geographic Explorer based in Peru*

Colombian presidential hopeful Vicky Dávila

THE AQ PROFILE

The Former Journalist Seeking Colombia's Presidency

Vicky Dávila is a rising conservative candidate in the 2026 presidential race.

by Ricardo Ávila

VÍCTOR ALZATE

BOGOTÁ—On the campaign trail in May, Vicky Dávila received another reminder of why she is running for president in Colombia's 2026 election.

A former TV and print journalist with a career spanning 33 years, Dávila was in Barranquilla, one of the country's most vibrant yet unequal cities. She spoke with an elderly man selling carrots at a local market and was transported to the essential reality beyond the major stories she once covered.

"He told me that life was hard," Dávila recalled. After a brief conversation, she started to walk away, and the vendor began to cry softly. Dávila turned back and asked why he was crying. "He said that there was no hope for people like him, that he felt helpless. That moment reminded me why I'm doing what I'm doing." Dávila relived the encounter hours later when I interviewed her for this story in Bogotá, as the 52-year-old discussed her career and her journey to run as an independent in a highly polarized nation. In June, the assassination attempt on right-wing candidate Senator Miguel Uribe Turbay at a campaign rally in this city raised fears of a return to the political violence the country experienced in the 1980s and 1990s.

Before entering the long list of hopefuls for next year's general election, Victoria Eugenia Dávila — her full legal name — resigned from her position as editor-in-chief of the magazine *Semana* last November, with aspirations to lead the country on a conservative platform. Colombia is the world's largest cocaine producer, and continues to face the lingering effects of a prolonged guerrilla conflict. Furthermore, the social landscape is complicated by high inequality, with significant income and opportunity disparities persisting between urban and rural areas and across racial and ethnic lines.

Initially viewed as a long shot due to her lack of political experience, Dávila's name has consistently ranked among the top three in opinion polls since last September. This resilience suggests she could be the dark horse in the race to govern this country of 52 million people, Latin America's third-largest.

With more than 50 presidential hopefuls in the race and Dávila leading many of them in the polls, some believe she should be taken seriously in a contest whose first round is scheduled for May 31, 2026. Her goal is to succeed President Gustavo Petro, a former member of the M-19 guerrilla movement and the nation's first leftist president, who has become more radical as the end of his term approaches next August. In May, Petro's approval rating rose slightly to 38%, while his disapproval remained at 56%.

Rise to fame

DÁVILA COMES FROM a humble background, has been a media figure for decades, and "has a special connection to people," said Bogotá-based political analyst Leonardo García. Throughout her career, she has "exposed corrupt practices and criticised politicians and powerful people, and all that makes her the perfect outsider," García told *AQ*.

Helping her chances is Dávila's public recognition. A report on candidates or potential hopefuls in the 2026 contest published by Guarumo, EcoAnalítica, and Wise in late April showed Dávila with the most followers on X (4.1 million), Instagram (1.3 million), and TikTok (611,100), and the second-most followers on Facebook (938,887), behind Claudia López, the former Bogotá mayor.

According to her recently published autobiography, *The Cost of Telling the Truth*, Dávila experienced extreme poverty during most of her youth. The daughter of an adolescent mother and an abusive father, she was born in the agricultural city of Tuluá, in the Cauca Valley, but considers herself from Buga, a mid-size city about 43 miles north of Cali.

She witnessed episodes of severe domestic violence on numerous occasions, and her mother decided to escape with her children when Dávila was 12 years old. Despite the incidents at home, she excelled in her studies and displayed a natural talent for

music. She was nine the first time she performed in front of a large audience, and she recalled that singing cured her of any stage fright.

Years later, she decided on journalism as a career. In the early days of her studies at a university in Cali, a classmate mentioned a casting call for a program on the regional TV channel, Telepacífico. Dávila was chosen — but received no salary — so she taught religion at a local high school to supplement her income. She later reported on security at NotiPacífico, where the pace was intense due to the fight against illegal drugs and the infamous Cali cartel. TV-Hoy, a national newscast, took notice of the 21-year-old journalist and offered her a position in Bogotá.

The big leap

In less than a year, Dávila joined the news program QAP, which aired from 1992 to 1997. "She was considered a junior in a room full of seasoned journalists," remembered former colleague Leyla Ponce. The independent newscast, led by journalists María Isabel Rueda and María Elvira Samper, had Nobel Prize-winner Gabriel García Márquez as one prominent contributor. "But after a few months, Vicky demonstrated that she would get to the most difficult sources no matter what. If she had to go through a wall, she would do it."

Dávila next worked for RCN, a private media conglomerate where she would stay for 18 years, becoming a familiar face in Colombia. She hosted a radio show in the mornings and presented the evening news from Monday to Friday. Her sharp instincts as a reporter enabled her to become a ferocious interviewer and interact effectively with the political elite.

All of this came to a sudden stop in 2016, when RCN surprisingly rescinded Davila's contract, first from TV and later from radio. A short press release explained her departure as a resignation. It is believed that a report exposing police corruption, combined with her criticism of the peace process and of alleged excessive expenditures at the presidential palace, distanced her from President Juan Manuel Santos and his administration. Dávila writes in her autobiography that she was convinced the pressure exerted by the Santos government against the Ardila family, RCN's owners, was behind the decision.

Rebranding

Being a free agent was challenging, even for someone recognized as a media star. In July 2016, the former anchor reinvented herself by launching *Vicky Dávila Digital*. The new site attracted 50,000 subscribers on its first day online, a number that grew to 300,000 just a few weeks later, according to her figures.

She returned to established media in early January 2017 at W Radio. Almost three years later, Gabriel Gilinsky, the new owner of *Semana*, Colombia's best-known magazine, hired Dávila as head of digital news. From the beginning, she faced strong resistance within the print edition's staff, who felt Dávila had more resources and support from the owner. In late 2020, tensions reached a new high when a mass resignation took place. The situation could be summarized as "it's us or her."

Gilinsky chose Dávila, who became the editor-in-chief of the weekly. The editorial line moved toward the right, aligning more closely with the Iván Duque administration. Revelations, such as the irregular financing from Brazilian construction giant Odebrecht for the 2014 presidential campaigns of Santos and Óscar Iván Zuluaga, were published.

During the 2022 presidential election, Dávila regularly interviewed then-candidate Gustavo Petro, who won the second round by a slim margin. Relations soured after internal recordings of Petro's campaign were leaked.

A turning point came in February 2023, when *Semana* ran an interview with Day Vásquez, who had been married to the president's son Nicolás, claiming that he received illegal campaign contributions. The legal case is proceeding slowly. Nicolás, who ini-

tially agreed to cooperate with the prosecutor's office, now claims he is innocent. President Petro has denied any wrongdoing.

These revelations took place around the same time as the Gilinsky family was trying to complete a hostile takeover of one of Colombia's largest conglomerates, Grupo Empresarial Antioqueño (GEA). Eventually, Jaime Gilinsky (Gabriel Gilinsky's father) became the main shareholder and CEO of Nutresa, a processed foods multinational that was formerly part of GEA.

For some, *Semana* was far from objective in its coverage of the deal, and the publication lashed out at critics. When asked what happened, Dávila told *AQ*, "Gabriel is no longer my boss. He allowed me to do my job freely, and for that, I thank and respect him, but now things are different."

Dávila's platform

THE NOW-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE spends her days traveling the country, talking to students, street vendors, housewives, taxi drivers and anyone else who will listen. Dávila says that now she is seeing another side of Colombia, starting with the poverty and desperation of many citizens. The country's 2023 poverty rate was 32.4%, above the Latin American average of 25%. "I understand the pain because I come from there," she said.

She has vowed to crack down on crime, and her platform is based on respect for institutions such as the armed forces and the police. Petro's total peace policy of negotiating agreements with dozens of armed groups is widely considered a failure, and the military has taken a harder line stance recently.

Fighting corruption is also at the top of her list. "The money to help the poorest of my compatriots is there, but it is being stolen by people whose names we know and who still have the power," added Dávila. Colombia's traditional parties, as well as former President Santos, Petro, and the Pacto Histórico, which supports the current president, are continuous objects of her criticism.

When asked how she would govern, Dávila signaled that authority and transparency would be her trademarks. She favors a smaller government, which includes cutting bureaucratic processes and reducing red tape. Dávila proposes a 10-10-10 rule for taxes: a personal income tax rate, a corporate tax rate, and a sales tax. She also insisted that she would hire the best talent. "I know what I don't know, and I'll assemble a great team."

Playing the role of an anti-establishment politician and challenging outdated practices could draw in voters. In 2022, former Bucaramanga Mayor Rodolfo Hernández nearly won the presidential election, despite his age and several controversies. Hernández "represented a break from the past for many people, something different," said García, the political analyst. "There is no doubt that, when compared to him, Vicky looks like a stronger candidate," he added.

Like many on the Latin American right, Dávila celebrates Javier Milei's accomplishments in Argentina and plans to follow his policy of slashing the budget to balance public finances. Regarding Donald Trump, she has been more cautious but applauded the decision to cancel USAID contracts. "American taxpayers don't have to be financing projects of the harmful and destructive left in Colombia," she posted on X in early March.

Political future

KEY TO DÁVILA'S FUTURE is whether former President Álvaro Uribe endorses her as the standard-bearer of the right wing, despite resistance within his Centro Democrático party. Alicia Arango, Uribe's private secretary for two terms, joined Dávila's campaign in early April, a move seen as a subtle message of support. In response, Uribe stated, "I am very loyal to the party."

This suggests that an eventual endorsement may occur later in the race, after the party has chosen a candidate. If that person fares poorly in the polls, loses to Dávila in a right-wing primary, or is defeated in the first round of the election, things might change. For now, Dávila is running as an independent.

Vicky Dávila leaves the Fundación Santa Fe hospital in Bogotá where Miguel Uribe Turbay was in critical condition after being shot during a campaign event in June.

While going solo and proving that she is not the typical politician may bolster Dávila's candidacy, some journalists have reservations. Juanita León, editor-in-chief of *La Silla Vacía*, the leading independent digital media outlet in Colombia, characterized Dávila as "hardworking and charismatic," a person who "could embody the feeling of rejection toward Petro and the political class." Nonetheless, León warned that "the role she played while at *Semana*, using the magazine in order to advance the interests of its owner (Gilinsky) in the hostile takeover of Nutresa, opens a question mark about her ethical integrity."

Others spoke of her human qualities, beginning with family values. "She made peace with her father before he died, and since she was almost a child, she took care of her brothers and mother, whom she adores," said her former colleague Ponce. "She is what she says she is, and her life story is her biggest asset," a former boss told *AQ*.

The real race will begin after the legislative elections next March. At that point, Colombian voters will refine their opinions and assess the strengths and weaknesses of what is currently a large pool of candidates. If Dávila wins, she would be the first female president in Colombia's history. Others, such as former Foreign Minister Noemí Sanín, have tried. In 2018, Marta Lucía Ramírez was elected as Duque's vice president, while Francia Márquez serves as Petro's number two.

Predicting whether Dávila will stay in until the end is impossible, but she has a quick answer thus far. "I entered this race to win," she said. "And remember, my first name is Victoria." AQ

Ávila is a senior analyst at *El Tiempo*

DIEGO CUEVAS/GETTY

Lithium brine pools at SQM's operation in the Atacama salt flat in 2024

CRISTOBAL OLIVARES/BLOOMBERG/GETTY

COMPANY PROFILE

Chile's Embattled Lithium King

SQM's new state partnership faces growing scrutiny amid rising global competition for one of the world's most critical minerals.

by Patricia Garip

SANTIAGO — The half-century arc of SQM reads like a tale of modern Chile. Self-proclaimed heir to a bygone saltpeter boom in the Atacama Desert, the mining company has evolved from state control to privatization, from political controversy to corporate savvy, from insular vision to global reach.

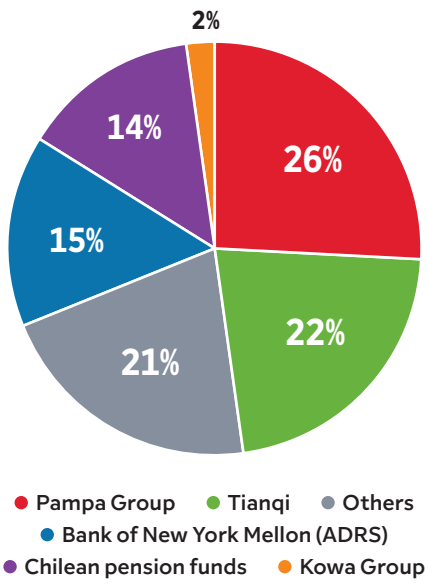
Today, the trajectory of Sociedad Química y Minera de Chile S.A. (SQM) — the world's second-biggest lithium miner — is intertwined with Chile's stop-and-start campaign to mine more of the critical mineral used in batteries for electric vehicles (EVs) and renewable energy storage. Chile became the second-largest producing country after policy fumbles in recent years ceded the top spot to Australia. And newcomer Argentina, now considered a friendlier investment destination, is nipping at Chile's heels.

To shore up its market edge at a time of geopolitical turmoil, SQM is staking its future on a once-unthinkable long-term partnership with Chile's state-owned copper mining company Codelco. But the preliminary public-private deal, signed in May 2024 after direct negotiations rather than a tender, is facing growing scrutiny ahead of Chile's elections in November.

Outgoing President Gabriel Boric is betting that Codelco's tie-up with SQM will accelerate Chile's lithium production, boost government revenue, impose a degree of state control over the coveted resource, transfer technological know-how, and improve sustainability as concerns over water use mount.

Detractors argue that the Codelco-SQM deal lacks transparency, and that Chile could capture more rent with a competitive tender and by authorizing concessions that leave lithium mining in more experienced and efficient private-sector hands. For others, especially among Boric's own left-wing base, SQM — or "Soquimich," as it is commonly known — is an irredeemably tainted partner.

SQM's Ownership Structure



NOTE: OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE ACCORDING TO SQM SHAREHOLDER REGISTRY AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024
SOURCE: SQM (MARCH 2025)

A checkered past

Founded in 1968 as a public-private venture under state development agency Corfo, SQM was privatized in the 1980s during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, when his then-son-in-law, Julio Ponce Lerou, came to control the company through a series of sweetheart transactions.

Ponce Lerou had himself headed Corfo until 1983, and was forced to resign amid allegations of corruption, which he denied. Other scandals would dog him and SQM long after Chile restored democracy in 1990. In the 2010s, heavy fines for a sweeping insider trading scheme were followed by a blow-up over systematic illicit financing of politicians, for which the company paid over $30 million for violating the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA).

(Ponce Lerou denies wrongdoing.)

Chilean legal proceedings are ongoing. Today, the reclusive 79-year-old is consolidating his enterprise Grupo Pampa, which remains SQM's largest shareholder with a 26% stake, and has passed leadership to his daughter, Francisca Ponce Pinochet. Upon announcing the changes, Ponce defended his tenure at SQM from "myths, criticisms and controversies." Still, SQM's joint venture with Codelco would bar him and his close relatives from any future managerial role.

Despite its checkered past, SQM ranks among Chile's top enterprises, with a market capitalization of around $9 billion. The firm "has organized itself over many decades to squeeze everything, including the pips, out of the lemon," London-based mining consultant Christopher Ecclestone told *AQ*. This has enabled it to compete with U.S.-based Albemarle Corporation — the world's largest lithium producer that operates beside SQM in the shimmering high-altitude Salar de Atacama salt flat. And more competition is coming to northern Chile; Anglo-Australian mining giant Rio Tinto has just partnered with Codelco and smaller state-owned company Enami in other lithium-rich salt flats.

Supply surge

SQM's portfolio is robust; lithium accounted for nearly half of the company's total $4.5 billion in revenue last year, but iodine and fertilizers represented 21% apiece. Already the world's top producer of iodine, SQM is building a new seawa-

Chile's President Gabriel Boric presents his National Lithium Strategy in Antofagasta in 2023.

Beijing remains ever-present; Chengdu-based Tianqi is SQM's second-largest shareholder, with a 22% stake.

ter pipeline in Chile to boost output as prices climb.

This softened the blow as lithium prices plummeted from over $80,000 per ton in late 2022 to around $9,000 today, reflecting persistent oversupply. After posting a profit of over $2 billion in 2023, the company saw a net loss of $404 million last year. Management attributed part of that 2024 loss to a one-time tax bill exceeding $1 billion.

In the first quarter of this year, SQM posted a lower-than-expected net profit of $138 million — compared to a loss of $870 million in the first quarter of 2024 — as it upped its lithium sales volume 27% to compensate for a corresponding decline in the company's average sales price. Management has warned of even softer prices in the second quarter.

In Chile, SQM plans to expand production of lithium hydroxide from a current 35,000 metric tons (MT) to 100,000 MT by the end of the year and lithium carbonate from 185,000 MT to 240,000 MT in 2026.

On a quarterly earnings call in May, this pedal-to-the-metal supply strategy prompted Joel Jackson of BMO Capital Markets to ask, "Don't you get worried that your view on supply could be wrong?" Over the long term "oversupply will disappear," SQM lithium manager Carlos Díaz responded. "There's no way the industry can survive these prices," added CEO Ricardo Ramos, asserting that SQM, which has "by far the lowest cost" in the industry, is prepared to meet global appetite once prices bounce back. In March, the company slashed its 2025 capital spending plan 31% to $1.1 billion.

Overseas, SQM is ramping up a new lithium hydroxide joint venture in Australia, where the mineral is more costly to mine. "For SQM to grow more in Chile was practically impossible," Santiago-based lithium consultant Daniel Jiménez told *AQ*. Chile has rigid production quotas, a legacy of the 1970s when lithium was erroneously believed to hold strategic nuclear applications. Bizarrely, these quotas still require approval from Chile's nuclear energy commission. This outdated framework, together with permitting delays, hinders investment.

State bargain

When Boric took office in March 2022, lithium prices were skyrocketing. To seize the opportunity missed by his predecessor, late President Sebastián Piñera, he proposed a National Lithium Company, but the idea soon tanked along with a constitutional draft that would have enshrined it.

Then, in 2023, Boric unveiled a National Lithium Strategy to double lithium production in 10 years. The cornerstone was a government offer to SQM that was hard for the boardroom to refuse: partner with Codelco or risk losing its lithium operations after 2030, when its current Corfo contracts expire.

Under the terms of the deal, which is expected to close later this year, SQM will partner with Codelco in 2025-30, and from 2031-60, Codelco will take control of the venture with a 50% stake plus one symbolic share.

After the initial handshake agreement in December 2023, Piñera's former Mining and Energy Minister Juan Carlos Jobet described it as pragmatic and "politically astute." But sentiment has since hardened. Chile's center-right presidential frontrunner Evelyn Matthei has vowed to review the public-private contract, and economist Jorge Quiroz, representing Chile's Errázuriz Group that has mining rights in the salt flats, asserted that Chile stands to forego $5 billion by sealing a direct agreement instead of holding a competitive tender. Codelco Chairman Máximo Pa-

GLENN ARCOS/AFP/GETTY

SQM CEO Ricardo Ramos leaves a meeting with Codelco Chairman Máximo Pacheco in Santiago in 2023.

checo has pushed back, saying the deal was Chile's "most transparent" ever and that a tender for SQM's stake, rather than direct negotiations, would have implied a costly supply interruption. Corfo has echoed his arguments.

SQM declined to comment for this article, but on the recent earnings call, management described the heated debate over the joint venture with Codelco as election season "noise."

Meanwhile, analysts privately told *AQ* that a tender could award Chile's prized lithium reserves to a Chinese state enterprise, risking backlash from the U.S., Chile's top source of foreign investment. Unlike other OECD countries, Chile has no mechanism to block such a result on grounds of national interest.

Beijing remains ever-present; Chengdu-based Tianqi is SQM's second-largest shareholder, with a 22% stake. Tianqi has sought, thus far unsuccessfully, to thwart the SQM-Codelco contract with demands for a shareholder vote. Regulators in Chile and countries where SQM has distribution channels, namely Brazil, Japan, Saudi Arabia and South Korea, as well as the EU, have blessed the deal. But China, where SQM processes lithium sulfate, seems to be dragging its feet. The country is Chile's top trading partner and the destination for most of the world's lithium. It's not clear what would happen if Beijing put up a roadblock.

Skeptical stakeholders

Back at home, SQM has set ambitious environmental targets. By 2040, the company has pledged to achieve carbon neutrality and reduce its water consumption and brine extraction in Chile by 65% apiece. Under its Salar Futuro project, the company plans to apply for an environmental permit next year to use new water-saving technologies, including a form of direct lithium extraction (DLE), to transition away from its current evapora-

PABLO VERA/AFP/GETTY

SQM's Salar del Carmen lithium plant in Antofagasta, Chile in 2024

tion method.

Critics are unconvinced. Regardless of technology, lithium mining sacrifices the fragile ecosystem around salt flats for EVs that few Chileans can afford to buy, prominent environmentalist Cristina Dorador told *AQ*. Dorador highlighted damage to vital microorganisms that sustain a broad range of biodiversity, including threatened flamingos.

The many Indigenous communities who live near the salt flat must also be consulted for the SQM-Codelco deal to go through. Some support lithium mining, while others are wary. Early on, one group accused SQM and Codelco of forging a deal "behind their backs." Indigenous critics such as Ercilia Araya cite Codelco's spotty social and environmental track record. "Clearly this lithium has to be taken advantage of, but in a reasonable way," Indigenous legal adviser Ariel León Bacián said at a recent congressional hearing. "Codelco is not up to the task, and neither is the government."

The hearing was conducted by a congressional commission tasked with investigating the new partnership. In May, the commission voted overwhelmingly to recommend the deal be scrapped. Although it's not binding, the lopsided outcome reflects skepticism that might prove hard to shrug off.

For SQM and other lithium miners, battery innovations, the pace of energy transition, and global recession pose additional risks. And with China dominating the resource, there is no certainty of a lithium price rebound at a time when market forces have taken a back seat to power politics on the international stage. For now, SQM will carry on in Chile, with or without its state partner, at least through 2030. From there, this tale of shared fate could take another dramatic turn. AQ

Garip is a freelance journalist based in Santiago, Chile. She focuses on natural resources and geopolitics in Latin America.

CRISTOBAL OLIVARES/BLOOMBERG/GETTY

Trump's Policies Test U.S.–Latin America Ties

Even allies complain about a lack of clarity, a professor writes.

by Lucía Dammert

SANTIAGO — In just a few months, the Trump administration has significantly reshaped U.S.–Latin American relations, introducing uncertainty and turbulence into a traditionally complex yet cooperative dynamic. Trump's "America First" rhetoric, along with substantial policy shifts, have created anxiety throughout the region, and his blunt characterization of Latin American countries primarily as sources of irregular migration, crime, and economic burdens has deepened mistrust and heightened tensions.

His declaration that "Latin American countries need us much more than we need them" exemplifies a transactional approach that misjudges the idiosyncratic dynamics and overlooks growing regional autonomy and global multipolarity.

Since *AQ* published an issue last year highlighting the significance of the U.S. election for Latin America and the Caribbean, numerous events and decisions have underscored the inextricable connection between the White House and the region. The rapid issuance of executive orders, the delays in implementing some directives, and the specific

Trump's "America First" rhetoric, along with substantial policy shifts, have created anxiety throughout the region.

"deals" with several countries in the region illustrate the unpredictability that many analysts anticipated.

In January, shortly after his inauguration, I published an article outlining 10 keys to understanding Trump's second term. Now, more than six months into his administration, 10 lessons have become clear and provide critical context:

1. **Diplomacy Matters**: Transactional and confrontational rhetoric weakens long-term partnerships.
2. **Aid Reductions Backfire**: Cutting USAID programs exacerbates instability and migration.
3. **Trade Threats Alienate Allies**: Protectionist measures undermine U.S. influence, pushing partners toward competitors.
4. **Military Responses Have Limits**: Militarized approaches to drug trafficking risk escalating regional violence.
5. **Ignoring Climate Change Hurts Everyone**: Withdrawal from environmental commitments exacerbates regional vulnerabilities.
6. **Migration Requires Comprehensive Solutions**: Structural causes cannot be addressed through punitive border policies alone.
7. **Regional Unity Is Crucial**: Favoring bilateral deals over multilateral cooperation undermines collective regional stability.
8. **Democracy Needs Support**: Failure to address democratic erosion allows authoritarianism and populism to flourish.
9. **China's Influence Expands Unchecked**: Without a robust U.S. strategy, China's economic foothold in Latin America grows.
10. **Strategic Clarity is Essential**: Ambiguity in policy creates uncertainty, weakening strategic partnerships and regional trust.

Throughout Trump's second term, the lack of clarity regarding U.S. partnerships has become increasingly pronounced. The administration's unpredictable posture toward key nations — especially Mexico, Colombia and Brazil — leaves these traditionally close allies uncertain of their standing. Ambiguity and volatility hinder sustained collaboration, complicating long-term strategic planning. Trump's threats of tariffs against Mexico have particularly strained relations, jeopardizing critical cooperation on migration and security.

The significant reduction of USAID funding remains a major concern. By drastically cutting U.S. aid, Trump undermines initiatives aimed at addressing poverty, crime, public health crises, and governance challenges throughout Latin America. These programs have historically contributed to mitigat-

Aggressive tariff negotiations and threats have prompted Latin American nations to strengthen economic ties with alternative powers like China and the EU.

ing the root causes of instability and migration. With reduced U.S. support, regional conditions are worsening, possibly intensifying migration flows and security threats — precisely the outcomes Trump aims to prevent.

Undermining U.S. influence

On trade, Trump continues to prioritize protectionist measures. His withdrawal from multilateral trade frameworks, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and threats against USMCA have destabilized regional economies that heavily rely on U.S. markets. The aggressive tariff negotiations and threats have prompted Latin American nations to strengthen economic ties with alternative powers like China and the EU, inadvertently undermining long-term U.S. influence in the hemisphere.

Security cooperation has similarly suffered. Trump's designation of Mexican cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, along with aggressive rhetoric about combating drugs through military means, raises concerns about increased violence and instability instead of addressing the underlying issues. Furthermore, Trump has initiated large-scale deportations of Latin American migrants, often through measures that challenge or disregard legal norms. These deportations have involved forcibly returning migrants either directly to their home countries or to other countries within the region, frequently without adequately assessing their claims for asylum or protection under international law. Such actions have raised significant concerns regarding human rights violations, due process, and the broader implications for regional stability and cooperation.

Immigration enforcement agents carried out raids in Los Angeles during the first week of June, using excessive force, targeting specific population groups, and demonstrating authoritarian tendencies. These actions both respond to and reinforce a public narrative centered on the perception of Latin American migrants as a threat. None of this will yield positive long-term outcomes.

Democrats have intensified their critiques, arguing that Trump's approach risks decades of diplomatic progress and regional stability. They emphasize the importance of collaborative over coercive policies. Yet, Democrats face their own challenges in clearly defining a cohesive alternative policy. While critiques abound, a fully articulated, comprehensive regional strategy remains elusive, complicating their political positioning both domestically and regionally.

Ultimately, Trump's second-term policies continue to create uncertainty, undermining U.S. leadership in Latin America and worsening regional instability. Without a cooperative, clearly defined approach, long-term hemispheric relationships face the risk of permanent damage. AQ

Dammert is a professor of international relations at Universidad de Santiago de Chile

Cultura

The Attacca Quartet performs at the Festival Internacional de Música Clásica de Bogotá (Music, p. 78)

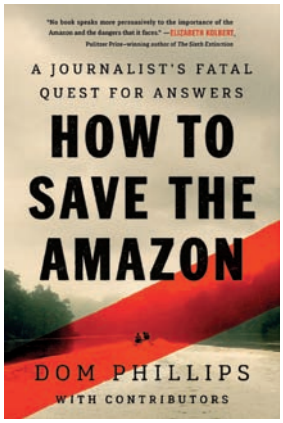
JUAN DIEGO CASTILLO RAMÍREZ

Books

Nonfiction

How to Save the Amazon confronts the complexity of the rainforest crisis, but still manages to inspire.

Reviewed by Luiza Franco



How to Save the Amazon: A Journalist's Fatal Quest for Answers

By Dom Phillips with contributors
Chelsea Green Publishing
304 pages

When outsiders write about the Amazon, they tend to romanticize it. They go to the heart, not the liver, as Indigenous rights campaigner Helena Palmquist notes toward the end of *How to Save the Amazon*. With such a title, one might suspect the book indulges in that kind of romanticism. However, its main author, British journalist Dom Phillips, was perhaps too much of a reporter for that. He was determined the book would not be a tale of environmental catastrophe but rather highlight the people and ideas that contribute to solving the Amazon crisis. But he did not shy away from describing the web of challenges he observed. The result is complex, vivid and heartbreaking.

In 2022, Phillips was murdered in the Brazilian Amazon while reporting for the book, alongside Bruno Pereira, a former government official turned activist. After his killing, Alessandra Sampaio, Phillips' wife, and his friends were intent on making sure the book reached the public. He had written the first chapters and filled notebooks with scrawl — questions, observations and plans gathered during trips through forests, villages and cities. They decided to piece it all together and complete the book he had begun. That ensemble is *How to Save the Amazon: A Journalist's Fatal Quest for Answers*.

On the day they were killed, Phillips and Pereira were returning from a four-day reporting trip, on a small boat in a river deep in the Vale do Javari, an Indigenous territory the size of Portugal. Phillips had been conducting interviews for his book; Pereira was both his guide and part of the story. Once a dedicated official at FUNAI, Brazil's Indigenous protection agency, Pereira had left after the presidency of Jair Bolsonaro gutted environmental oversight. He began training Indigenous communities to defend their lands and became a target for fishermen, poachers and illegal miners. He had long faced death threats and learned to live with them. That day, it was mainly Pereira the criminals were after.

Dom Phillips conducts interviews for his book during a reporting trip to the Amazon in 2019.

To capture the full complexity of the situation in the Amazon, Phillips spoke to everyone — protectors and destroyers alike — seeking to understand their motives, including those who broke the law. That day, Phillips had just interviewed a local criminal, who likely tipped off others about the pair's whereabouts, and they were ambushed. That irony — being killed after doing the work of hearing from all sides — makes the story even more tragic. He could have told a simpler tale, but he chose the more complex, truer, and better one.

The first chapters, written by Phillips, resemble a travel book through a land that is ecologically and culturally rich, yet chaotic and lawless. Combining a first-person travel writing style with reportage, the first four chapters address the history of occupation in the region; depict the development of cattle ranching, which accounts for over 80% of Amazon deforestation since 1985; examine the role of corporations in profiting from illegal activities; and describe the consequences of unmanaged urbanization. In Manaus, the region's largest city, home to 2 million people, 38% live on the minimum wage or less, and workers receive 5% of companies' turnover instead of the national average of 11%, according to one study. On all these subjects, we also hear from people attempting to turn the situation around, with varying degrees of success.

Like Phillips, the colleagues who finished the book found no magical answers for how to save the Amazon. They describe courageous stories of defiance and initiatives that could provide blueprints for sustainability, such as cacao planting, ecotourism and biopharmaceuticals. They share a belief that the broader economic model based on agricultural and raw materials exports must change. It might seem

JOÃO LAT/COURTESY OF AFP

odd that a book about solutions focuses so heavily on problems, but by doing so, it reveals to the reader the magnitude of the political and economic shifts required to reverse the current trend.

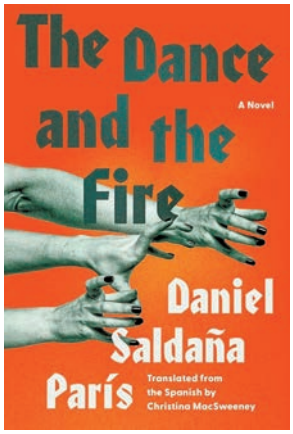
As the book closes, we wonder how Phillips would feel today. Since Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's return to the presidency in 2023, deforestation has slowed, and Indigenous patrols like those Pereira trained are growing. However, contradictions remain: The government still encourages the presence of the meat, soy and oil industries that threaten the forest's future. Phillips wanted the book titled *How to Save the Amazon: Ask the People Who Know*. His friends changed it to *A Journalist's Fatal Quest for Answers*. It certainly inspires the reader to continue his mission of sharing vital truths about the Amazon — the ugly, the complicated, the beautiful. AQ

Franco is an editor and podcast producer at *AQ*

Fiction

A medieval dancing mania reappears in a novel set in modern Mexico.

Reviewed by Alejandra Oliva



The Dance and the Fire

By Daniel Saldaña París
Translated by Christina MacSweeney
Catapult
256 pages

THEY SAY THAT TIME is a flat circle, history forever repeating itself. However, we often feel distant from the foibles of our forebears, as scientific advancements and a deeper understanding of the world around us foster a sense of being on an arc of progress. In the novel *The Dance and the Fire*, a dancing mania from the Middle Ages reappears in contemporary Cuernavaca, Mexico, while the city is surrounded by wildfires and shrouded in smoky skies. Through the tales of three childhood friends, writer Daniel Saldaña París crafts a story that builds to a haunting, frenzied conclusion that feels, despite its strangeness, all too familiar.

The Dancing Plague swept through a starving, traumatized Strasbourg, France, in the summer of 1518, sparked by Frau Troffea, who began dancing outside her home in mid-July. By mid-September, when the last dancer stilled their feet, 400 people had died. The dancers were famine-stricken townsfolk, children of plague survivors, people who, perhaps correctly, felt as though they had survived an apocalypse only to be thrust into another.

The story of the dance maniacs of Strasbourg fascinates one of the main characters, the choreographer Natalia. She creates a choreogra-

phy that mimics these movements, drawing inspiration from Strasbourg and the Swedish witches said to dance back-to-back. Her performance showcase is planned for the Jardín Borda, the former home of Emperor Maximilian I and his wife Carlota — a kind of Versailles-lite garden in Cuernavaca, which time and the drought have turned brittle brown and trash-strewn, as if Old Europe lay desiccated and dying.

Natalia is both living up to her adolescent dream of being an artist, and also compromised — the showcase was obtained because she is in a relationship with a much older, renowned oil painter. She floats through his house aimless and resentful during the days, and comes to life in the moments when he has left. Her two childhood friends — Conejo and Erre — lead similarly compromised lives, short of the visions of artistry and creative fulfillment of their adolescence.

The narration cycles among the three friends. Natalia comes first, as the dance draws from her readings and her obsessions, her growing worry at the circling wildfires. Her sections bring in history and photographs, connecting as much to the oddities of the past as to the ongoing present. Erre is next, back in town after his own private apocalypse: He has lost his job and gotten a divorce, and has now returned to his childhood bedroom. He is also nursing a mysterious pain condition, chasing down pharmaceuticals in search of a reprieve, and reminiscing about the shining youth the three of them shared — he in love with Natalia, Conejo in love with him, all of them in love with the possibilities opening ahead of them. And finally, Conejo — living with and caring for his blind father, seeking out conspiracy theories from the corners of the internet, worrying about his two friends lost in their own anxieties, as a kind of apocalyptic future looms.

The Dance and the Fire, originally published in Spanish in 2021 with an English edition scheduled for release on July 29, circles the idea that the medieval response to end-of-the-world times is not as strange as it may initially seem, time and again. The tinder for the pains of the martyrs and the dancing feet of the townspeople are all here and present; they just need a single spark to set them off. Saldaña París' reconstruction of this centuries-old tale feels vibrant and urgent in this age of wildfires and pandemics. AQ

Oliva is an essayist and embroiderer based in Chicago

Upcoming Books

The latest in economics, history, policy and fiction from across the hemisphere

FICTION

Archive of Unknown Universes
Ruben Reyes Jr.
July 2025
HarperCollins

Frankito em chamas
Matheus Borges
July 2025
Todavia

NONFICTION

The Venal Origins of Development in Spanish America
Jenny Guardado
September 2025
Cambridge University Press

Governing the Excluded: Rural Livelihoods Beyond Coca in Colombia's Peace Laboratory
Alex Diamond
January 2026
University of Chicago Press

Film

Documentary

A riveting new film connects South America's longest-lasting dictatorship to broader forces beyond its borders.

Reviewed by Ena Alvarado

Under the Flags, the Sun (Bajo las banderas, el sol)

Directed by
Juanjo Pereira

Screenplay by
Juanjo Pereira

Distributed by
Icarus Films

Paraguay, Argentina, U.S., France, Germany

An age-old Latin American joke has it that Paraguay does not exist. When your country is landlocked and counts two regional giants — Argentina and Brazil — as neighbors, a reputation for being an afterthought can seem inevitable. This gibe about Paraguay's irrelevance is blown sky-high in filmmaker Juanjo Pereira's *Under the Flags, the Sun*, a riveting documentary about Alfredo Stroessner's 35-year dictatorship from 1954 to 1989, the longest in South American history.

The son of a Bavarian accountant, Stroessner ruled Paraguay with a general's disciplined and ruthless might. Putsches bookended his regime; one put him in power, and another toppled him in his old age — though not his political party. The Partido Colorado that accompanied Stroessner in his decades-long campaign of "peace, work and well-being" survived and continues to dominate the country's politics today.

Pereira's film brings the years of the so-called *Stronato* to life through rare archival footage. Official propaganda clips, local newsreels, foreign reportages, declassified documents, and even amateur films — sometimes in color, but mostly in black and white — populate the screen in rotation. Notably, Pereira refrains from using the typical convention of voice-over narration. There are no overt editorials. Instead, by experimenting with montage, the film flips its material upside down. A military parade meant to celebrate Stroessner takes on a sinister tone when it is suddenly rewound, revealing soldiers marching backward in an uncanny manner.

To piece together his first feature, Pereira culled 120 hours of footage from more than a dozen archives from Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, the U.S., Germany, France and Belgium. It seems clear that his main selection criterion privileged the testimony, however muffled, of regular Paraguayans. This becomes all the more notable when one realizes just how overpowering Stroessner's cult of personality was. As a result,

In this still from *Under the Flags, the Sun*, Paraguayan dictator Alfredo Stroessner (right) speaks with Andrés Rodríguez Pedotti, who later overthrew Stroessner in a coup in 1989.

landmark moments of the dictatorship, once flaunted or shrugged off, depending on the particular political agenda, take on a new, more honest legacy.

For instance, the film follows the construction of the Itaipú Dam on the Paraná River, located on the border between Paraguay and Brazil. The massive hydroelectric power plant, begun in the 1970s and completed in 1984, was the largest of its kind in the world at the time. A broadcaster repeats the official spiel that all necessary resources were "mobilized so that the environmental impacts can be reduced to a minimum," and another brags about the humane working conditions of the manual laborers. These statements are then juxtaposed with images and TV broadcasts of dozens of killed workmen, evacuated villages, and stranded animals in the aftermath of enormous dynamite explosions, which Pereira edits into slow motion. A painful and cruel dimension thus suffuses Stroessner's "pharaonic project," as another critic aptly called the dam.

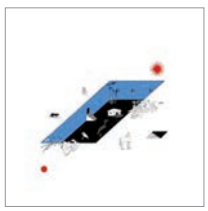
Another example involves the notorious Nazi physician Josef Mengele, better known as the Angel of Death for his significant role in murdering prisoners at Auschwitz. For years, it was an open secret that Stroessner sheltered Mengele in Paraguay and prevented his extradition to West Germany. *Under the Flags, the Sun* clarifies how strongly Paraguayans objected to this blatant evasion of justice, through clips of protests demanding Mengele's arrest and interviews with Stroessner in which he dodged questions about the SS officer.

Much of what is presented in the film connects Paraguay's history to broader forces beyond its borders. The Itaipú Dam, shared with Brazil, generated more electricity than any other facility in the world for over a quarter century, only recently surpassed by China's Three Gorges Dam. The presence of Nazis like Mengele further tied the country to the power struggles of the Cold War. *Under the Flags, the Sun* links the nation's past to larger geopolitical dynamics and dispels unfounded assumptions about Paraguay's invisibility. In addition to providing a nuanced portrayal of Stroessner's regime, Pereira's documentary builds a strong case for Paraguay's significance on the world stage. AQ

Alvarado is a writer and former assistant editor at *The Atlantic*

COURTESY OF ICARUS FILMS

Music



El peso
by Jaison Neutra

Tengo lo que tengo
by Jimena Angel

Palenque
by Bituin

Si como el agua
by Manuela Ocampo

Ascenso hacia lo profundo
by Santiago Cañón-Valencia

AQ's Summer Playlist

From classical to cumbia: a dispatch from Bogotá by *AQ's* music columnist, with a playlist to match

by Sebastián Zubieta

For more than a decade, Bogotá's Teatro Mayor Julio Mario Santo Domingo has hosted its signature Festival Internacional de Música Clásica, a biannual, weeklong international celebration of classical music. In its seventh edition in April, nearly 300 musicians from the Americas and Europe performed works ranging from Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) classics to orchestral versions of popular music. Americas Society's vocal ensemble participated with a piece by Canadian composer Claude Vivier, and I spent the week exploring both the festival and Bogotá's vibrant music scene — captured in the playlist that follows.

The opening concert featured the **Bogotá Philharmonic**, one of four full orchestras participating in the festival, alongside sopranos Betty Garcés and Julieth Lozano, and Mexican star tenor Ramón Vargas. This concert included symphonic versions of popular songs, propelled by a stellar percussion section, such as a somewhat older rendition of the traditional "La pollera colorá," one of Colombia's most famous songs.

Cumbia is never far from the musical surface on any given night in this bustling capital, and there are as many iterations of it as artists from across the country. You could, for example, find the *santanderano* **Jaison Neutra** performing his heartfelt and swinging "El peso," a take on cumbia that subtly combines electronic and acoustic sounds, reminding us that dancing the sorrows away is not a bad way to face heartbreak.

Bogotá, naturally, is home to an array of musical styles, like the delicate elaborations on Andean music by tiple virtuoso **Diego Bahamón**. The tiple, popular in Colombia since the 19th century, is one of the several guitar-like instruments played across the continent, featuring four sets of triple stings. "Berceuse," a lulling composition, highlights the instrument's rich sound. Unlike the guitar, which has six individual strings, the tiple configuration gives it a shimmering tone, which works beautifully in this calm tune.

The combination of electronic and acoustic sounds forms the base for

Soprano Betty Garcés performs alongside the Bogotá Philharmonic at the opening concert of the city's classical music festival.

three artists from the city: Opa!, Telebit and **Jimena Angel**. In all cases, hybrid beats and harmonies, sometimes jagged, sometimes flowing, support the intimate vocal parts, with hypnotic results, as in Angel's "Tengo lo que tengo."

Bituin is a band of siblings with an unusual setup, including two sisters who sing (Juanita and Valentina Áñez) and two brothers (Santiago and Daniel de Mendoza) on percussion and bass. Their whimsical "Palenque," named after the UNESCO-protected village in northern Colombia, features the sisters' ever-tight vocals over the brothers' propulsive beat, turning vertiginously flexible about halfway through the song without falling apart. **Manuela Ocampo**'s longing "Si como el agua," in contrast, contains delicate vocal arrangements over an equally polished guitar sound reminiscent of folk music.

Additional performances at the festival featured the **Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo** (**OSESP**), and Colombian star cellist **Santiago Cañón-Valencia**. The OSESP, one of the leading orchestras in the Americas, presented three programs, including their *Amazon Concerto*, a multimedia show with stunning images of the rainforest. The music included Heitor Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas brasileiras #4*, one of the prolific composer's cycle of pieces that merge Brazilian popular music with Bach-inspired counterpoint and formal musical devices.

Cañón-Valencia presented an intimate recital, with classics of the cello repertoire alongside his original compositions. "Ascenso hacia lo profundo" is a solo work that sounds like improvisation, with distinctive melodies and textures that keep morphing into successive sections, generating a continuous atmosphere.

Tracks by **Gina Savino**, **Pilar Cabrera**, **Gregorio Uribe**, and many others round out the playlist, which wants to be as kaleidoscopic as the city itself. AQ

Zubieta is music director at Americas Society

LISTEN TO OUR PLAYLIST NOW!
OPEN SPOTIFY & SCAN THIS CODE:

JUAN DIEGO CASTILLO/FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE MÚSICA CLÁSICA DE BOGOTÁ

The redesigned wing draws on ancient American architectural traditions, echoing the spatial layout of landmarks from Mesoamerica and the Andes.

BRIGIT BEYER

Visual Arts

Museum Exhibition

The Met recasts its Arts of the Americas wing for a new generation.

by Daniela Cobos

After four years of renovations, the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Michael C. Rockefeller Wing reopened to the public on May 31. The occasion marked a refashioning of how one of the world's leading museums presents the art of Indigenous cultures of the Americas, at a time when legacy institutions are grappling with what it means to decolonize their collections.

Almost 700 objects — crafted in ceramic, gold, wood and stone — fill the Arts of the Ancient Americas galleries. From Maya sculptures to Andean textiles and gold ornaments from Colombia and Panama, the collection reveals the sophistication of societies that flourished long before European colonization. They also reflect a more profound shift: a deliberate move toward centering Indigenous agency.

"Despite European domination, Indigenous agency and resilience are evident in the visual arts," reads a wall text near the entrance. The design and curation reflect that statement, portraying these artists and communities as innovators.

Initially opened in 1982, the Michael C. Rockefeller Wing was conceived to showcase art from Africa, Oceania and the Americas — regions that had long been underrepresented in major Western institutions. Max Hollein, the Met's director and CEO, said during a press visit that the renovation continues the initial mission of providing a space for "those whose stories need to be told." But this latest iteration is more intentional in how it

One of the highlights of the revamped wing is a new space devoted to ancient American textiles and featherwork.

tells those stories, allowing a new generation of museumgoers to see Indigenous cultures as rich and enduring civilizations.

Recent discoveries offer fresh insights into gender roles and daily life. In Peru's Moche culture, elite women wore elaborate regalia to signal power — a fact revealed through new archaeological findings. One exquisite nose ornament was detailed using electrochemical silvering — a technique not seen in Europe until centuries later.

The galleries also exhibit items like *tupus* and *ttipquis*, pins Andean women used to fasten and decorate clothes since at least the early first millennium CE. Women continued wearing them during the colonial era, incorporating new materials like glass. These daily artifacts offer a window into how these women merged self-expression and practicality.

Thanks to recent scholarly advances, some of the works on display now bear the names of their creators. Advances in epigraphy and the study of Classic Maya period texts have enabled scholars to identify artists. A carved limestone panel on display is now attributed to the sculptor Chakalte', for example.

The renovated galleries also highlight the use of gold in Indigenous cultures. Many used gold to signal status, sharing metalworking techniques across regions. In Colombia's Calima region, gold regalia adorned elite leaders called *caciques*. In Panama, gold plaques with imagery were found in high-status burials, worn by the dead.

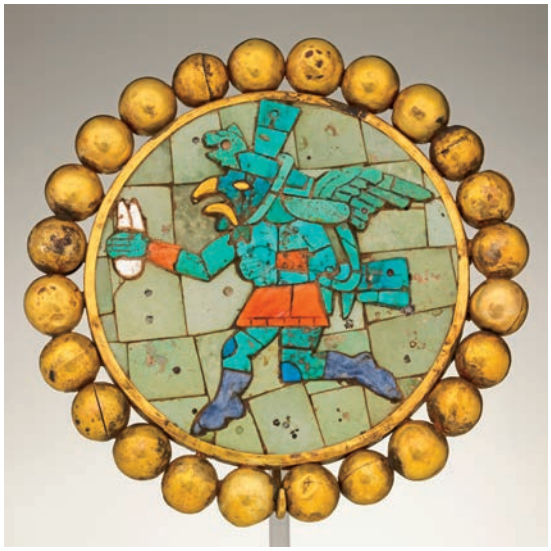
Although the galleries emphasize Indigenous agency, it's clear that some precolonial art forms survived under colonial rule only when they aligned with Spanish interests. Items like vessels and ornaments signaled Inca identities as both Christians and subjects of the Spanish crown. As one wall text notes, Indigenous artists have navigated history by "at times resisting and at times adapting to shifting global currents."

One lingering question remains: How might these cultures have evolved artistically without the disruption of colonization?

Whether this reimagining will resonate with a new generation remains to be seen. What lies front and center, however, is that the works by these Indigenous artists are mesmerizing and regal. The Met's Arts of the Ancient Americas galleries present them as reflections of vibrant, complex civilizations. AQ

Cobos is a journalist based in New York and a former Opinion International Fellow at *The New York Times*

BRIGIT BEYER



Top left: An eagle relief, by Toltec artists, Mexico (900–1200 CE)

Bottom left: A tunic by Inca artists, from Argentina, Peru or Bolivia (1400–1535 CE)

Top right, bottom right: Headdress and nose ornaments, by Calima (Yotoco) artists, Colombia (100–700 BCE)

Center right: Ear ornament with winged runner, by Moche artists, Peru (400–700 CE)

COURTESY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

LATIN AMERICA AT A GLANCE

INCLUDES DATA PROVIDED BY Bloomberg

Latin America and the Caribbean's tax revenues as a share of GDP fell by 0.2 percentage points from 2022 to 2023 amid an economic slowdown, falling income tax proceeds, and lower global prices for nonrenewable natural resources, according to a recent OECD report. LAC's average tax-to-GDP ratio reached 21.3%, compared to the OECD average of 33.9%.










ARGENTINA | BRAZIL | CHILE | COLOMBIA | DOMINICAN REPUBLIC | ECUADOR | GUATEMALA | MEXICO | PERU | VENEZUELA

TAX-TO-GDP RATIOS

2023	27.8%	32.0%	20.6%	22.2%	14.3%	20.6%	14.0%	17.7%	17.0%	N/A
percentage point change from 2022	-1.7	-0.5	-3.2	2.6	0.3	-0.3	-0.3	0.9	-2.1	N/A

GDP GROWTH

2025 (projected)	5.0%	2.2%	2.3%	2.4%	4.0%	1.5%	3.5%	0.0%	3.0%	-4.0%
2026 (projected)	3.2%	1.6%	2.1%	2.7%	4.5%	1.8%	3.3%	1.3%	2.7%	-5.5%
2027 (projected)	3.0%	2.2%	2.3%	2.9%	5.0%	2.0%	3.8%	2.0%	3.0%	N/A

PROJECTIONS CURRENT AS OF JUNE 2025

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

2025 Inflation (projected)	42.6%	5.3%	4.4%	5.0%	3.7%	1.3%	3.0%	3.9%	1.9%	180%
2025 Unemployment rate (projected)	7.0%	6.8%	8.4%	9.8%	5.3%	4.5%	N/A	3.0%	6.1%	N/A
2025 Govt. deficit as % of GDP (projected)	0.0%	-8.4%	-1.9%	-6.3%	-3.0%	-3.0%	-2.8%	-3.9%	-2.8%	N/A

PROJECTIONS CURRENT AS OF JUNE 2025

PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL RATINGS

										
President	Javier Milei	Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva	Gabriel Boric	Gustavo Petro	Luis Abinader	Daniel Noboa	Bernardo Arévalo	Claudia Sheinbaum	Dina Boluarte	Nicolás Maduro
Approval	49%	40%	34%	29%	59%	51%	39%	77%	4%	N/A

SOURCES: Tax-to-GDP ratios: OECD et al. (May). GDP growth forecasts, inflation rate, unemployment rate, government deficit as percentage of GDP: Bloomberg (June); Dominican Republic 2027 GDP growth and unemployment, Guatemala 2027 GDP growth, Venezuela GDP growth and inflation: IMF (April). NOTE: Figures rounded to nearest decimal point.

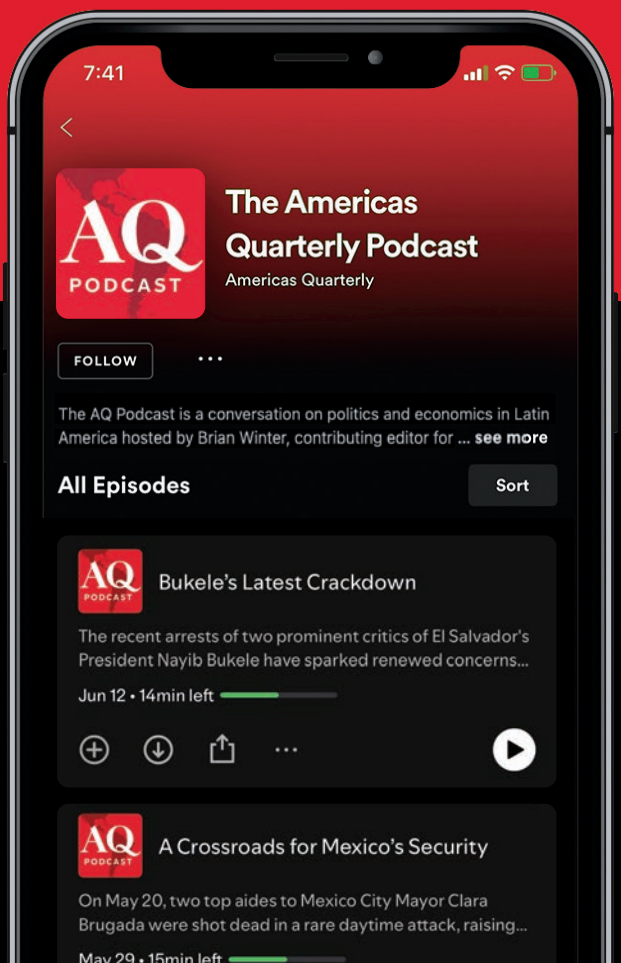
PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL: Argentina: Encuesta de Satisfacción Política y Opinión - Universidad de San Andrés (May); Brazil: Genial/Quaest (May); Chile, Plaza Pública Cadem (June); Colombia, Invamer (June); Dominican Republic, Guatemala: CID Gallup (January); Ecuador: Comunicaliza (April); Mexico: El Financiero (May); Peru, Ipsos (June). NOTE: Figures rounded to nearest percentage..

CANCILLERÍA ARGENTINA VIA COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA; CASA ROSADA VIA COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA; GETTY; SEBASTIAN BARROS/NURPHOTO/GETTY; FLICKR; ASAMBLEA NACIONAL DEL ECUADOR FROM QUITO, ECUADOR VIA COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA; GOBIERNO DE GUATEMALA VIA COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA; RODRIGO JARDÓN VIA COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA; WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION VIA COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA; GABY ORAA/BLOOMBERG/GETTY

AQ PODCAST

A 'Must-Listen' for Latin American Politics

Brian Winter, contributing editor for *Americas Quarterly*, hosts a conversation on the people and events shaping Latin American politics.



Available on Apple, Spotify, and YouTube.

Scan to Subscribe on Apple Podcasts

Produced by Luiza Franco


SHARE
YOUR
LOVE FOR
LATIN
AMERICA
JOIN AMERICAS SOCIETY
as-coa.org/membership
AS/60
AMERICAS SOCIETY
60 YEARS