

GENERAL ANALYSIS – AMAZON REGION

The Amazon, one of the world's largest "lungs," spans eight South American countries and plays a [crucial role](#) at national, regional, continental, and global levels. It is the largest continuous tropical forest and river system, regulating the global climate and storing 10% of the world's carbon. The Amazon covers 50.35 million hectares in [Colombia](#), making up 44.6% of the country's continental territory. Its natural and cultural richness offers opportunities for the sustainable development of the agricultural and tourism sectors and significant potential for [renewable energy](#) generation, especially in solar, biomass, and geothermal energy production. Despite its natural and cultural richness, the Colombian Amazon faces vulnerabilities, including climate change, deforestation, and social inequalities. Recent local elections have resulted in a [political landscape](#) that is not entirely favorable for the current government, with only the governor of [Amazonas](#) sharing the president's ideology. This situation has created uncertainty regarding foreign investment and economic growth. National and international challenges hinder the government's ability to implement ambitious proposals, making it crucial for decision-makers to recognize the gap between intentions and actual capabilities. This report emphasizes the importance of understanding regional differences for investment. It includes an index that serves as a resource for economic development strategies, although it highlights a lack of updated data for several departments, complicating policy development.



CONNECTIVITY PROBLEMS:

Access to the Amazon region, specifically Amazonas, Guainía, and Vaupés, is challenging due to the lack of road connectivity, with only Putumayo, Caquetá, and Guaviare being accessible by road. Poor conditions and the absence of secondary and tertiary roads hinder the transport of goods and people, increasing production costs and reducing competitiveness. Geographical factors, special community recognition, and protected areas complicate road construction, as many Indigenous communities prioritize environmental preservation over new roads. Sustainable approaches, such as [green infrastructure](#) guidelines, are essential to mitigate construction impacts and include local communities in planning. Regarding airport infrastructure, all departments require maintenance and investment to improve facilities and attract more national airlines. Additionally, the limited operability of informal river ports, combined with rising temperatures and low rainfall, reduces navigability, increases transportation costs, and isolates communities. Enhancing port infrastructure will likely boost tourism potential and improve quality of life by expanding mobility options and lowering costs.

ECONOMIES DEPENDENT ON PUBLIC SPENDING AND THE PRIMARY SECTOR:

The economy of the Amazon departments, except for Putumayo, largely depends on public administration, which creates vulnerability to corruption and benefits circles close to officials, increasing the migration of skilled labor. Additionally, reliance on the agricultural sector exposes the region to external shocks. Although the government aims to strengthen rural areas, inadequate infrastructure limits development and income for producers. Investing in agro-industry and modernizing agriculture is crucial for diversifying the economy and improving productivity.

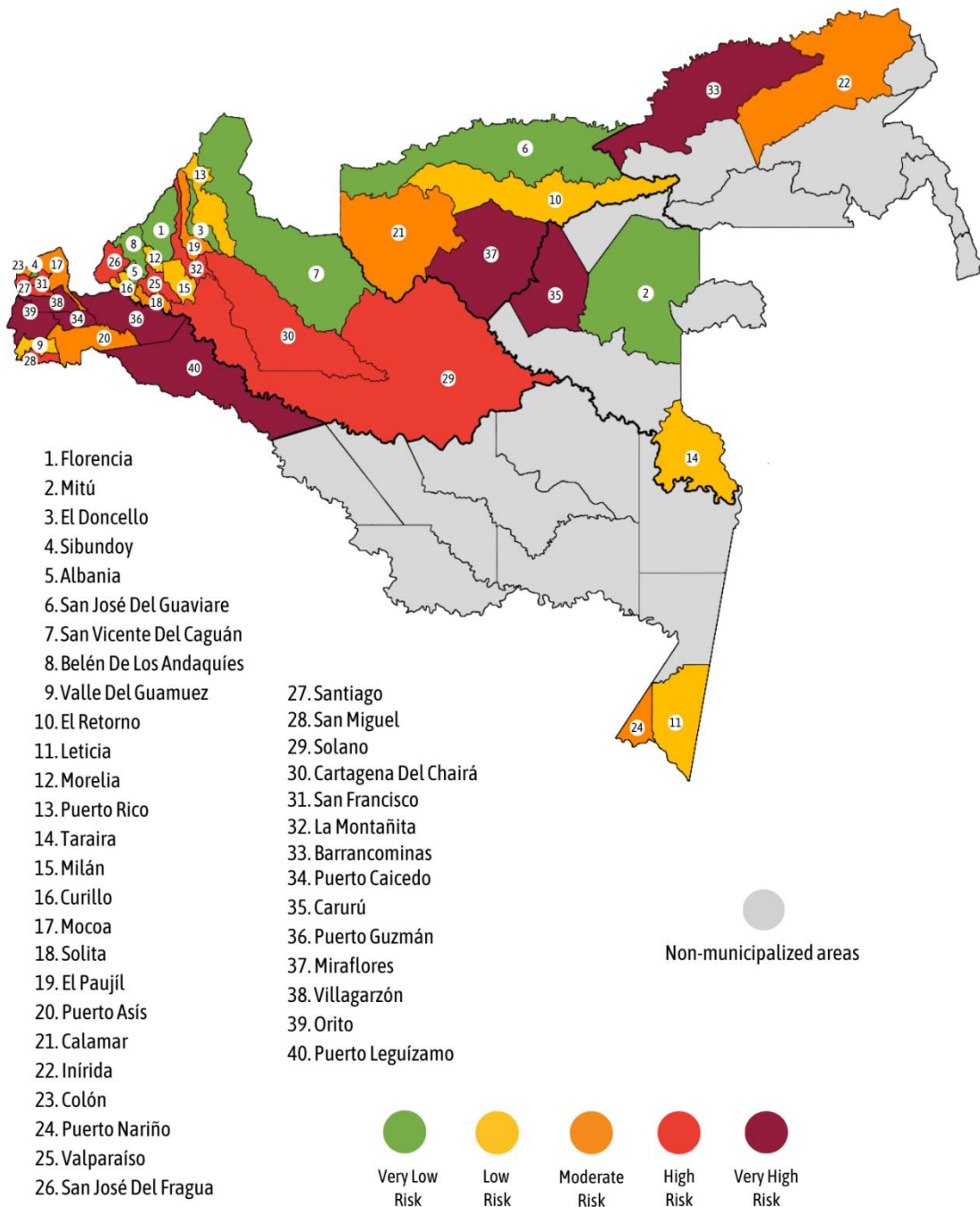
THE COMPLEX SECURITY PANORAMA:

Various sources indicate a perceived sense of security in the departments' main municipal centers, but the security situation is more complex in remote areas. Groups like the [ELN, Segunda Marquetalia, and Estado Mayor Central](#) are vying for territorial control and illegal economies, including coca cultivation and illegal mining. This rivalry, particularly in border areas with Brazil and Venezuela, increases risks for business development and socio-economic progress, trapping communities in cycles of violence and forced displacement. Additionally, the constant threats and murders of environmental leaders pose a serious risk to ecosystem protection and long-term sustainability. In 2023, Colombia was the deadliest country for these leaders, with [79 killed](#), including 12 from Amazonian departments. The targeting of environmental leaders undermines efforts to combat illegal activities like deforestation and unregulated mining, creates an atmosphere of impunity, and discourages community involvement in environmental protection, exacerbating ecological and social issues.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION:

[Deforestation](#) remains a top challenge in Colombia, with 34,900 hectares lost in 2023, accounting for 44% of the country's total deforestation. Caquetá and Guaviare are the most affected departments, with 12,647 and 11,496 hectares deforested, respectively. [Contributing factors](#) include land conversion for grazing, illicit crops, extensive livestock farming, and illegal mining. The region's vulnerability to climate change further affects communities reliant on healthy rivers for mobility and livelihood. While environmental protection has been a central theme in President Petro's agenda, his ambitious proposals often lack feasible execution. For instance, the failure of the [green bonds system](#) in Vaupés and limited success in other departments highlight regulatory challenges. In Amazonas, Caquetá, and Putumayo, specific measures have been implemented to control timber movement, establishing oversight mechanisms to combat illegal practices and promote sustainability in the timber industry.

MUNICIPAL RISK MAP OF THE AMAZON REGION



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