

AUTHORITIES LAUNCHED AMAZON RAIN FOREST PROMOTION



Amazon rain forest features a great tourism attraction. Nevertheless, only few tourists come to see it. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization plans to change it and has launched a promotional campaign.

The Amazon rain forest is undoubtedly one of the world's most spectacular areas. Despite the continuous deforestation it is huge. It occupies over **7.5 million square kilometers**, which is about 40 percent of South America. It features amazing opportunities for **adventure and eco tourists**. However, only a limited number of tourists visits the great rainforest.

There are multiple reasons for the **low influx of tourists**. Some of them fear wild animals, diseases like malaria or yellow fever. Others expect the area to be dangerous because of drug dealers and other criminals. The major setback is, however, the lack of information and insufficient tourism infrastructure. There is a need for good hotels, airports as well as for skilled multilingual tourism personnel.

The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) has started promoting tourism in the Amazon Rainforest area. This year there will be more than 80 events in eight South American countries to promote this kind of tourism. According to Francisco Ruiz, the ACTO's general secretary, only 3 per cent of Brazilians chose the Amazon Rainforest as a tourist destination. Development of tourism is seen as a possibility of helping the local people as well as the environment. Tourism could provide jobs for locals which could limit the destruction of the forest.

Vacation in the Amazon rainforest is undoubtedly a unique experience. Not many people may say they were there. According to ACTO's Tourism Coordinator Donald Sinclair only 5 to 6 per cent of tourists coming to the Amazon River basin visits the Amazon Rainforest.

Today, tourists may hire boats, guides and other staff to go on an adventurous trip deep to the rainforest. These services may be provided by specialized agencies. Those with less money prefer to travel on their own. This is certainly more adventurous but also more dangerous way how to travel through the area.

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