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**PSICODELICAMENTE**  
PSYCHEDELIC JOURNALISM

SPECIAL REPORT

# Global pressure on ayahuasca threatens Amazonian plants and knowledge systems

The rising global popularity of ayahuasca has increased pressure on the Amazonian plant species used in its preparation — and on the Indigenous knowledge systems that sustain it.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: DOES THE HUMAN BODY PRODUCE DMT AT BIRTH AND DEATH? PSYCHEDELIC AMAZON

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— ABOUT PSICODELICAMENTE

## An independent digital magazine dedicated to psychedelic journalism

Psicodelicamento is an independent digital magazine based in Brazil and founded by journalist Carlos Minuano.

Created to address a gap in Brazilian media coverage, the magazine produces in-depth and investigative reporting, news, interviews, and opinion pieces on psychedelics and ayahuasca.

Its journalism explores the field beyond scientific research, connecting psychedelics with history, anthropology, religion, culture, Indigenous knowledge, politics, human behavior, and rights. With contributions from journalists, researchers, scientists, and professionals from different fields, Psicodelicamento seeks to broaden journalistic narratives, foster informed debate, and counter the misinformation, myths, and prejudice surrounding psychedelics.

Its mission is to provide carefully reported, science-based information while creating a platform for dialogue about the complex social, cultural, scientific, and political dimensions of these substances.

— PSYCHEDELIC AMAZON

Since 2022, journalist Carlos Minuano has been reporting on the globalization of ayahuasca and its impacts across the Amazon, traveling through San Martín, Ucayali, Loreto, and Madre de Dios in Peru, as well as Rio Branco and Feijó, in the Brazilian state of Acre.

The investigation examines how growing scientific interest in ayahuasca's therapeutic potential is fueling a new wave of psychedelic tourism in Peru and Brazil, and how this expansion is affecting Indigenous peoples, medicinal plants, and the traditional knowledge associated with the brew.

Through reporting from Amazonian territories and communities, Psychedelic Amazon explores the tensions between global demand for ayahuasca, scientific research, Indigenous knowledge, and the rapidly expanding psychedelic field.

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Minuano interviews Shipibo healer Fidelia Ahuanari in Pucallpa, Peru. Photo: Carlos Rojas.



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PSYCHEDELIC AMAZON

There are no official figures, but Peru is believed to be one of the world's biggest ayahuasca-drinking countries. Psicodelicamento founder Carlos Minuano traveled to Pucallpa, in the Peruvian Amazon, where the Shipibo people are among the oldest keepers of ayahuasca knowledge, to see firsthand how surging shamanic tourism is reshaping — and threatening — authentic Indigenous medicine. Shipibo traditional healers Cesar Maynas, 51, and Fidelia Ahuanari, 45, featured on the cover of this issue, have run the Rao Kano Xobo healing center in Yarinacocha for 25 years. In an interview for the Psychedelic Amazon series, they discuss the impacts of growing global interest in the Amazonian brew. "We use many plants — it's not only ayahuasca that heals," says Ahuanari. Watch the interview on Psicodelicamento's YouTube channel.

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DIGITAL EDITION



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# Global pressure on ayahuasca threatens Amazonian plants and knowledge systems

The rising global popularity of ayahuasca, driven by religious, therapeutic, and tourism purposes, has increased pressure on the Amazonian plant species used in its preparation, with reports of growing scarcity in some parts of the rainforest.

BY CARLOS MINUANO · ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED BY MONGABAY

“One of the world’s largest pharmacies is being destroyed,” says Benki Piyäko, a leader of the Ashaninka Indigenous people in the Brazilian state of Acre. The warning points to multiple threats advancing on the Amazon but also to growing debate surrounding one of the so-called forest medicines: ayahuasca.



Benki Piyäko, leader of the Ashaninka people. Image courtesy of Benki Piyäko.

This Indigenous beverage with psychedelic properties is usually prepared from two native plants: the caapi vine or mariri (*Banisteriopsis caapi*) and the leaves of the chacrona plant (*Psychotria viridis*). According to Indigenous leaders and experts, these species are facing increasing pressure and signs of scarcity in some areas.

Called kamaräpe by the Ashaninka people, ayahuasca has been used by Indigenous peoples across the Amazon for centuries. It has crossed borders for decades, ceasing to circulate exclusively in its original contexts. Today, it can be found in urban religious centers, therapeutic retreats, and international psychedelic tourism circuits.

Scientists and pharmaceutical companies are also turning their attention to this ancestral beverage, which already shows evidence of therapeutic potential for different mental health disorders such as depression and substance addiction. But increasing global interest is also creating concerns.

As demand grows, so has the ayahuasca supply chain, without a corresponding growth in management or oversight. In different parts of the Amazon, there are signs of pressure on the species used to prepare the beverage, often collected without planning. At the same time, increasing consumption in nontraditional contexts raises concerns about ancestral knowledge being commodified for the market.

The main problem seems to lie in how this expansion is sustained through an opaque chain connecting the forest to distant markets. Vines and leaves are collected in areas that often lack organized management, pass through intermediaries, and feed a global flow that often operates at the limits of legality.

Even though a resolution by Brazil’s National Council on Drug Policy (CONAD) recognizes the religious use of ayahuasca, the beverage contains dimethyltryptamine (DMT), a psychedelic substance that’s controlled under both Brazilian legislation and international treaties.

*“What we see today is people wanting to transform this knowledge into a product.”*

**BENKI PIYÄKO, LÍDER ASHANINKA**

At the heart of the controversy is the fact that, while DMT is listed as prohibited, the plants that contain it and the traditional preparations made from them, such as ayahuasca, are not explicitly prohibited, which creates a legal gray area. In practice, the interpretation varies from country to country, and authorities often end up equating ayahuasca with illicit drugs and pushing its circulation into clandestine circuits.

Given the lack of coherent policies on cultivation and protection, there’s growing fear that the ayahuasca hype will put pressure on the forest faster than it can regenerate. “The risk is that ayahuasca will become a market,” Benki says.

“What we see today is people wanting to transform this knowledge into a product,” he adds, emphasizing that ayahuasca is part of a broader context, which is also threatened. “If you say you have spirituality, you must take care of the land.”

For Benki, ayahuasca cannot be dissociated from the set of plants and relationships that sustain life in the forest. “It’s not just ayahuasca that is at risk. A whole plant system is under pressure.” It’s a worldview reflected in the principles that guide his work.

The Indigenous leader lives in the upper basin of the Juruá River, a tributary of the mighty Amazon that forms part of the border between Brazil and Peru. In 2004, he left his territory to head up the environmental department for the border town of Marechal Thaumaturgo. Three years later, he formed a group of about 80 young people to work with agroforestry techniques.

The initiative evolved over the years, and in 2018 it gave rise to the Yorenka Tasorensi Institute, now focused on recovering degraded areas, establishing agroforestry systems, and strengthening Indigenous governance. Since then, the project has brought together young people, communities, and territories around reforestation practices and food sovereignty, having already planted millions of trees in the region.

In recent years, Benki’s work has begun to engage with a broader agenda: coordinating with Indigenous leaders from different countries to discuss the future of ayahuasca as it gains global popularity. After five Indigenous conferences held in Acre state, where Marechal Thaumaturgo is located, the issue is set to take on an international scale with the World Ayahuasca Forum, scheduled for Sept. 9–13 this year in Girona, Spain.

## REGULATION PRESSURE

## UNDER

The last Indigenous Ayahuasca Conference, held in Acre in January 2025, concluded with a joint declaration rejecting “all forms of commercialization of ayahuasca that have established a global market outside ethical limits.” That event was attended by representatives of 34 Indigenous peoples from different countries.

The declaration laid out the set of concerns that have also been gaining traction in Brazil’s institutional debate. That same year, the state of Acre approved the country’s first specific legislation aimed at regulating the extraction, transport, and use of plants involved in the preparation of ayahuasca. That unprecedented initiative, however, has come under criticism.

“Forest medicine is being appropriated without recognition of its origin and the peoples who hold that knowledge,” Ninawa Huni Kuin, chief of the Huni Kuin people, also known as the Kaxinawá, said at a public hearing held by the Federal Prosecution Service of Acre in late 2025, shortly after the new state regulation was announced.

Indigenous leaders, researchers, and Acre state officials attended the hearing. They raised an alert about ayahuasca's uncontrolled growth in Brazil against the backdrop of effective oversight, regulatory gaps, and increasing commercialization in nontraditional and nonreligious contexts.

In Acre, considered the Brazilian capital of ayahuasca, the regulation approved in 2025 sets distinct parameters for religious groups and formalized organizations. In practice, it allows vines and leaves to be gathered periodically upon notification to the state environmental agency.



Travel agency in Iquitos, in the Peruvian Amazon. Photo: Inon Sani

Informal groups with no legal status can harvest up to 150 kilograms (330 pounds) of vines and 60 kg (130 lbs) of leaves every four months. Formally established entities have access to larger quotas of up to 1,000 kg (2,200 lbs) of vines and 300 kg (660 lbs) of leaves every six months, as long as they can prove they will use the beverage for ritual, noncommercial purposes.

The initiative seeks to give some predictability to an activity that has historically operated in poorly regulated areas. At the same time, it reflects an attempt to reconcile different interests that range from enforcing environmental protection to guaranteeing religious use.

But the lack of basic information on the availability of the plants and the actual volume of extraction restricts the model's effectiveness. “No surveys were carried out on the stock and natural exploitation of these species,” said state legislator Edvaldo Magalhães, who sponsored the bill, when commenting on the data behind the proposal.

According to Magalhães, the initiative's main focus was to meet the demands of already established religious entities, many of which maintain their own cultivation areas. At the same time, it acknowledges that there's no consolidated information on the circulation of the beverage or the actual pressure on the plants.

The limitations of the law have not gone unnoticed to the state's own environmental agency, known as IMAC. In a technical report published in January 2026, IMAC pointed out relevant inconsistencies in the regulation and possible conflicts with federal legislation.

Among its main points, the report says the law doesn't set basic criteria for sustainable harvesting of the plants, such as adequate periods, plant maturation, or techniques that guarantee their regeneration. It also points out that mere notification to the environmental agency, which is provided for in the new rule, doesn't replace the requirement for prior environmental licensing as required by national legislation.

Another critical point is the possibility of legalizing shipments at inspection, which, according to IMAC's report, could open loopholes for the circulation of material of unknown origin. In this scenario, the agency itself recognizes the need to review the law in order to adapt it to current environmental and legal parameters.

Pressure for change has also come from Indigenous groups. The Yorenka Tasorensi Institute led by Benki Piyãko formally requested the revision and even the annulment of the legislation, arguing that it failed to consider the right to prior consultation of Indigenous peoples as provided for in international agreements to which Brazil is a signatory. Between technical recommendations and political challenges, the law that intended to regulate the use of ayahuasca in Acre is now being challenged at its very foundation.

## NO DATA, NO CONTROL



Cipó caapi or mariri, (*Banisteriopsis caapi*), one of the plants used to prepare ayahuasca. Image courtesy of Eurivaldo Bezerra/LIS.

The weak technical and scientific basis behind this debate is one of its most sensitive points. Today, there's no reliable information on the distribution, abundance, or exploitation volume of the main plant species used to prepare ayahuasca in the Amazon.

Eufan Ferreira do Amaral, a researcher at Embrapa, the Brazilian agricultural research institute, says this gap begins at the most basic level: mapping the plants. “We still don't have consolidated data since inventories have focused on timber species and eventually on nontimber species with economic value,” he says.

The lack of information also extends to the very occurrence of the species. The *Banisteriopsis caapi* vine and *Psychotria viridis* leaf develop in distinct environments within the Amazon Rainforest, which hinders broader estimation of their distribution. Without this type of data, it's hard to set reliable parameters for extraction or even assess the impact of increasing demand, Amaral says.

From an ecological point of view, signs of pressure are already beginning to appear. “With increasing deforestation and extraction without knowledge of the species' density, searches are going increasingly far, and availability is decreasing in areas where those species used to be more abundant,” Amaral says.

The lack of territorial monitoring also prevents any reliable estimation of ayahuasca production or circulation volume in Brazil. At the same time, the growing number of high-volume ayahuasca factories raises additional concerns. “It's an environmental, ecological, and cultural risk, since they contribute to removing large amounts without management, impact assessment or replacement,” Amaral says.

Despite the uncertain scenario, specific experiences point to possible paths forward. Some religious organizations have invested in their own plantations, seeking to reduce pressure on wild populations. For Amaral, this model could be expanded. “We would be working with plantations associated with forest restoration in medicinal agroforestry systems and protecting the remaining forest,” he says.

Still, any long-term strategy would depend on a technical and scientific basis that still doesn't exist. Among the necessary measures, Amaral calls for conducting forest inventories, monitoring species growth in their natural environment, and overseeing planted areas. Without this, he warns, ayahuasca consumption may continue to expand faster than our ability to understand the impacts.

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Leaves of the chacrona plant (*Psychotria viridis*), used to prepare ayahuasca. Image courtesy of Eurivaldo Bezerra/LIS.

## ON THE BORDER OF ILLEGALITY

The expansion of ayahuasca beyond the Amazon is occurring not only under environmental tension but also in a fragmented and often contradictory legal scenario. In different countries, the beverage circulates in a gray area between the licit and illicit.

Jesús Alonso Olamendi is a lawyer with the Ayahuasca Defense Fund (ADF), a program affiliated with the Spain-based International Center for Ethnobotanical Education, Research and Service (ICEERS). He says the situation in Europe is currently “uncertain.” In some countries, such as Spain, recent court decisions have begun to distinguish between synthetic DMT, an internationally controlled substance, and naturally occurring DMT from plants and traditional preparations like ayahuasca. However, this distinction isn’t universally accepted.

In practice, Olamendi says, there’s a tendency to treat ayahuasca as an illicit substance, ignoring its cultural and ritual contexts. “This comparison is wrong from both a legal and a pharmacological point of view,” he says. “But for many authorities, it’s the simplest way out.”

This has translated into an increase in seizures and arrests, especially as ayahuasca practices expand to regions with little historical knowledge about its traditional use. “We have seen more and more members of Indigenous communities traveling to countries where these plants are treated simply as drugs,” Olamendi says.

The impacts fall directly on these Indigenous advocates. According to Olamendi, many end up being detained when trying to enter European territory or during ceremonies, facing charges that can drag on for months. “In many cases, they are subjected to preventive detention or house arrest for a year or more,” he says.

Data gathered by the ADF show the scale of the phenomenon. Over the last 10 years, the organization has monitored around 500 cases of seized products and people detained in 47 countries in connection with plants used for traditional purposes in the Americas, including ayahuasca. The number doesn’t account for all such cases, but points to a clear trend: ayahuasca already circulates globally, often in contexts of legal risk.

At the same time, increasingly restrictive policies underscore a paradox. Scientific and therapeutic interest in psychedelic substances is growing, but this movement tends to favor those substances over the plants and knowledge systems from which they came. “There is some tolerance in the case of research, but it’s almost always restricted to synthetic substances,” Olamendi says.

## INDIGENOUS RESPONSE GAINS GLOBAL SCALE

Faced with a scenario marked by global expansion, criminalization, and legal disputes, Indigenous leaders have been seeking to build their own response to reposition the debate around ayahuasca based on their territories and knowledge systems.

One of the main developments in this process is the World Ayahuasca Forum to be held this September in Spain. The meeting is the result of collaboration between ICEERS and the Yorenka Tasorensi Institute led by Benki Piyäko.

More than a simple event, the forum presents itself as an Indigenous governance platform, with Indigenous peoples from around the world invited to play a key role in it. The meeting aims to discuss the impacts of the expansion of ayahuasca and other psychedelic plants, from regulation to cultural extractivism, including biomedicalization and the commodification of traditional knowledge systems.

*“We don’t want just to point out problems. We want to build a great alliance.”*

NIXIWAKA YAWANAWÁ, LÍDER YAWANAWÁ

“The forum aims to start a dialogue with the scientific and academic as well as the economic world, so that it’s possible to understand these medicines without losing the way we, Indigenous peoples, preserve and use them,” says Nixiwaka Yawanawá, one of the founders of the Ayahuasca Indigenous Conference and co-organizer of the event in Girona.

According to him, the proposal is not only critical, but also propositional. “We don’t want just to point out problems. We want to build a great alliance,” he says. Its goals include the creation of an international council of Indigenous spiritual leaders who can coordinate their actions to defend traditional medicines and related knowledge.

This movement recently gained visibility when it was presented, in January 2026, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where Nixiwaka, chief of the Yawanawá people of Acre, laid the foundations for a global alliance aimed at protecting knowledge systems linked to medicinal plants and the potential contributions of these knowledge systems to face humanity’s greatest challenges.

The proposal to create this Global Alliance, sometimes described by its organizers as an “Indigenous U.N.,” comes in response to the international expansion of psychedelic plants, whose global popularity takes them increasingly out of the control or leadership of the peoples who developed that knowledge. It’s thus a space for spiritual governance organized by guardians of ancestral knowledge systems.

For the Ashaninka leader Benki, who is also taking part in this effort, the challenge is to prevent ayahuasca from following the same path as other plants that lost their original context after entering the global mainstream. He reiterates the risks involved in the process, warning about the transformation of traditional knowledge systems into commodities disconnected from the forest.

“Leaders like Nixiwaka Yawanawá and Benki Piyäko have been showing the world the importance of these knowledges to face the great challenges of our time,” says Peruvian anthropologist Claude Guislain, a member of the organizing committee for the World Ayahuasca Forum.

For Guislain, this action gains even more relevance in the context of increasing pressure on Indigenous territories and traditional ways of life. “At a time when the pressures from our world continue to threaten theirs, they point to a path in which the strongest form of resistance is to offer the best of their knowledges to contribute to humanity’s common future,” he says.

The creation of their own organization spaces, such as the World Ayahuasca Forum and the Global Alliance, is an attempt to rebalance this scenario, placing Indigenous peoples at the center of decision-making not only about the future of ayahuasca but also about the broader role of this knowledge in a world increasingly interested in its effects but still little committed to its origins.

With the increasing circulation of the Amazonian beverage around the world, there’s also a growing perception that these peoples possess knowledge systems that go beyond ritual uses, encompassing views about health, the environment, and the relationship between society and nature, which can help humanity face challenges that transcend the field of traditional medicines.

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Boat on the Nanay River in Iquitos, Peru. Image courtesy of Inon Sani.

## SUSTAINABLE PATHS

Amid this scenario of increasing pressure and scarce data, some Brazilian initiatives seek to structure forms of management that are more closely aligned with forest cycles. LIS, whose name in Portuguese translates into “Home and Integration of Being,” is an institution dedicated to vegetalism, a set of ancestral knowledge systems from Peru’s Upper Amazon region, where the cultivation of plants used in rituals follows principles that combine traditional knowledge and continuous monitoring.

In the mountain town of Areal in Rio de Janeiro state, LIS’s work is based on the relationship with the so-called master plants, such as the caapi vine and chacrona plant used to prepare ayahuasca. “The first thing we did in this territory was to start planting,” says psychologist Karla Perdigão, co-founder of the LIS. The nonprofit initiative was developed in partnership with Novo Humano, an organization that supports projects focused on individual and collective change, with a focus on socioenvironmental impact.

According to Perdigão, all the master plants — species considered by Amazonian traditions as sources of spiritual learning and knowledge — used in the work are cultivated at LIS and monitored from planting to harvesting, including spiritual care.

For Perdigão, the growing demand for ayahuasca is a matter of concern. “This growth in consumption is creating a significant impact on sustainability, planting, and respect for the plant’s timing,” she says. Part of the problem, she adds, lies in the disconnect between its use and the contexts that have historically guided this knowledge. “This puts these plants at risk,” she says. “We have been noticing a kind of ‘spiritual extraction.’”

## ‘THE AMAZON’S GREATEST TREASURE IS ITS BIOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY’

In the Peruvian Amazon, where the ayahuasca tradition spans generations and territories, the effects of this expansion are felt in everyday life. In the city of Iquitos, one of the main circulation hubs for the beverage in the region, forestry engineer José Torres Vázquez has been following the changes surrounding the plants and the knowledge associated with them for decades. For him, increasing demand driven by tourism and international interest is already having real impacts.

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“Of course the ayahuasca boom causes damage,” he says. Without structured management policies or incentives for cultivation, he warns, the growth in consumption has pushed people into increasingly distant areas to seek the plants. “If there are no plantations or efforts — whether private or public — to maintain the conditions of the plants, they naturally tend to disappear,” Torres says.

At the same time, the boom in ayahuasca has also had social and economic impacts in the region. In a scenario marked by informality, a significant portion of the places that offer experiences with the beverage operate without clear regulation, and the income generated by this market is unequally distributed. “Many Indigenous people receive a few soles, while tourists pay many dollars,” Torres says.

He adds this process mirrors a broader trend toward undermining traditional practices among new generations. “Young [Indigenous] people are moving away from ayahuasca, influenced by the Western world,” he says. Without continuous knowledge transmission, the risk is not only environmental but also cultural.

The scarcity of information exacerbates the problem. There are no consistent estimates about the volume of plants extracted or the extent of their occurrence in the forest. “Very little information. That’s one of our big problems,” Torres says.

In Peru, as in Brazil, amid environmental pressures, regulatory gaps, and disputes surrounding the use and control of ayahuasca, the challenge is to prevent the global expansion of the beverage from becoming disconnected from the conditions that made it possible. At the base of this system is knowledge built over generations, deeply connected to the forest and the ways of life of the people who inhabit it.

Some of these pressures aren’t new ones. “All traditional knowledge has always been threatened, all over the world,” Torres says. “And, in the case of ayahuasca, one of the first threats was posed by religious groups.” He says the use of the beverage is still discouraged or prohibited in some communities, often based on misinformation.

He recounts an episode that, for him, reveals how deep this process is. At the end of a conference on botany and sacred plants at an intercultural university in the Ucayali region of the Peruvian Amazon, Torres invited the students, mostly Indigenous people, to an ayahuasca ceremony. “There were over 200 young people. I invited them all. Do you know how many showed up? None,” he says. The next day, when he asked why, he heard the explanation: the strong presence of religious groups in the region had led to the abandonment of the practice by younger people.

*“The greatest treasure we have in the Amazon is its biological diversity and its cultural diversity.”*

JOSÉ TORRES VÁZQUEZ, ENGENHEIRO FLORESTAL

“The greatest treasure we have in the Amazon is its biological diversity and its cultural diversity,” Torres says. “And within that, native peoples’ worldview and their relationship with ayahuasca and the master plants.”

For Torres, what’s at stake goes beyond the preservation of a species or a practice. “Human beings don’t realize that they are part of nature,” he says. In a world that is encroaching on the forest while seeking answers to its own crises, ayahuasca exposes a paradox: while it is becoming globalized, it risks losing the conditions that sustain its existence: the forest, the territories, and the knowledge that make it meaningful.

\*This article was originally published by Mongabay.

\*Carlos Minuano is the founder and editor of Psicodelicamento.

# Does the Human Body Produce DMT at Birth and Death? Here's What Science Says

The popular claim has gained traction on social media, but it still lacks solid scientific support, a neuroscientist says. Here is what is known and what remains hypothetical.

BY CARLOS MINUANO

Never have there been so many experts on so many subjects. In the chaotic world of social media, anyone can become a content creator. It does not take much searching to find all kinds of material, often packaged and presented as journalism but produced without any actual reporting or verification. The psychedelic field, of course, is no exception. In this environment of information overload, misinformation about these intriguing and controversial substances also finds fertile ground.

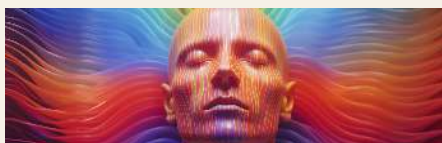


Illustration: Freepik

When the subject is ayahuasca, the excess is equally striking. The other day, I came across a video of a young woman confidently claiming that DMT (N,N-dimethyltryptamine), one of the substances found in the Amazonian brew, is produced by the human body at the moment of birth and death. But does this claim actually make any sense?

Historically surrounded by myths, confusion, prejudice, and misinformation of all kinds, the psychedelic field still lacks informed and qualified debate. That is why I decided to launch a new fact-checking series here on the Psicondelicamento blog.

To clarify this first issue, I consulted an expert in the field, neuroscientist Dráulio Araújo of the Brain Institute at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN). His research group conducted one of the largest studies ever carried out on the effects of ayahuasca in patients with treatment-resistant depression.

According to Araújo, the idea that DMT is produced at birth and death has been speculated about for years, particularly because the substance is indeed found in small quantities in the human body, including in the brain and other tissues. However, the claim still lacks solid scientific evidence.

"Studies indicate that DMT may be synthesized by the human body, and there has been speculation that this process may be related to the pineal gland [a small structure located at the center of the brain]." According to Araújo, however, there is no consistent evidence proving this connection. "Likewise, the claim that the substance is released in large quantities during birth or death remains only a hypothesis," he adds.

Araújo explains that a study in rats observed increased levels of DMT in the brain under hypoxic conditions—that is, when oxygen levels are low—fueling hypotheses about what might occur in humans. In addition, some studies have suggested similarities between reports of near-death experiences and experiences induced by DMT, based on validated questionnaires designed to measure such experiences, including the Near-Death Experience Scale (NDE Scale).

"This scale was administered to volunteers under the effects of DMT, and the results showed that many participants reported experiences similar to near-death experiences, with comparable scores across different dimensions, including feelings of transcendence, a loss of the sense of time and space, and sensations of unity with the universe," the researcher explains.

For Araújo, this finding suggests that DMT can induce altered states of consciousness that share certain characteristics with reports of near-death experiences. However, there is still no direct evidence that the substance is specifically released at the moment of birth or death.

In other words, there is not enough scientific evidence to claim that DMT is produced by the human body at birth or death. It is a widely circulated hypothesis, but one that still lacks solid proof.

Spotted a questionable claim about psychedelics? Send it to [redacao@psicondelicamento.com.br](mailto:redacao@psicondelicamento.com.br).

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### Confidential [REDACTED] intel | the twilight of the [REDACTED], [REDACTED] "gatekeepers"

[REDACTED] gatekeepers are [REDACTED] charging at least five thousand US dollars [REDACTED] and experiences. Neo-[REDACTED] sprout from the ground, two a day, one on every [REDACTED]. With them, [REDACTED], sexual, and spiritual abuse takes root and [REDACTED]. There are [REDACTED] founders directly linked to [REDACTED] abuse reported by [REDACTED], alongside the [REDACTED] spiritual exploitation of vulnerable [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED]/entheogenic scene has turned into a house of madness, starring the "expanded" minds of pure, [REDACTED] righteous, [REDACTED], middle-aged [REDACTED] men. Psychedelic AI is [REDACTED] at full steam, and soon [REDACTED] two [REDACTED] experiences on sale: one with ads, and [REDACTED] subscribers.

**FACTS**

- DMT remains banned in the land of ayahuasca.
- The war on drugs was a resounding success.
- Jamaican psychedelic [REDACTED] resorts are becoming too expensive.
- Next stop: Brazil.

**FYI · PSYCHEDELIC GATEKEEPERS**

- Intellectualised middle aged white men.
- Saviour complex ("white saviour").
- Open access to [REDACTED] peoples.
- Psychedelic social climbing 101.
- People pleasers.

**MEMO**

PS: Taxation [REDACTED] fine. We're planning on [REDACTED] short while. [REDACTED] gatekeepers in our pockets, it [REDACTED] easy task.

PS²: They're [REDACTED] by the minute [REDACTED] Trump has said the word "[REDACTED]". [REDACTED] odds were [REDACTED].

PS³: The latest Matrix' build is [REDACTED]. They still think entheogens aren't drugs.

Yours,  
[REDACTED]

**FUND THE NEXT REPORT.**



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# Amazonian Vegetalismo in the Atlantic Forest

*In Rio de Janeiro's mountain region, LIS leads nature retreats based on the vegetalismo tradition of the Peruvian Amazon.*

PRODUCED BY **STUDIO PSI** IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LIS — LAR E INTEGRAÇÃO DO SER



The LIS retreat center, in the mountains of Areal (RJ). Photo: Courtesy of LIS.

In Areal, in Rio de Janeiro's mountain region, the rush of daily life gives way to the rhythm of the forest. Amid the mountains of the Atlantic Forest, LIS (Lar e Integração do Ser — Home and Integration of Being) proposes a meeting between spirituality, nature, and science. The center's journeys include individual retreats in welcoming forest cabins, guidance from Peruvian maestros, and support from a multidisciplinary team made up of a physician, psychologist, nurse, and therapist.

In vegetalismo, master plants are understood to hold wisdom and spirit that people can relate to and learn from. That relationship is built through diets with non-psychedelic plants, plant baths, purging ceremonies, and ayahuasca ceremonies. LIS offers three formats: three-day Detox and Approach journeys, and the nine-day Vegetalista Journey, a diet built around non-psychedelic master plants.

"The diet is the foundation of vegetalismo," says Karla Perdigão, psychologist, co-founder, and ritual facilitator at LIS. According to her, retreating into the forest in relationship with the master plants allows people to step away from the rhythms and pressures of daily life and build "a deeper relationship with themselves, with their own body, their feelings, and other expressions of life in nature."



One of LIS's individual forest cabins. Photo: Courtesy of LIS.



Inside one of the cabins. Photo: Courtesy of LIS.

LIS's work is carried out in alliance with Peruvian vegetalista maestros, who lead the journeys alongside Karla Perdigão. One of them is Orlando Chujandama, from Chazuta, in the Peruvian Amazon, who received from his grandparents the knowledge he now shares in Brazil. "I feel happy and proud to share this art, this ancestral knowledge that I carry within my culture and my blood," he says.

For Karine Bezerra, a physician and mother of three, the nine-day journey meant a reversal of roles. "Instead of taking care of everyone, like I always did, I felt cared for in every way. I learned that I need to make time for myself."

Ana Thomaz had already taken part in other retreats before arriving at LIS. "That's where I had a paradigm shift, a before and an after," she says. She points to the depth of the work and "the total sense of safety" she felt throughout the process. Every participant goes through a rigorous prior screening process.



**THE JOURNEYS** — 3 days (Detox and Approach) and 9 days (Vegetalista Journey). Sign-ups and calendar at [lis.org.br](https://lis.org.br). Scan the QR code to learn more about LIS's work.

Produced by Studio Psi, Psicodeticamente's branded content unit, in partnership with LIS — Lar e Integração do Ser. Psicodeticamente's editorial team did not take part in producing this material. At LIS, the use of ayahuasca is ritual, religious, and voluntary. In Brazil, the religious use of the beverage is protected under Resolution No. 1/2010 of the National Council on Drug Policy (Conad).