An Interfaith Rainforest Initiative country program was launched in Democratic Republic of the Congo during a 3-day event that included the training of over 180 religious leaders from across the country, as well as indigenous and community leaders, the participation of the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, and the establishment of an Advisory Council chaired by the two most influential religious organizations in the country (CENCO and ECC).

The Interfaith Rainforest Initiative country program in Colombia has successfully launched five IRI local chapters in the areas of the country with the highest rates of deforestation (providing training to over 500 religious leaders), negotiated a commitment from Congress to end deforestation as part of the country’s National Development Plan, briefed the President on the initiative, hosted political debates with mayoral candidates in high-deforestation municipalities to get them to commit to protecting rainforests, embedded IRI representatives on municipal development councils to shape forest policy, developed and placed op-eds on the spiritual responsibility to protect forests, prepared and submitted a position paper calling on the government to include commitments to end deforestation in its next Nationally Determined Contributions to the UNFCCC, and much more.

The Interfaith Rainforest Initiative country program in Peru has launched an IRI local chapter in Puerto Maldonado (with plans for two more), engaged in extensive awareness raising about IRI in religious communities across the country, developed and placed op-eds on the spiritual responsibility to protect forests, hosted political debates on forest protection with candidates for Congress, prepared and submitted a position paper calling on the government to include commitments to end deforestation in its next Nationally Determined Contributions to the UNFCCC, and much more.

An Executive Council of religious leaders is taking the initiative forward in Brazil, recently holding a successful 2-day IRI education and planning event in Sao Paulo (with the participation of more than 90 faith leaders) and with similar events planned in four other Brazilian cities – Belem, Manaus, Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia – in February and March of 2020.

An activation mission was held to Indonesia, where a country planning team of key partners was established and has been meeting weekly to put in place plans for an Interfaith Rainforest Initiative country program launch from 28-30 January 2020.