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About the contributions of the UDV during AYA2019

From May 27 'till June 2nd ICEERS organized, in collaboration with many supporters and partners, for the 3rd time the World Ayahuasca Conference, held in Girona, Catalonia, in the north of Spain. This edition focussed principally on the role ayahuasca can have in relation to strengthening communities, transcending our individualistic approach to health to one that is more systemic, and in restoring our relationship with the natural world and seeking a future that is more sustainable and connected. Our vision for this event was one of a coming together, in which the international, intercultural community we are part of could have spaces of sharing and debate, and align behind a common vision for the future and strategies to advance this cause.

In this context, we sought participation of communities, organizations and individuals with extensive experience and know-how in these areas, eager to share, learn and align behind this collective vision. We are grateful for the UDV's proactive participation from early on in the process. It was fantastic to see how our event information and call for abstracts was actively disseminated under its members, resulting in a significant attendance at the event. An event of this scope and cost cannot be successful without the proactive promotion of communities it is aimed for.

In addition, we are grateful for the various presentations that UDV members gave, sharing its extensive experience with environmental work and cultivation of sacred plants — a subject that is a key dimension to the globalization — and insights into community and policy/legal aspects of the institution were particularly important in the context of this conference.

Lastly, in our effort to facilitate international/intercultural community building with this event, the countless new introductions, conversations and moments of human connection in between the presentations are an important part of this process. Many things were going on simultaneously, but it is clear that AYA2019 has been a coming together where all those new connections and alignment will shed important fruit in the future.

For us AYA2019 was the closing of a decade of work, and it is with great commitment that we continue our mission and continue to facilitate spaces of interchange of ideas and perspectives, human connection and the co-creation of the future we want to see for these sacred plants in our globalized society. In this sense I want to invite the UDV to continue to engage in this process.

In gratitude,



A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "B. De Loenen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Benjamin De Loenen
Executive Director, ICEERS