AMAZON WATCH

# ACHIEVEMENTS & PRIORITIES

**Amazon Watch works to protect the rainforest and our climate by supporting indigenous peoples across the Amazon Basin.**

2017

# RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Working with our partners in the Amazon Basin and internationally, Amazon Watch's recent achievements include:

- **Brazil dropped plans for the controversial Tapajós mega-dam:** In August 2016, Brazil's environmental agency cancelled the São Luiz do Tapajós mega-dam, one of the largest hydroelectric projects ever planned for the Amazon. Amazon Watch played an influential role in the dam's cancellation by shining an international spotlight on the government's plans for the Tapajós River, highlighting the Munduruku's territorial struggles, and leveraging news coverage of the disastrous Belo Monte mega-dam as a cautionary tale.

- **Our End Amazon Crude campaign took off:** In September 2016, Amazon Watch launched the End Amazon Crude campaign to bring the reality of oil drilling in the Amazon to the attention of its biggest consumer: the United States of America. In the months since, we have engaged 31 refineries and more than 50 of the largest corporate purchasers of this harmful fossil fuel, laying the groundwork for a market campaign to stigmatize Amazon crude as a toxic asset. We hope to announce our first big Amazon fuel-free commitments by the end of 2017.

- **The Achuar of Peru put oil company on notice:** In December 2016, Chilean oil company GeoPark announced its intention to explore for oil in Block 64, the same block from which the Achuar, with international support, kicked out Talisman and Oxy. The Achuar swiftly responded, notifying the company that it is not authorized to operate within Achuar territory. Amazon Watch connected the Achuar with international reporters and alerted key financial analysts who specialize in evaluating GeoPark for international bond markets to the pitfalls of investing in Geopark.

- **Indigenous solar communications project launched:** In 2016, Amazon Watch began collaborating with Empowered By Light to provide clean energy and communications systems for the indigenous Amazonian communities in Brazil, Ecuador and Colombia. These communities are on the front lines of fighting dirty energy projects, and these solar systems allow them to better protect themselves and their territory, and share their stories with the world, without relying on dirty energy.

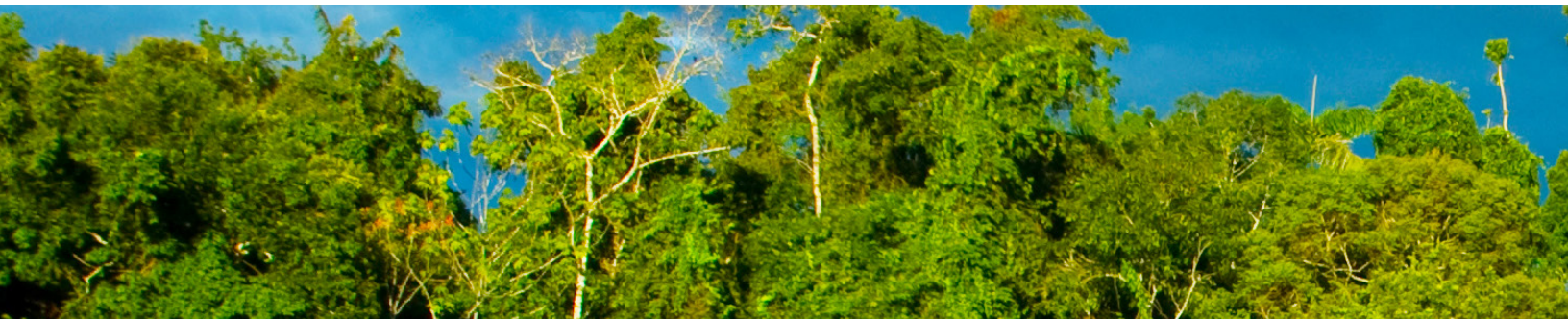
- **Amazonian leaders strengthened the international movement for indigenous territorial rights:** Ensuring the collective rights of indigenous and traditional peoples is among the most effective strategies for conserving our global ecological heritage and mitigating climate change. Amazon Watch supported delegations from Ecuador (Sarayaku) and Colombia (U'wa) to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's September 2016 World Conservation Congress, where indigenous leadership played a key role in the passage of Motion 26, which elevates "sacred natural sites" to protected area designations as "No Go" zones for extractive industries.

- **Brazilian social movements fought back against right-wing attacks:** Throughout 2016 and 2017, Amazon Watch engaged with Brazilian allies and the international community to spotlight escalating environmental and human rights threats from Brazil's right-wing *ruralista* government leaders. We continue to work with the indigenous-led #Resista movement to draw international attention to the crisis and apply pressure to the ruralistas' international financiers.

- **The Kichwa people of Sarayaku brought legal claims against the Ecuadorian government before an international tribunal:** Amazon Watch provided logistical and financial support to the Kichwa people of Sarayaku to bring their legal claims against the Ecuadorian government before the Inter-American Human Rights Court in San Jose, Costa Rica in November 2016. Ecuador has failed to abide by a previous Court ruling on past illegal oil drilling and is now pursuing new oil extraction that also violates this decision.

- **Indigenous Amazonian leaders joined tens of thousands at the Peoples Climate March:** Sápara and Shipibo leaders walked at the front of the Peoples Climate March in April 2017, alongside Standing Rock leaders and allies like Leonardo DiCaprio. Amazon Watch staff also organized and marched with the Land Rights Now contingent, making clear that indigenous territorial rights are a key component of addressing climate change and promoting climate justice.

- **Amazon indigenous communities had financial resources to defend themselves and the rainforest:** Amazon Watch's re-granting program is a critical part of our engagement and advocacy work, providing financial resources to our indigenous partners to increase their capacity to wage their own campaigns. Since 2006, the re-granting fund has disbursed more than $2.3 million to our indigenous partners from the Amazon. In 2016, with the support of a major donor, we launched an Earth Defenders Urgent Action Fund to provide rapid response grants to communities increasingly facing human rights violations at the hands of government and corporate forces.



# 2017-2018 PRIORITIES

## STOP AMAZON DESTRUCTION

Amazon Watch resists the destruction of the Amazon by challenging disastrous development projects and natural resource extraction and by promoting indigenous rights.

1. Apply international markets pressure via our End Amazon Crude campaign to stigmatize and ultimately halt the U.S. importation of Amazonian oil, thus drying up demand for the product.

2. Stop Beijing-backed oil drilling and mining projects by encouraging China to uphold its environmental and climate commitments.

3. Slow Brazil's renewed assault on the Amazon, environmental regulations, and indigenous territorial rights by exposing international investment in corrupt government leaders representing agribusiness, mining, and energy interests.

## ADVANCE INDIGENOUS SOLUTIONS

Amazon Watch supports and promotes indigenous-led alternative solutions to climate change, natural resource extraction, and industrial development.

1. Support grassroots indigenous-led efforts to advance a vision for a permanently protected Sacred Headwaters bio-cultural region located between the Napo and Marañon Rivers.

2. Continue to install solar power and communications systems in frontline indigenous communities and provide training in their use and upkeep in coordination with Empowered By Light.

3. Manage a re-granting program to ensure that our indigenous partners have the resources needed to wage successful struggles against rights abuses and natural resource and climate destruction.

## SUPPORT CLIMATE JUSTICE

Amazon Watch joins with the climate justice movement to address the fact that the most vulnerable – especially indigenous people and people of color – bear the brunt of environmental destruction, corporate greed, and climate change, and are often excluded from top-down solutions.

1. Ensure indigenous Amazonian participation in international climate change convenings and negotiations, including COP23 in Bonn, Germany in November 2017.

2. Support inter-ethnic and international alliance-building between indigenous peoples of the North and South calling for climate justice.

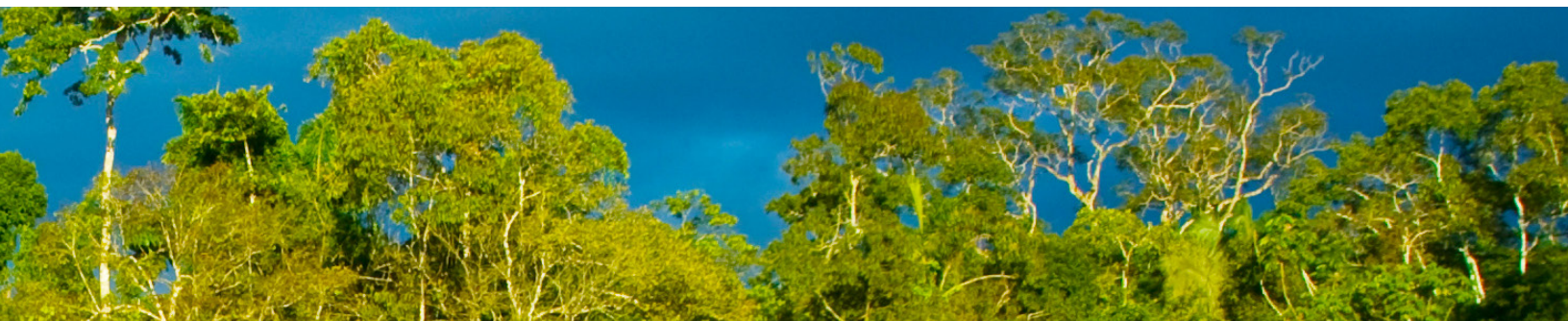
3. Support and advance proposals by indigenous women and youth on the frontlines of ecological destruction and climate change in the Amazon.

4. Maintain the pressure on Chevron to clean up its toxic legacy in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

5. Engage China in productive dialogue about its climate-harming activities in the Amazon.

**"If we want to defend our global climate, we must defend the Amazon. If we want to defend the Amazon, we must support indigenous rights and territories."**

*– Leila Salazar-López, Amazon Watch*



The Amazon, the world's largest and most biodiverse tropical rainforest, covers an area larger than the continental United States, houses one-third of the Earth's plant and animal species, and helps regulate our global climate. Nearly 400 distinct indigenous peoples depend on the Amazon rainforest for their physical and cultural survival. The Amazon and its peoples are under threat from unsustainable mega-projects (dams, drilling, pipelines, roads) that, if built, will accelerate deforestation, displacement of indigenous peoples, and climate change. The next several years will be critical to advancing rainforest protection, indigenous rights, and solutions to climate change such as clean renewable energy.

It costs only $.03 per acre per year to support Amazon Watch's work with indigenous peoples to protect more than 60 million acres of rainforest from oil development and mega-dams. Please join us!

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