

## **GEPARK ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY RETURNED WITH COMMENTS**

English translation of [original Spanish press release](#)

- The Environmental Impact Study (EIS) that GeoPark presented to the National Service for Environmental Certification (SENACE) was returned with comment considering the criticisms presented by the Achuar People of the Pastaza River – FENAP.
- For the Achuar People of the Pastaza, the Project for Oil Exploitation in Situche Central – Block 64 is null and unviable, as the oil block and project lack prior consultation and their implementation would irrevocably impact Achuar collective territory and life. As such SENACE should not issue an environmental certification to GeoPark.

IIDS / IILS February, 2019 – The National Service for Environmental Certification for Sustainable Investment (SENACE) has returned with comments the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) of the “Project for Development of the NorthEastern Area (Situche Central) of Block 64” of the oil company GeoPark, through a Directorial Statement. As such, the company does not yet have a green light to start operations, at the very least until the observations are dealt with.

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The Achuar People of the Pastaza, represented by the Federation of Achuar Nationalities of Peru (FENAP), welcome that SENACE has taking into account several of their criticisms, transmitting them to GeoPark. However, the Achuar regret that several relevant criticisms have not been included, such as that related to GeoPark’s base of operations being within a military encampment, Base Camp Sargento Puño, property of the Peruvian Armed Forces, associated in the past with violence against the Achuar People of the Pastaza.

On the other hand, FENAP believes that their criticisms can’t be resolved because the project implies serious flaws of being null and unviable. The establishment of Block 64 and the Situche Central Project both lack prior consultation, which is a fatal flaw. Additionally, the execution of the project would bring irreparable damages to the life and collective integrity of the Achuar People of Pastaza, for which SENACE should not approve the project.

Below we include the criticisms of FENAP that have been taken into account and transmitted to GeoPark:

### **Plagiarism of Studies**

FENAP criticized the EIS's lack of professionalism which included plagiarism from Wikipedia of some parts of the study.

This has been recognized by SENACE which in turn requested greater rigorousness for the EIS.

### **Project Impact Area**

The Achuar People of Pastaza criticized GeoPark for not having included territory of their people within the project's "area of influence" even though oil wells 2X and 3X of Block 64 are found within the territory of Putuntsa, one of the 45 communities under FENAP.

SENACE is requiring that GeoPark justify the limits of the "areas of influence", both direct and indirect. Additionally, SENACE is asking for a verification of the impact of the project's activities and the inclusion, within the area of influence, of zones that will be impacted.

### **Environmental Liabilities**

In their criticisms, the Achuar People outlined the omission from GeoPark's EIS about the un-remediated environmental contamination within Achuar territory, responding to the oil company's affirmation that "We found no presence of hydrocarbons, whether petroleum or oils in any of the stations."

Given this issue, SENACE has requested that GeoPark clarify the existence or lack of existence of environmental contamination within the area of influence, adding that if they do find such contamination, they need to carry out a registry of such.

### **Cultural Patrimony at Risk**

The Achuar People have assured the existence of archeological sites, ancestral ceramic remains, and other objects / places that form part of their cultural patrimony, which brought them to raise the alarm about the irrevocable impact that execution of the project would generate.

On this point, SENACE asked GeoPark to offer greater clarity and substantiation about the current cultural and religious situation and the existence of significant cultural spaces within their area of influence.

Additionally, the entity has required both the names and academic qualifications of the professionals that carry out the archeological report of the original EIS, which stated that, "there are no archeological remains." FENAP stated that said report should have been carried out by qualified and titled professionals.

## **Social Impacts**

FENAP criticized the GeoPark EIS in its social aspect, including the fact that employment in the project is not guaranteed for community members within the area of influence, given that their occupations don't correspond with the requirements of said project.

SENACE has indicated that the company has dismissed the impact on unqualified labor on family and communal life. The largely male workforce would leave their food production, economic and organizational activities, for which SENACE requested the number of workers that are found in that category.

## **Lack of Gender Focus**

The Achuar People of the Pastaza criticized that GeoPark's EIS did not take into consideration the perspective and world view of Achuar women, ensuring that they will reject any infrastructure, extractive, or similar project which allow the arrival of third-parties who bring new diseases, sexual violence against girls and women, prostitution networks, among other problems.

Referring to this issue, SENACE has asked the oil company to compile the perspectives and fears of the women.

## **Lack of Prior Consultation**

FENAP asserted that the GeoPark EIS violated the Achuar Peoples right to prior consultation, by omitting them from the Project's area of influence, even though Situche Central Platform 3 and oil wells 2X and 3X are within the territory of the community of Putuntsa.

However, even though SENACE reference this right, they haven't given it the importance it deserves, as an indigenous right that the company has violated and has become irreparable, as there can be "prior consultation" once actions have been consummated.

The Achuar People of Pastaza reiterates its rejection of the GeoPark EIS, while SENACE has issued a 30-day period for GeoPark to respond to their comments.

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