MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of Amazon Watch,

Over the last year, hope and progress for the future of the Amazon and climate has been restored. With immense joy and pride, we celebrate recent victories to protect Indigenous land rights with the civil society consultation to keep oil in the ground in the Yasuní National Park in Ecuador and the Brazilian Supreme Court ruling declaring “Marco Temporal” unconstitutional. We are so proud and honored to have worked closely with Indigenous peoples, organizations, and movements to achieve these historic victories.

In August, the people of Ecuador voted to keep nearly 1.5 billion barrels of crude oil permanently in the ground in the Yasuní-ITT oil block to protect biodiversity and the rights of isolated Indigenous peoples. This is a truly inspiring victory that sets a precedent for a civil society-led fossil fuel phaseout across the Amazon and around the world to ensure that global temperatures do not continue to rise past 1.5 degrees C.

In Brazil, we are witnessing the restoration of respect for Indigenous land rights with the recognition and demarcation of Indigenous ancestral lands totaling more than eight hundred thousand hectares. Demarcation is the process which secures the legal right to own, manage, and protect traditional lands from all forms of extraction and destruction, including mining and agribusiness. It secures rights to self-determination and sovereignty, and protects traditional knowledge and cultural practices for future generations. To fully and permanently protect the Amazon 100% of Indigenous lands must be demarcated.

Thankfully, in September, Brazil’s Supreme Court ruled against “Marco Temporal”, a nefarious legal scheme that sought to completely undermine and eliminate Indigenous land rights in Brazil, and President Lula has since vetoed parliamentary attempts to undermine Indigenous rights and the constitution. With this hard-fought victory the Indigenous movement defended their territorial land rights guaranteed in the Brazilian constitution and secured hope for biodiversity and global climate balance.

These victories, as well as the growing Indigenous Women’s movement across the Amazon, restore and inspire us to continue our work to protect and defend the Amazon and climate in solidarity with Indigenous peoples. As Sonia Guajajara, First Minister of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, and long-time ally of Amazon Watch, said following the Marco Temporal victory, “We have won this battle, but we have not won the war against Indigenous rights and Mother Earth.” She is right, because Indigenous lands across the Amazon continue to be threatened by large-scale industrial extraction — including oil and mineral extraction and agribusiness — further contributing to the Amazon tipping point and climate emergency.

In solidarity with our Indigenous partners and NGO allies, we are on a mission to End Amazon Crude, Stop Amazon Mining, and Defend Earth Defenders. Our on-the-ground field teams in Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador are strategically positioned to work closely with our partners and in coordination with our global team on local, national and international advocacy, corporate accountability, and communication campaigns to protect the Amazon, defend Indigenous rights, and advance climate justice, including at the United Nations and the Inter-American Human Rights system. This past year, our Amazon Defenders Fund (ADF) provided $2 million in solidarity and emergency grants directly to our partners across the Amazon to support their priorities.

We are committed, we are inspired, and we are grateful. Thank you for partnering with us on this critical work for all of our collective future!

For the Amazon,

Leila Salazar-López
Executive Director

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DECOLONIZATION AND JEDI - JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

We recognize that the destruction of the Amazon is rooted in historic and perpetual colonization that began with the Spanish and Portuguese and continues via government and corporate exploitation. The driving factors of colonial, white-supremacist, and capitalist ideologies provide the justification for treating Indigenous peoples and their territories as sacrifice zones. As Amazon Watch grows in staff and influence, the organization is adopting new measures and practices to actively work for decolonization, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion internally and externally.

Amazon Watch commits to these critical decolonization guidelines and justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decolonization Guidelines</th>
<th>JEDI Goals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shift power to frontline communities</td>
<td>Staff diversity at every level and on every team of the organization</td>
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<td>Lift up Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous systems thinking</td>
<td>Commitment to ongoing learning and transformation</td>
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<td>Build equitable relationships</td>
<td>Institutional implementation and active practice of JEDI objectives</td>
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<td>Practice humility and integrate lessons learned</td>
<td>Multilingual accessibility</td>
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<td>Engage in clear and transparent communication</td>
<td>A culture of self and collective care</td>
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<td>Be accountable to harm</td>
<td>Equitable timelines and expectations</td>
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<td>Skills and systems for constructive feedback and generative conflict</td>
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OUR WORK

Protecting the rainforest and our climate in solidarity with Indigenous peoples

MISSION

Since 1996, Amazon Watch has protected the rainforest and advanced the rights of Indigenous peoples in the Amazon Basin. We partner with Indigenous and environmental organizations in campaigns for human rights, corporate accountability, and the preservation of the Amazon’s ecological systems.

Stop Amazon Destruction

Amazon Watch resists the destruction of the Amazon rainforest, which is perilously close to passing a tipping point of ecological collapse, by challenging and bringing global media attention to government, corporate, and financial actors complicit in deforestation, resource extraction, land grabs, rights abuses, and disastrous development projects.

Amplify Indigenous-Led Solutions

Amazon Watch amplifies the voices, stories, and solutions of Indigenous peoples to uphold their rights, lives, and territories. Amazon Watch upholds and invests in Indigenous-led solutions for forest conservation, sustainable livelihoods, and regenerative, local economies.

Advance Climate Justice

Amazon Watch centers the voices and solutions of Indigenous peoples into policies that protect biodiversity and address the global climate crisis. Amazon Watch advocates for principled climate action that includes proposals and solutions from communities on the front lines of the climate crisis — especially Indigenous peoples and people of color — who have historically been excluded due to systemic racism and economic oppression.

VISION STATEMENT

We envision a world where the collective rights of Indigenous peoples and the rights of nature are respected; where healthy forests, biodiversity, and the global climate are fully protected. We strive for a movement of global solidarity rooted in interconnectedness and practices of decolonization to respect the rights of Indigenous peoples and to permanently protect the Amazon rainforest, a vital organ of the Earth’s biosphere, which is perilously close to passing a tipping point of ecological collapse. We believe that Indigenous self-determination is a critical component of any successful conservation strategy for the Amazon, and see that Indigenous knowledge, cultures, and traditional practices are critical to sustainable and equitable stewardship of Mother Earth. We seek solutions that will lead to the transformation of our economic, financial and political governance systems for ones that are life-affirming and regenerative. We commit, in the spirit of partnership and mutual respect, to support Indigenous, forest, and traditional peoples in their efforts to protect life, land, and culture in accordance with their aspirations and needs, by advocating for true solutions that respect the principles of climate justice.

DECOLONIZATION AND JEDI - JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

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Alessandra was accompanied to the destruction of Amazonian mining - inspired her to take on a lifetime spent witnessing the impacts of predatory industries on Munduruku territory - one of the political and community hubs of Mundurukânia in the middle Tapajós River basin. Throughout their stay in San Francisco and Washington, D.C., the two leaders stressed a consistent message: the United States must uphold its constitutional duty and officially recognize, demarcate, and uphold Munduruku territories. At the crux of Indigenous land rights in Brazil, Sawré Muybu territory has languished in legal limbo for decades, making it particularly vulnerable to illegal loggers, miners, and land grabbers who wreak havoc on its forests, streams, and rightful inhabitants. Without federal protections, industrial actors like Anglo American can formally seek to mine its rich mineral deposits, forcing the Munduruku and their partners to resist its activities. Meanwhile, these ancestral lands continue in a constant state of jeopardy.

It was therefore truly just when Alessandra and Juarez received news that the United Nations Human Rights Council, via an expert of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, designated the rights of Munduruku people as “in danger.” As such, the recognition that Munduruku and the Munduruku were receiving was particularly acute, where it grew 787% between 2016 and 2022. And while illegal mining - what’s known as “garimpo” in Brazil - has previously been carried out by small-scale “artisanal” miners, today’s garimpo is a lavishly financed billion-dollar industry with close ties to powerful organized criminal networks, politicians, and the private sector.

The impacts on the Amazon’s highly preserved Indigenous territories - particularly those of the Yanomami, Munduruku, and Kayapó people - are immeasurable. The miners scour streams and riverbeds, causing deforestation and polluting critical freshwater resources with sediments and mercury, which is used to separate gold from other minerals. These activities have led to a rise in lethal illnesses, as well as brain, kidney, and skin afflictions caused by water poisoning. This is in addition to the intense social conflicts triggered by the invasion of illegal miners, such as armed conflict commodity, which flourishes due to shocking policy loopholes and lack of oversight of both Brazilian and international actors.

While the Brazilian government plays a leading role in allowing this illegal economy to operate, with half of the country’s gold exports believed to be of illegal origins, the same is true of the countries that import this gold, the companies that refine it, and the corporations that put it in their products and pass it off to us in our phones, electric cars, and jewelry. Amazon Watch is putting these companies on notice in an engagement strategy meant to leverage the power of global market leaders to ultimately influence Brazilian policymakers to put an end to the illegal gold industry.
Indigenous Nations Take on Multibillion-Dollar Firms
By Mary Mijares
Amazonian Indigenous peoples remain steadfast in their struggles against institutions that threaten their ancestral lands and worsen climate catastrophe. In the past year, Amazon Watch amplified calls to action from the ground by waging international campaigns against companies that pose material harm to local communities.

At the center of Wall Street, it was as if worlds collided that day. In a conference room overlooking New York City, I sat at the head of an imposing conference table where, to my left, a Peruvian delegation with leaders from the Achuar, Wampís, and Cabo Blanco’s Fishing Association, occupied that side of the table. To my right, representatives from the international multibillion-dollar bank investment firm, Goldman Sachs, were seated at attention.

The Peruvian leaders, appointed by their communities and accompanied by Amazon Watch, journeyed thousands of miles to confront banks about their financing of an oil company that continues to undermine their rights and environment. The bank representatives never once averted their gaze as leaders warned: any corporation or financial institution that threatens our lands, livelihoods, and survival will be met with resistance. Unbeknownst to many, financial institutions can serve as enablers for extractive industries that poison the air and homes of millions. This financing continues in the backdrop of the hottest weeks ever recorded during a year filled with terrifying typhoons, floods, fires, and drought. Such calamities systematically hit poor and marginalized communities the hardest, as well as frontline defenders who steward lands across the world.

As part of our organization’s initiative, End Amazon Crude, the Petroperú campaign seeks to expose the connections between international financiers and the Peruvian state-run oil company – a company marred by corporate scandals, disregard of Indigenous rights, and environmental degradation from oil pollution. Despite these impacts, international financiers with climate commitments still financially support Petroperú notwithstanding their “due diligence” processes.

To counter the company’s claims, Amazon Watch published “The Risks of Investing in Petroperú.” This comprehensive document, made possible by our team’s research and information from communities on the ground, lays bare the countless threats and potential consequences of supporting Petroperú’s operations. It highlights the staggering $5.3 billion in long-term financing the company has received and lists the known financiers perpetuating its destructive activities, including the controversial Talara Refinery Modernization Project.

Any financing to this company, and this project, is likely to lead to more oil exploration and extraction in sensitive areas. Such concessions include Block 64, which overlaps Achuar and Wampís territories, and Blocks X and Z-2B on the Peruvian coast, where local fishing communities, such as the Cabo Blanco Fishing Association, rely on thriving marine habitats for their livelihoods. Our report also details the company’s disastrous management of the North Peruvian Pipeline, which frequently leaks oil that runs into the rivers and soil in the rainforest, undermining both the Amazon’s rich biodiversity and the lives of its people.

We sent this report to over ten financial institutions known to finance Petroperú, which resulted in statements of concern from European banks, such as BNP Paribas and Deutsche Bank. It also served as a catalyst for in-person discussions between the Peruvian delegation – consisting of leaders from the Achuar and Wampís nations, and the Cabo Blanco Fishing Association – and representatives from some of the world’s largest banks, such as Deutsche Bank, Citi, JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, and Goldman Sachs.

From Frankfurt, Germany to New York City, members of the delegation came face to face with bank representatives and spoke about the consequences of extractivism on their territories and the direct harm that financing Petroperú can inflict on their homes. In Pennsylvania, the delegation also took on the second-largest asset manager, Vanguard. Leaders demonstrated and spoke outside Vanguard’s headquarters alongside over 100 allies committed to the climate justice movement, exposing the company’s controversial deals and motivating young activists.

To this day, we continue to be agile and responsive to new information, finding additional ways to expose potential financiers of Petroperú through regular company monitoring and research which enhance our campaigning alongside communities. As Indigenous nations and civil societies continue to resist, allies abroad must remain steadfast, and ensure that leaders’ stories and calls to action reverberate in corporate offices and in mobilizations calling for corporate accountability. After all, the preservation of the Amazon and our Origins from Amazon Watch's stewardship is crucial for securing a collective future, not only for us but for future generations.
Yasuní Triumph: A Beacon for the Amazon and Beyond
By Kevin Koenig

On August 20, 2023, Ecuador made a groundbreaking decision that reverberated across the globe. Despite challenges like political unrest and economic instability, Ecuadorians voted overwhelmingly to prioritize the environment and Indigenous rights over oil interests. Nearly 60% supported the initiative to halt the country’s largest oil project, ensuring that approximately 1.5 billion barrels of crude remain untouched beneath the Amazon.

Yasuní National Park, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, is a treasure trove of biodiversity. Nestled on the equator, it boasts over 120 reptile species, 598 bird species, 200 mammal species, and a staggering 100,000 insect species in just one hectare. Beneath this rich tapestry, the Ishpingo, Tiputini, and Tambococha (ITT) oil fields hold an estimated 1.67 billion barrels of crude. The recent vote mandates the closure of 225 active wells and the removal of all oil infrastructure within a year. Additionally, a separate ballot measure successfully banned new mining activities in the province of Quito.

This vote is a testament to Ecuador’s commitment to the Amazon, Indigenous communities, and the global climate. It’s a bold step towards safeguarding the last Indigenous groups in Ecuador who choose to live in isolation. Ecuador’s stance sets a precedent for the world, emphasizing the urgency to transition away from fossil fuels to prevent a looming climate disaster.

The journey to this victory spanned over two decades, with grassroots movements and environmental advocates tirelessly campaigning for Yasuni’s protection. Amazon Watch stood at the forefront of this battle, spearheading international coalitions, raising awareness, and offering legal aid during crucial junctures. Our dedication never wavered, even in the face of adversity. This decision sends a potent message to global investors and financial institutions: the age of unbridled resource extraction is drawing to a close. The world must heed Ecuador’s call, understanding that certain resources must remain undisturbed and that transitioning fairly and justly is non-negotiable.

The global cry to “End Fossil Fuels” and specifically to “End Amazon Crude” is louder than ever. Research from expert organizations like the International Energy Agency underscores the necessity to keep a significant portion of known fossil fuel reserves untouched to limit global warming to 1.5°C to protect our global climate. Central to this mission is the preservation of the Amazon rainforest, with the defense of Indigenous rights and territories being paramount.

However, challenges persist. Despite the clear mandate to cease oil activities in Yasuni, both the outgoing Lasso government and state oil company Petroecuador have declared that it would be “impossible” to comply. The world watches intently, ensuring that Ecuador respects its commitment to Yasuni and a just and sustainable future.

While we celebrate this monumental success, there are also other oil blocks within Yasuní that still pose threats. The task ahead is to amplify this victory, making it a guiding light for environmental and Indigenous rights protection, not only in Ecuador but across the globe.
Community Priorities at the Forefront
Between July 2022 and June 2023, the ADF channeled a groundbreaking $2 million through 248 grants to 126 diverse Indigenous peoples and movements. This surge in financial support reflects the urgent needs of frontline communities contending with escalating existential threats, from environmental destruction to human rights abuses.

A cornerstone of timely solidarity has been consistent and robust backing for Brazil’s Free Land Camp. As the country’s largest Indigenous mobilization, in 2023 it united 6,000 Indigenous voices from 200 different ethnic backgrounds, all rallying to elevate Indigenous land rights and combat the climate crises. President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a guest of the Free Land Camp, officially announced the demarcation of six ancestral Indigenous lands at the event. Our sustained commitment to facilitating the participation of strong Amazonian delegations emanates from years of dedicated organizing and partnership, reinforcing the pivotal role ADF plays as a first responder in Indigenous and grassroots initiatives.

Women at the Vanguard
Recognizing that women are often the backbone of these movements, ADF mobilizes resources to elevate their leadership. For example, in Ecuador, we’ve supported CONFENIAE in organizing women to combat gender violence at familial, communal, and state levels. In Peru, our funding has nurtured the vision of the Chapra nation’s first female president, Olivia Bisa. We’ve also backed the Indigenous Women’s March in Brasília, echoing their call to “Reforest minds to cure the Earth.”

A Living Tapestry of Solutions
Every Indigenous community is a keeper of profound wisdom that can teach us how to live in harmony with the Earth. The ADF is committed to amplifying these voices, weaving together a living tapestry of solutions through consistent support. We’ve learned that even small contributions can serve as tributaries in a greater river, flowing towards the life of the forest and its peoples.

Visionary Resilience and Future Commitments
In these times of crisis and transformation, ADF moves at the pace of the Indigenous movement: constantly in motion, resolute, and unbreakable. As we look ahead, we strive to further scale ADF’s regranting process and grow our commitment to accompany Indigenous peoples and organizations.

In the spirit of true solidarity and guided by the age-old knowledge of our Indigenous partners, we invite you to join us. Together, we can work to dismantle colonial paradigms and nurture a future where justice, autonomy, and Earth-aligned living are not just ideals, but lived realities.
Expanding International Advocacy to Protect the Amazon

By Gisela Hurtado, Sofia Jarrín, and Gabriela Sarret

In recent years, Amazon Watch has expanded its U.S. staff and international team to engage in new advocacy strategies to defend the Amazon. As always, this work is done with the strategic participation of our Indigenous partners. Decision-makers and policy shapers from across the globe frequently come together to combat climate change, safeguard our planet, and protect the Amazon. It is crucial that our Indigenous allies are right there, side by side with them, with a seat at the table when policies that affect their lives and territories are being discussed. After all, who understands the delicate balance of nature better than the Indigenous peoples who have lived in harmony with it for generations?

Their voices need to be heard, we must be guided by their wisdom, and their solutions are invaluable in saving our planet from environmental degradation, the alarming loss of biodiversity, and the threats of oil, mining, and illegal economies. That is why we work tirelessly to provide them with tools and expertise to ensure they have the opportunity to influence policies in these high-level spaces.

Last year, for example, we accompanied Amazonian Indigenous partners from Brazil and Peru at COP 15, the Conference on Biodiversity, held in Montreal, Canada. It was a powerful moment, where their voices resonated inside the Palais des Congres as heads of states adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. We were there to promote their participation in the Indigenous Caucus and accompany them to meetings with government representatives.

Our support extended well beyond this conference. During our visit to Canada, we accompanied the largest Indigenous coalition from Brazil in denouncing the threats of Canadian mining company Belo Sun. We established and reinforced alliances with Canadian civil society and Indigenous organizations. While Canada is presenting itself as a human rights champion, Canadian mining companies – Belo Sun and Solaris Resources – that are threatening the Shuar Arutam and other Indigenous peoples from Ecuador and Brazil. We have already launched financial campaigns against these companies and issued several “Risk Assessment” reports designed to discourage investment and financing.

Looking ahead, building on the lessons learned from the UPR process, we are gearing up to support our Indigenous partners’ participation in the world’s largest mining industry convention, the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC). At this event, we will be exposing and denouncing two Canadian mining companies – Belo Sun and Solaris Resources – that are threatening the Shuar Arutam and other Indigenous peoples from Latin America and the Caribbean. We have already launched financial campaigns against these companies and issued several “Risk Assessment” reports designed to discourage investment and financing.

Amidst the collective efforts have yielded results, the participation of our Indigenous partners in international spaces has been transformative, infusing our diplomacy strategy of the Canadian government.

Leveraging this experience, we are strategically utilizing the findings on Canadian operations abroad for the next Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Canada. This process allows U.N. member states to review the human rights records of other nations. Amazon Watch accompanied a coalition of Indigenous leaders, local communities, and Latin American civil society representatives to Geneva, Switzerland, during the last week of August. Together, we exposed the predatory practices of Canada’s extractive sectors operating in Latin America and the Caribbean, actively supported by the “economic diplomacy strategy” of the Canadian government.

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airstrips within the Kakataibo Reserve. One of the most recent photographs taken during these flights confirmed the existence of a third covert airstrip used for drug shipments, turning more of the Kakataibo territory into a narcotics transportation nexus.

We stand firmly with leaders like Herlin Odicio of FENACOKA, who tirelessly decries that earlier efforts to replace coca crops with alternative development projects have been undermined due to the Peruvian government’s inaction. FENACOKA’s call for centering Indigenous territories in anti-drug strategies remains largely ignored, as local governments facilitate drug trafficking and land invasions.

Forestry Concessions: A Pathway to Further Exploitation

Powerful forces not just in Congress but also in local governments share a vested interest in dismantling PIACI territories. In Kakataibo lands, local authorities continue granting forest concessions even within the Northern Kakataibo Reserve. Astonishingly, one concession owner had the audacity to sue the Peruvian government, arguing that the reserve infringed upon his “right to work.”

Though such lawsuits will likely falter in the Constitutional Court, they serve as detrimental stalling tactics. Roads constructed for “legal” timber extraction have become deforestation hotspots and doorways for more extensive illegal activities, including drug trafficking.

A United Front for Climate Justice and Indigenous Rights

Our alliance with Indigenous organizations such as FENACOKA and AIDESEP aims to change the flawed systems perpetuating these injustices. We advocate for a holistic approach that adheres to principles of climate justice while prioritizing free and secure Indigenous territories as the most effective protection measure.

As we move forward, we will continue supporting Indigenous defenders across the Peruvian Amazon. They are the frontline warriors against not only environmental destruction but also the propagation of false narratives that minimize the gravity of these urgent challenges.

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The fight to protect the Peruvian Amazon is a complex tapestry of environmental conservation, human rights, and policy change. It’s a battle that demands not just legal wins but robust, on-the-ground defenses against insidious threats like drug trafficking and illegal logging.

Join us as we stand with our Indigenous partners in confronting these combined threats, in defense of their lands and the future of our planet.
Ecuador’s Indigenous Communities Rise Against Extractivism

By Nathaly Yépez, Paola Maldonado, and Raphael Hoetmer

In the past year, Ecuador has witnessed a significant erosion of its democratic fabric, marked by a surge in violence and political instability. This deterioration culminated in the dissolution of the national government, prompting early elections. The tragic assassination of presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio further intensified the crisis.

Ecuador now has the highest increase of homicides in the region, with a fivefold rise between 2016 and 2021 and an 82% increase in 2022 alone. The government’s repressive responses, which include constant states of emergency, relaxing gun laws, and deploying armed forces for internal security, has not only been ineffective but has also heightened risks for human rights defenders.

Indigenous Territories Under Threat

Against this backdrop, the outgoing Lasso government’s push for expanding mining and oil industries has added pressure on Indigenous territories. A notable instance was an executive decree in May that turned the right to consultation into a mere administrative procedure, paving the way for extractive projects.

The National Mining Sector Development Plan projects that by 2030, medium and large mining concessions will cover approximately 11 percent of the country. The Shuar Arutam People’s (PSHA) territory in the Southern Amazon is particularly at risk, as they resist both the Panantza-San Carlos and Warintza mining projects. Additionally, small-scale illegal mining is on the rise, especially in the Napo province.

Hope and Resistance from Indigenous Communities

Despite these challenges, Indigenous communities remain steadfast on their path to self-determination. A significant victory came in September 2022 when Ecuador’s Constitutional Court ruled in favor of the Shuar people, stating that the Panantza-San Carlos mining project of the Chinese company EXSA violated their right to consultation. This ruling was a result of a lawsuit filed by PSHA with our legal counsel.

The Shuar Arutam people have reinforced their opposition to mining since electing their new president, Jaime Palomino, to succeed Josefina Tunki, the organization’s first woman president who had brought national and international attention to their struggle. In June 2023, in collaboration with national Indigenous leaders, they presented the Popular Anti-mining Mandate, urging the government to declare all of Ecuador to be a mining-free zone.

Our report on the Solaris Resources project highlights the risks of the Canadian mining initiative in the Cordillera del Condor region, one of the most biodiverse places in Ecuador. The Shuar Arutam People did not give their consent, despite attempts to divide and co-opt community leaders.

Earth Defenders Continue Fighting Despite Grave Risks

However, defending their rights and territories comes at a cost. Indigenous leaders face threats, criminalization, and even violence. The brutal murder of Cofán leader Eduardo Mendúa, a key organizer of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), underscores the grave risks they face. Only hours earlier at a CONAIE assembly, Mendúa had ratified his resistance to new oil extraction in his community. Amazon Watch stands in solidarity, demanding truth, justice, and reparations for his murder.

The resilience of Indigenous leaders, even in challenging times, illuminates a path forward and gives hope for the response to the climate emergency and fight against fossil fuels. Their struggles highlight the environmental and societal threats posed by the mining industry, and their political proposals offer a blueprint for a truly equitable transition. We remain committed to supporting these guardians of life and advocating for their rights.

In honor of and in gratitude to Kathryn “Katy” Montgomery Allen

From the rainforests of Peru to West Africa, Katy Allen loved rainforests, rivers, and all of nature. She was passionate about protecting animals and helping people from the Amazon to her hometown of Santa Barbara. We are so grateful for her dedicated support to Amazon Watch over the years and for sharing her legacy with us. We mourn her passing and share our deepest sentiments with her family and friends.
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Protecting the rainforest and our climate in solidarity with Indigenous peoples

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