Dear Friends of Amazon Watch,

It has been a groundbreaking and historic year in our work to protect and defend the Amazon. 2019 saw the devastation of the deforestation fires, which in turn brought a groundswell of support in defense of the Amazon. On the heels of this historic tragedy, and overwhelming support, we increased capacity and responded with renewed vigor in the knowledge that Amazon Watch’s mission is more critical than ever. In 2020, Amazon Watch responded to the COVID-19 emergency in Indigenous communities in the Amazon, and officially launched its Women Defenders program, supporting holistic, political and leadership programs for Indigenous women across the Amazon. This year we reached our 25 year milestone, and I am so proud of the work we have accomplished together in solidarity with Indigenous peoples and allies committed to corporate accountability and climate justice. Together, we are building a global movement to permanently protect the Amazon from increasing threats and multiple crises and we are generating widespread support for Indigenous-led solutions.

The Amazon is at a tipping point. It is not near, it’s here. To reverse/halt this tipping point requires real commitments from governments and corporations to stop deforestation, exit Amazon oil and gas, and put an end to attacks against Indigenous and forest peoples defending lives, rights, and territories. This requires supporting calls for the demarcation and recognition of Indigenous ancestral territories.

In 2021, Amazon Watch released our landmark 2021-2025 strategic plan committing to advance and amplify Indigenous rights, resistance, and solutions to protect and defend the Amazon basin; denounce false solutions, including carbon offsets; elevate Indigenous women’s voices; develop and implement rapid response protocols and campaigns to defend earth defenders of the Amazon, and to redirect $1.5 million+ per year in solidarity and emergency rapid response funds via our Amazon Defenders Fund. We also commit to practice and actively work for decolonization, justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work, internally and externally. It is our intention to fulfill our mission over the next five years, with well thought through and resourced expansion to meet the current crises.

With a growing U.S.-based and international team in Brazil, Peru, and Ecuador, we will expand regional and international advocacy and communication campaigns to halt and hold accountable the global drivers of Amazon destruction, including governments, corporations, extractive industries – such as fossil fuel and agribusiness – and their financial backers. We will expose investors of Amazon destruction and dissuade them from investing in agribusiness, mining, and Amazon crude. And, we will work in collaboration with regional and international allies to build a pan-Amazon and global movement to act for the Amazon, Indigenous rights, and climate justice. Thank you for standing with us during this critical and transformative time for the Amazon, our climate, and all of humanity.

With deep gratitude for your support,

Leila Salazar-López, Executive Director

Leila Salazar-López headshot © Rucha Chitnis
OUR WORK - PROTECTING THE RAINFOREST AND OUR CLIMATE IN SOLIDARITY WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: JUL 2020 - JUN 2021

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

The Amazon rainforest has reached the tipping point: the point at which the degradation of the ecosystem is irreversible. According to the Science Panel for the Amazon, “Current deforestation across the entire Amazon basin is 17% and approaching 20% in the Brazilian Amazon.” They estimate that the tipping point of the Amazon will be reached at 20-25% deforestation, not 40% as previously predicted. While the challenges we face are daunting, together we are making a difference for the Amazon and the lives of Indigenous peoples who are defending the forest for our collective future.

Advocated Against GeoPark in Colombia: With a coalition of allies, Amazon Watch pressured the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to end its relationship with Chilean oil giant GeoPark in Colombia. GeoPark’s operations had long been denounced by Indigenous communities who opposed the project and never provided consent. To break the opposition, GeoPark engaged paramilitaries and sought a partnership with UNDP to provide cover. Amazon Watch led engagement with UNDP contacts, filed official complaints, and deployed outside advocacy tactics, forcing the UNDP to cancel its newly-established partnership just two weeks after its announcement.

Opposed GeoPark in Peru Alongside the Achuar and Wampis: Following years of fierce opposition from the Achuar People of the Pastaza and the Wampis Nation of the northern Peruvian Amazon, Chilean oil company GeoPark announced it would leave Block 64 “due to extended force majeure.” The Achuar People of the Pastaza and the Wampis Nation have fought to keep their ancestral territories – covering a total of 5 million acres of primary Amazon rainforest – free from destructive oil and mining projects.

Responded to Ecuador’s biggest oil spill in more than a decade: Amazon Watch provided financial, communications, and advocacy support for a major mobilization of communities affected by the 2020 oil spill on the Coca River to keep pressure on the government to adequately remediate, and co-filed an appeal of the legal case to the Constitutional Court.

Produced the Fires Week of Action: A series of climate-related actions targeting the major corporations and financial institutions profiting from the destruction of rainforests, the Fires Week of Action included direct and online actions, rallies, and teach-ins. Frontline leaders testified on the deforestation commodities destroying their homelands and strategized new ways to pressure some of the biggest corporations currently profiting from this crisis.

Convened Congressional Briefing on Threatened Earth Defenders: Amazon Watch convened a well-attended briefing for members of the U.S. Congress featuring testimony by threatened Peruvian Indigenous land defenders and participated in a meeting with senior Peruvian ministers regarding threats in Indigenous territories, where ministers pledged to protect Indigenous leaders.

Defended Earth Defenders: Amazon Watch expanded legal strategies, ramped up accompaniment and security tactics for threatened Earth Defenders, and supported Indigenous peoples to become lawyers for their communities through Amazon Defenders Fund solidarity grants.

Combatted False Solutions Like “net zero”: Governments, companies, and financial institutions are attempting to appear as if they are reducing emissions while continuing business-as-usual with schemes such as forest offsets. Trading forest protection for continued greenhouse gas emissions presents a false and dangerous “solution” to the climate crisis. Amazon Watch continued to advocate for an end to “net zero”.

Advancement of Indigenous-led Solutions:

Amazon Watch centers Indigenous solutions to climate change. Multiple scientific studies have shown that Indigenous lands are currently the most important barrier to Amazon deforestation. Defending Indigenous rights is instrumental to defending the Amazon, as Indigenous peoples play a crucial role in conserving biodiversity and have an unrivalled knowledge of the forest, plants, and animals. The 2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report recommended that the role of Indigenous peoples as forest guardians should be recognized as a solution to the climate crisis and that their knowledge and practices are important contributions to climate resilience. In some regions, their lands are oases in the middle of farming commodities fields and vast environmental destruction. In Brazil alone, deforestation rates within community-protected forests are two-thirds lower than in other areas.
**Defended Communities Against Mining Giant Belo Sun:** Canadian mining company Belo Sun experienced a major setback in plans to open a massive gold mine along the Xingu river in Brazil when it lost authorization to meet with Indigenous communities during the pandemic due to a pressure campaign by Indigenous leaders, human rights organizations, and Amazon Watch.

**Testified to Congress on Indigenous Rights:** Amazon Watch Executive Director Leila Salazar-López joined allied human rights organizations to testify to the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission on the status of the human rights of Indigenous peoples in the Americas. The congressional hearing was chaired by Reps. McGovern and Smith, as well as then-Rep. Deb Haaland. Haaland is a Laguna Pueblo-American and one of the first two Native American women elected to Congress.

**Supported Women Defenders of the Amazon:** Amazon Watch established its Women Defenders Program, led by Nina Gualinga, an Ecuadorian Amazon defender and Indigenous rights leader. Amazon Watch supported historic women’s convenings, including the Bi-Annual Meeting of Women Defenders in Ecuador and historic 2021 International Women’s Day mobilizations. Amazon Watch also supported the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFINAE) Women’s March and the re-launch of the Women’s Program at the Inter-Ethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDESEP), provided legal support for women facing domestic and gender violence in Ecuador, and supplied direct legal and security accompaniment for threatened Indigenous women leaders. Holistic strategies included support for the Shipibo-Konibo women healers’ community in Peru, including for their ceremonial practices, organic traditional medicine, agriculture, and reproductive health. Amazon Watch also provided a grant and logistical support for the establishment of La Casa de Mujeres Amazoníacas in Ecuador, a meeting place, safe house, and healing site for women. The site hosted its first retreat/healing circle for 30 Indigenous women.

**COVID-19 Emergency Response:** The COVID-19 emergency in the Amazon escalated dramatically, as government plans to stop the virus and provide appropriate medical support proved woefully inadequate. As a founding member of the Amazon Emergency Fund, an alliance of Indigenous, NGO, and donor allies responding to the emergency, Amazon Watch raised crucial funds for urgent needs including oxygen, rapid-response health care, food and medicine, PPE, vaccines, transportation, and communications. According to the Pan Amazonian Ecclesiical Network (REPAM), to date, there have been 3.3 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the Amazon and nearly 100,000 confirmed deaths, with the majority of cases occurring in Brazil. Infection rates in some remote Indigenous communities were as high as 90% of the population, with community elders dying at unprecedented rates. Amazon Watch made a major grant to AeroSarayaku in Ecuador, whose planes serve remote Indigenous communities in roadless territories, transporting medical personnel, food, and medical supplies. As the only airline founded and managed by Indigenous people from the Kichwa community of Sarayaku, AeroSarayaku provided a life-saving service while other airlines refused to transport people ill with COVID-19.

**Disbursed Nearly $2 Million in Direct Solidarity Funding:** The Amazon Defenders Fund (ADF) disbursed rapid-response, emergency, and solidarity grants to Indigenous peoples across the Amazon, with small and midsize grants, disbursed with a minimum of bureaucratic barriers, for urgent and longer-term priorities of Indigenous peoples’ communities, organizations, and movements in the Amazon.

**DEMAND CLIMATE JUSTICE**

This year, Amazon Watch increased its communications capacity, expanding both the U.S.-based communications team as well as the in-country communications teams in Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil. Amazon Watch utilized its media pipeline to expose violations of Indigenous rights, deforestation, and the fires in the Amazon. Campaigners used this global media attention to amplify Indigenous voices and were consistently interviewed, quoted and cited in global media outlets.

**Forced Mining Company Anglo American to withdraw 27 Research Applications:** After pressure from the Munduruku, the Association of Brazil’s Indigenous Peoples (APIB), and Amazon Watch, mining giant Anglo American withdrew all 27 of its license applications in Indigenous territories. This came on the heels of the release of Amazon Watch and APIB’s report “Complicity in Destruction III,” which revealed that Anglo had research applications overlapping 18 Indigenous territories.

**Pressured Danske Bank to Divest from Deforestation-Linked Companies in Brazil:** Danske Bank announced it was divesting from agribusiness giant Cargill and placed investment restrictions on the mining company Vale, both of whom were named in “Complicity in Destruction III” as actors involved in the invasion and deforestation of Indigenous territories.

**Secured End to Banks’ New Financing of Ecuadorian Crude:** European banks BNP Paribas Group, Credit Suisse, Rabobank, and ING — collectively responsible for financing the trade of over $5.5 billion in Amazon oil to the U.S. from 2009 to 2020 — committed to immediate exclusion measures on the trading of oil from the Amazon Sacred Headwaters region to the U.S. This is the first time global commercial banks have adopted policies that exclude finance for extractive activities in the Amazon rainforest.

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Supported Imprisoned Human Rights Lawyer Steven Donziger: With the help of two federal judges, Chevron continued to persecute Steven Donziger for the 2013 $9.5 billion judgment in Ecuador against the oil giant for contaminating a stretch of the Amazon rainforest. Amazon Watch kept the case in the media spotlight and rallied congressional support for Donziger, at a time when Chevron actively intimidated media outlets with the threat of lawsuits for covering the case.

Built the Amazon Rainforest 100-Day Action Plan for the Biden-Harris Administration: With Artists for Amazonia and Amazon Aid, Amazon Watch advocated for a multi-pronged policy for protecting the Amazon rainforest, urging that the voices of Indigenous communities be central to policy formulation.

Convened Brazil Policy and Amazon Climate Forum: At the start of the Biden presidency, Amazon Watch organized the Amazon Climate Forum, with testimony by Indigenous leaders, congresspeople, artists, celebrities, and members of the Science Panel for the Amazon, attended by members of the Biden team. Amazon Watch engaged the media and members of the U.S. Congress and mobilized artists, who signed a letter calling on Biden to avoid reaching any possible agreement on the rainforest with the Bolsonaro administration. No agreement crafted behind closed doors made it to fruition.

Played Critical Role in Coalition Organizing: Amazon Watch continued as a leading member of the BlackRock’s Big Problem campaign and the Stop the Money Pipeline coalition, helping maintain focus on the role that large financial institutions play in propping up extractive industries in the Amazon.

BlackRock Releases Policy Changes: Amazon Watch’s consistent pressure led BlackRock, the world’s largest asset manager, to acknowledge the importance of “natural capital and human rights” with significant policy change pronouncements. Amazon Watch also released the report “Investing in Amazon Crude II” which exposes the asset managers BlackRock, Vanguard, and State Street, with case studies of oil exploitation and the attendant effects on Indigenous communities. The report outlines actions they must take and urges clients of these firms to insist they complete them.

Convened Brazil Policy and Amazon Climate Forum: At the start of the Biden presidency, Amazon Watch organized the Amazon Climate Forum, with testimony by Indigenous leaders, congresspeople, artists, celebrities, and members of the Science Panel for the Amazon, attended by members of the Biden team. Amazon Watch engaged the media and members of the U.S. Congress and mobilized artists, who signed a letter calling on Biden to avoid reaching any possible agreement on the rainforest with the Bolsonaro administration. No agreement crafted behind closed doors made it to fruition.

How We Decolonize Philanthropy
The 10 principles of the Amazon Defenders Fund are guided by Indigenous cosmovision.

1. Indigenous movement-led
2. Participatory grantmaking
3. Solidarity, respect, reciprocity and partnership
4. Accountability, flexibility, and responsiveness
5. Collective leadership and process
6. Dismantling patriarchal systems of power and white supremacy
7. Committed to long-term processes of change
8. Committed to rapidly and safely supporting allies in crisis and at risk
9. Organizing philanthropic actors
10. Celebrating and regenerating the cycle of life

The Amazon Defenders Fund (ADF) is built upon Amazon Watch’s multi-decade track record as a trusted partner among Indigenous nations and local organizations, and guided by the principles and cosmology of Indigenous peoples. These principles are interconnectedness, relationality, and reciprocity, and are the ways in which Indigenous peoples trace their ancestral relationships to the environment, the cosmos, and to one another.

The ADF mobilizes flexible, timely, and direct solidarity funds into the hands of historical and emerging Indigenous leaders, peoples, and organizations to advance the Amazonian Indigenous agenda of autonomy and self-determination. In recent years, we’ve quadrupled our solidarity grantmaking and are working to decolonize philanthropy by distributing nearly one-third of Amazon Watch’s annual budget directly to the Amazon. The fund is often the first line of support for many Indigenous and forest leaders and communities, as well as those facing repression and different forms of violence. The ADF is one of the primary mechanisms sought by funders wishing to effectively and immediately reach those directly affected by emergencies across the Amazon Basin.

The ADF made more than 250 grants including:

COVID-19 Relief
With local hospital capacity in Brazil collapsing under the pressure of the pandemic, the ADF supported Expedicionários da Saúde to create highly effective “Field Wards” serving local Indigenous communities, and delivered oxygen concentrators, provided training, installation of medical equipment and medical transport.

Funding was provided to support Indigenous Amazonian women defenders in Sarayaku, Ecuador, to provide crisis medical care for community members with COVID-19, including medical aid and treatment for Sarayaku and neighboring Indigenous communities. For isolated and hard to reach communities, transportation is a vital logistical need during COVID-19 in the Amazon, especially airplanes to serve the health needs of Indigenous communities by transporting medical personnel, food, and medical equipment. AeroSarayaku—the only airline founded and managed by Indigenous people from the Kichwa community in Sarayaku—provided a life-saving service, as other airlines continue to refuse to transport severely COVID-19 ill people. The ADF provided funding for a new motor, and operating support funds to AeroSarayaku.

COVID-19 has exacerbated pervasive existing inequalities in the Amazon which are exponentially worse for Indigenous peoples, and even more so for Indigenous women. Women healers preserve Amazonian practices, medicine, history, and art of their ancestors. The halt in tourism in Peru as a result of the pandemic devastated the livelihoods of women healers and their communities. An emergency support grant was provided to a group of Shipibo Konibo traditional women healers and midwives, “Bakẹbitimis.”
Indigenous Media
The ADF supported Midia India in Brazil, training youth in media techniques and digital storytelling, purchasing cameras, tripods, batteries, and travel stipends to cover the raging fires in the Brazilian Pantanal and in the Amazon.

Organizing
A grant was made to the Voo da Vespa (The Flight of the Wasp) fund in Brazil to support Indigenous activists and leaders’ organizing, in collaboration with Culture Hack Labs and Choose Love, a new collaborative fund supporting Indigenous spaces for organizing and strategizing.

The ADF accompanied the AIDESEP Women’s Program/Women Wisdom and Healers Keepers initiative with a solidarity fund to support the transmission and sustenance of ancestral medicinal and healing techniques of 180 Amazonian Wisdom Keepers and healers in Peru. The Wisdom Keepers are passing their knowledge on ancestral medicine and the proper use of Indigenous medicinal plants to prevent, care and treat ethnocultural diseases, including COVID-19. Additionally, they contribute to revitalizing communal medicinal plant gardens that guarantee access to and sustainability of Amazonian medicine, and promote biocultural diversity, collective management, and revitalization of Amazonian ecosystems.

ADF GRANTS 2020-2021
Number of Grants 279
Average Grant $7,044
Highest Award $99,625
TOTAL FUNDING $1,943,627

FYE 2020-2021 INCOME SOURCES
Funds for Amazonian Groups 6%
Individual Donors 25%
Organizations & Businesses 3%
Foundation Grants 66%

FYE 2020-2021 EXPENSES
Fund Development 4%
Total Program Services 89%
Community Mobilizing, Organizing, and Strategy 41%
Women Leadership 12%
Crisis 28%
Other 9%
Defenders at Risk 9%
Regional Partnership 1%

AMAZON DEFENDERS FUND’S IMPACT
FY2020-2021

AMAZON WATCH
Summary Financial Report
Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2021

INCOME
Foundation Grants 3,482,231
Funds for Amazonian Groups 313,131
Individual Donors 1,317,457
Organizations & Businesses 147,137
Delegations & Other Income 6,944
TOTAL INCOME 5,266,900

EXPENSES
Programs and Campaigns 2,564,554
Grants to Amazonian Groups 1,943,627
Total Program Services 4,508,181
Management 215,185
Fund Development 322,371
TOTAL EXPENSES 5,045,737

Net Income 221,163
Net Assets on July 1, 2020 6,389,403
Net Assets on June 30, 2021 6,610,566

Net Assets on June 30 Include
Cash Assets 6,707,841
Grants Receivable 118,164
Other Assets 21,819
Total Liabilities 237,258
TOTAL NET ASSETS 6,610,566

Note: This report is based on the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended June 30, 2021.
THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

$500,000 and up
The Hugh C. and Thomas Lord Fund
Wendy II, Inc.

$449,999
Energy Transition Fund
(a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors)

Open Society Foundations
The Sunrise Project
The Waterloos Foundation
The William H. Donner Foundation

$50,000 to $99,999
Amazon Watch Sweden
CREDO
ImpactAssets
Oak Foundation
The Overbrook Foundation
Rainforest Action Network
Schmidt Family Foundation/The 11th Hour Project
The Steiner Family Foundation/Lynn Wasser

$24,999
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$4,999
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$2,499
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$1,000 to $2,499
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$500 to $999
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$100 to $500
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$50 to $100
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$10 to $50
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$5,000 to $9,999
Anonymous Donors
Anonymous Donors

$5,000 to $24,999
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$1,000 to $24,999
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$50 to $99
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$10 to $49
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$5 to $9
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$1
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$0.50
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$0.25
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$0.10
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$0.05
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor

$0.01
Anonymous Donor
Anonymous Donor
Protecting the rainforest and our climate in solidarity with Indigenous peoples