Proposals for the
Summit of Presidents of the Amazon

The following proposals for the Summit of Presidents of the Amazon have been the result of a discussion process of several months by the Pan-Amazon Social Forum (FOSPA), the Pan-Amazon Ecclesial Network (REPAM), the World Assembly for the Amazon (AMA), several indigenous organizations and civil society institutions. organizations of the Amazon Basin and civil society institutions.

Let's avoid the point of no return in the Amazon

STATE OF SITUATION

According to the Scientific Panel for the Amazon\(^1\) this biome has lost 870,000 km\(^2\) of primary forests; an area that is three times the surface of Ecuador and more than three quarters the surface of Bolivia. To this we must add 1,036,080 km\(^2\) of degraded Amazon forests that have higher tree mortality, lower carbon reserves, higher temperatures, lower humidity, greater exposure to wind and exhibit changes in the composition of fauna and flora. Deforestation and combined forest degradation already reach 26% of Amazon forests.

Brazil and Bolivia concentrate 90% of deforestation. Sabanization is already taking place in these two countries, while Ecuador, Colombia and Peru are advancing in the same direction.

The Amazon is on the brink of a point of no return. A small change can cause an abrupt change of the ecosystem by feedback mechanisms. We are facing the danger of a systemic collapse in the Amazon\(^2\) due to the combined impacts of deforestation, fires, multi-causal contamination of water and soil (agrochemicals, drug trafficking, mining, hydrocarbons) that degrade or destroy Amazonian ecosystems, agro-industries (soy, palm and other monocultures), the bioeconomy based on commodities, and in general, the expansion of the agricultural frontier that has reached 15% of the Amazon.

The regressive extinction of the Amazon will affect the peoples that inhabit it, the Amazonian countries and the world as a whole because only at the level of climate change will an additional 110 to 275 Gt CO 2 eq be emitted, contributing to the increase in world temperature by 0.1 to 0.2°C.

Deforestation is not an inevitable fact. Between 2004 and 2012, deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon fell by almost 84%, from more than 27,000 km\(^2\) to 4,500 km\(^2\) implementation and continuity of the measures assumed. In the original design of the PPCDAM (2004), an 'environmentally sustainable infrastructure' component was created to ensure prior analysis of

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\(^1\) The Amazon we want, Scientific Panel for the Amazon, 2022. https://www.laamazoniaquequeremos.org/spa_publication/capitulos-en-resumen/

\(^2\) A call for global action to move the Amazon forest away from points of no return, Scientific Panel for the Amazon, 11/15/2022. https://www.laamazoniaquequeremos.org/spa_publication/un-llamado-a-la-accion-global-para-alejar-el-sistema-forestal-amazonico-de-los-puntos-de-inflexion-extended-version/
deforestation risks and evaluation of alternatives before making decisions, as well as strengthening territorial governance and monitoring impacts. in the environment of transport and energy works.

Protected areas and indigenous territories cover around half of the Amazon (48%) and are vital for its preservation. Most of the deforestation occurs outside of protected areas and indigenous territories (86%). The forests that are outside indigenous territories and protected areas register the highest rates of affectation.

Since the middle of the last decade in the Brazilian Amazon, policies and actions against deforestation have been weakening and eroding. In recent years, the creation of protected areas, as well as the titling of indigenous territories, has slowed down and the regulations and compliance with them have been weakened, generating a new increase in deforestation that has repercussions at the regional level. In several cases, the areas of the conservation units were reduced to serve the private interests of land speculators, ranchers, loggers, mining companies, hydroelectric dam builders, etc. In other cases, the protected areas are established on top of the ancestral territories of the peoples, with high operating costs and generating conflicts with the neighboring towns.

According to different scientific studies, the point of no return in the Amazon will occur this decade if urgent measures are not taken.

REGULATIONS AND MECHANISMS

ACTO

- The declarations of Presidents of the Amazon in 1992 and 2009 refer only to the "sustainable use of forests" which has been ineffective in curbing deforestation. Only the 2009 Manaus declaration mentions deforestation, proposing to identify “actions to reduce and monitor deforestation”[3].

- At the ACTO level, a "Memorandum of understanding for cooperation and mutual assistance for comprehensive fire management among ACTO member countries" was approved in 2021, which aims to establish a "Comprehensive Fire Management Network" for the coordination, collaboration and exchange of knowledge, experiences and technical resources, and the implementation of appropriate policies and actions in the field of fire. Likewise, ACTO has established an Amazon Regional Observatory where heat sources and other indicators of the Amazon are recorded.

- ACTO's 2010-2018 Strategic Agenda includes the forest sub-theme with actions to "design methodologies for the economic and environmental valuation of forests", "monitor forest cover and forest control", "promote and strengthen community forest management", "promote technical and financial cooperation..." and others without a publicly accessible evaluation document being available on said actions, nor details if they remain in plans or reach the territories and if they include modalities of bioeconomy of commodities and carbon markets.

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ACTO does not have goals to reduce deforestation, degradation or pollution, nor does it set forth a more systemic vision that includes avoiding the point of no return in the Amazon.

IUCN

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has adopted in 2020 a resolution to "Avoid the point of no return in the Amazon by protecting 80% by 2025" in "collaboration with and recognizing the leadership of indigenous peoples in the Amazon ensuring their free, prior and informed consent, and with the full recognition of their rights, to their lands, territories and waters, as a measure to guarantee the integrity of the ecosystem, stop deforestation, the loss of biodiversity and the change of use of ground, and prevent reaching the point of no return".

PROPOSALS

a) Adopt a pan-Amazon regional vision to avoid the point of no return in the Amazon and guarantee the preservation of at least 80% of the Amazon by 2025 based on a Regional Strategic Emergency Action Plan for the Amazon, with priority in effective territorial interventions.

b) Set as an objective of said plan the elimination of deforestation, degradation and contamination, of an illegal nature by 2025, and another similar one, for legal deforestation by 2027. We must reach zero deforestation before 2030 to avoid the point of no return of The Amazon.

c) Title 100% of indigenous, Afro-descendant and traditional community territorial claims that have not yet been titled/demarcated and expand and strengthen protected areas so that they meet their objectives in the preservation of the Amazon.

d) Assign permanent financial resources for indigenous, Afro-descendant and traditional community territories, with direct access from their representative organizations, and protected areas to achieve the objectives of the Regional Strategic Emergency Action Plan for the Amazon.

e) Guarantee consultation processes whose purpose is free prior informed consent and in good faith in all policies, strategies, plans, activities, works and projects in indigenous, Afro-descendant and traditional communities territories.

f) Identify and abrogate the regulations and provisions that enable and accelerate deforestation, degradation, and contamination of the Amazon at the level of clearing authorizations, agrochemicals, mercury, and the like, as well as fines, sanctions, and relaxation of environmental and indigenous regulations, Afro-descendant and traditional communities, expansion of the agricultural frontier and others.

g) Establish stricter and more effective regulations that sanction the main drivers of the destruction of the Amazon for agro-industrial, mining, hydrocarbon, mega-hydroelectric activities, commodity bioeconomy ventures and others, through the suspension of their licenses and concessions, the non-granting of financing, and the reversal of their agricultural property.

h) Implement a comprehensive governance model for the Amazon with representation and recognition of indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, traditional communities, peasants and other actors in the Amazon.

i) Create mechanisms to curb deforestation, degradation and exported contamination through the obligation to obtain an Amazon Seal that certifies that the agricultural, mining, biobusiness and energy products to be exported do not contribute to the three processes indicated. Establish the use and verification of the Amazon Seal for the large commercialization chains in the large urban centers of the Amazon countries.

j) Guarantee comprehensive, cumulative environmental impact assessments that consider alternatives to the projects under evaluation, and that they are carried out by independent entities that have no interest in said projects, and that they are executed in a transparent and participatory manner.

k) Develop actions for the restoration of degraded lands, based on native species, regeneration of flora and fauna, and avoiding monocultures and exotic species.

l) Implement actions to reduce the expansion and pressure of cattle ranching and agro-industry on the Amazon.

m) Adopt a plan to leave fossil fuels underground, generating exclusion mechanisms from the Amazon that prevent new exploration and exploitation projects, and develop progressive actions for the reduction to the elimination of current extraction projects in the Amazon. Develop fair and popular energy transition processes that respond to the contexts and dynamics of the Amazon.

n) Establish incentives for people, communities and municipalities that contribute to reducing deforestation, degradation, pollution and the preservation of the Amazon.

o) Strengthen participation, surveillance and social control mechanisms to guarantee the reduction of deforestation, degradation and contamination.

p) Develop cooperation agreements and cross-border actions to curb and combat practices that contribute to the spread of fires and deforestation, degradation and contamination between countries.

q) Strengthen cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking and form a multi-country working group with the objective of addressing the impact that illegal economies and actors have on indigenous peoples located in cross-border corridors.

r) Recognize the Amazon as a subject of law and guarantee its inherent right to exist, to preserve its vital cycles, its structure and evolutionary functions, and its prompt and timely comprehensive restoration.5

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5 See precedents: Verdict International Tribunal for the Rights of Nature, Glasgow 2021 and Judgment STC 4360/2018, pronounced by the Civil Cassation Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice of Colombia in favor of the Amazon.
The fate of the Amazon is the fate of its peoples

STATE OF SITUATION

Formed more than 30 million years ago, the Amazon has been inhabited by indigenous peoples for more than 11,000 years. The evolutionary history of the Amazon biomes is significantly intertwined with the management practices of indigenous peoples who play a fundamental role in the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity. The Amazon is home to approximately 47 million people, of whom approximately 2.2 million are indigenous (4.6%), consisting of at least 410 distinct ethnic groups or nations, including some 80 peoples who remain in voluntary isolation. More than 3,000 indigenous lands and territories have been recognized throughout the Amazon under various tenure systems which, when added to formally recognized protected areas, represent approximately 45% of the region and protect almost half of the forests remaining. Over 80% of the area occupied by indigenous peoples in the Amazon is forested, and 35% of all remaining intact forests in Latin America are occupied by indigenous peoples.

There are a series of extractive activities and far-reaching projects in the region that threaten the cultural and territorial integrity of Amazonian indigenous peoples, the situation of highly vulnerable peoples, of initial contact and in voluntary isolation who are threatened in its very existence. In this regard, the Report on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Pan-Amazon of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR, 2019) indicates the following as activities that represent significant threats to the lives of peoples: (1) mining, legal or illegal, which deforests, accumulates residues on the surface, consumes and contaminates river water and groundwater, and modifies population settlement patterns; (2) infrastructure projects, waterways, highways and railways, with enormous impacts on land and water; (3) hydroelectric plants, the construction of which completely redefines the ancestral territories of the peoples; and (4) hydrocarbon energy projects; with similar impacts to mining projects. Added to this is the expansion of agribusiness, extensive cattle farming and monoculture plantations.

It is known that, between the years 2000 and 2020, the total area devoted to agricultural activities in the Amazon has registered an increase of 81.5%, that is, two decades ago the agricultural area was 794,429 km² and that extension has been added 647,411 km². This conversion of forests to pasture for agricultural activity and expansion of the agricultural frontier occurred with force on Indigenous Territories (TI) and Protected Areas (AP). In the year 2000, 6% of the agricultural area was within these protected territories, a proportion that increased in the following years: between 2001 and 2018, the increase in new areas for agricultural use within PAs was more than 220%, transforming 53,269 km² of protection areas. During the same period, in IT the increase was more than 160%, transforming 42,860 km² of these territories in new areas for agricultural use. This expansion is produced mainly by the redistribution of land and the advancement of agricultural activities.

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6 Scientific Panel Summary Report for the Amazon, chapter 10.
activity generated by the private sector, as well as initiatives called "climate-smart agriculture" that are promoted by agribusiness with support from state levels and international cooperation.

Public incentives in favor of expanding the agricultural frontier (financial, institutional, and regulatory) that favor large-scale producers and agro-industry, to the detriment of family producers, generate a systematic abandonment of subsistence agriculture and encourage the deforestation and pollution.

For its part, mining affects 17% of the Amazonian territory, is present in all the countries of the region and covers more than 1.4 million square kilometers. 9.3% of the mining developments in the Amazon are superimposed on protected areas and a similar percentage on indigenous territories, a number that tends to grow since there are currently requests for mineral exploration and prospecting in an area of 182.1 thousand km² overlapping indigenous territories.

Gold mining is particularly worrying. Gold extraction requires a combination of logging, soil mining, destruction of riverbanks, and the use of liquid mercury for processing, posing a serious threat to both aquatic and terrestrial Amazonian biodiversity, human health, and to the resilience of the ecosystem. Mercury toxicity in Amazon rivers now constitutes one of the greatest threats to fisheries, diets, and the livelihoods of Amazonian peoples.

9.4% of the Amazonian surface is affected by oil lots, most of them (369) are located in the Andean Amazon (Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador), home to several indigenous peoples, including the uncontacted or in voluntary isolation. 43% of the oil areas in the region are within Protected Areas (88,926 km²) and indigenous territories (259,613 km²).

Between 2012 and 2020, the number of hydroelectric plants in operation and/or construction within Protected Areas in the Amazon has increased by 77% (from 13 to 23); while, in the same period of time, there is a four-fold increase (from 6 to 26) in the total number of hydroelectric plants currently in operation and construction within indigenous territories, while those planned increased by 60% (from 10 to 16).

Hydroelectric dams have cumulative and cascading effects on the downstream hydrological cycle, including massive losses of biodiversity and of the ecosystem functions on which society, and particularly indigenous peoples, depend.

The road infrastructure, in general, has affected 4.6 million km² of the Amazon, equivalent to 55% of its total surface.

The dimension of the impacts and cumulative damages of the extractive activities deployed and deepened in the territorial jurisdictions that make up the Amazon biome seriously affect the natural restoration capacity of the ecosystems of life, generating the disappearance of the peoples and putting the integrity at serious risk. of indigenous territories and the physical and cultural survival of the peoples, in particular there is alarm about the risk that this entails for indigenous peoples in isolation, initial contact and in a situation of vulnerability.

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10 Scientific Panel Summary Report for the Amazon, Part II, Chapter 14.
Noise pollution from extractivist activities affects the environmental quality of indigenous territories, having negative consequences for fauna and affecting different activities such as hunting and fishing of indigenous peoples.

It is important to highlight the health situation of women, children and older adults due to extractive activities, particularly those who live in indigenous communities located on the banks of rivers due to mercury poisoning and other chemicals.

The Report on the Situation of the human rights of the indigenous and tribal peoples of the Pan-Amazon presents and develops six fundamental standards to guarantee the full exercise of the rights of these groups: (1) the right to self-identification and recognition; (2) the right to self-determination, which includes the ability to freely define their own development; (3) the right to collective property, understanding the territory in its various dimensions: economic, cultural and spiritual; (4) State obligations to protect against extraction, exploitation, and development activities through regulations, prevention and mitigation policies, oversight mechanisms, community participation, and access to justice when rights violations occur\(^{11}\).

**REGULATIONS AND MECHANISMS**

- First of all, it is important to point out that the national Constitutions of the Amazon States have recognized the human right to live in a healthy environment as a basic and fundamental right, in the case of indigenous peoples this is a sine qua non condition to guarantee their survival\(^{12}\).

- Convention No. 169 of the International Labor Organization on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples that recognizes, among others, the right to the environment, subsistence, development and protection of natural resources. In its articles 4.1 and 7.4, it imposes on States the obligation to adopt measures to protect the indigenous environment. In this regard, it is the obligation of the governments to ensure that studies are carried out, in cooperation with the indigenous peoples, that make it possible to determine the social, spiritual, cultural and environmental impacts that development activities may generate in these peoples. Likewise, it recognizes the right to self-determination, safeguarding the power of these peoples to establish their development priorities. Article 15.1 recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples to the natural resources existing on their lands and imposes on States the obligation to especially protect these rights and guarantee indigenous participation in the use, administration and conservation of said resources.

- The United Nations Declaration on the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples (art 3) and autonomy or self-government in their internal and local affairs (art 4). Likewise, it establishes the consultation


with a view to prior, free and informed consent, before the approval of any project or measure that affects their lands or territories and other resources (article 32).

- The jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights it has raised the standards of enforceability of the rights of indigenous peoples through the development of jurisprudence that is important to highlight. Regarding indigenous communal ownership of lands and natural resources, the Court has ruled on conflicts generated by the States or by individuals with State support, as a result of the exploitation and affectation of natural resources, forests, water and minerals, among others, existing in the territories where indigenous and tribal peoples live, which belong to them by ancestral right. The property rights of indigenous and tribal peoples extend to the natural resources present in their territories, as a necessary consequence of the right to territorial property. The Inter-American Court has determined that the protection of indigenous property over natural resources is necessary to maintain their ways of life and customs; therefore, the protection also extends to cultural rights and imposes the obligation to guarantee indigenous activities related to the resources. natural resources such as fishing, hunting or gathering.

- In particular, Advisory Opinion OC-23/17 of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights has specified the scope and substantive content of the right to the environment. It is established that the standards required of the State for the application of the principle of prevention, in the face of activities potentially harmful to the environment, are: i) regulate; ii) supervise and supervise; iii) request and approve environmental impact studies; iv) establish contingency plans; and, v) mitigate in cases of occurrence of environmental damage. Due diligence means taking charge of the circumstance that environmental problems can affect towns, groups and people in a differentiated way in a condition of vulnerability.

- The Inter-American Court explains that indigenous peoples have the right to own their territory without any type of external interference from third parties. It specifies that the titling and demarcation must imply the peaceful use and enjoyment of the property, this means that the indigenous collective property right must be free from interference by the State and third parties, including bona fide third parties, even when they belong to groups vulnerable who depend on the land for their livelihood.

- In 2012, the OHCHR Office presented and published a document “Guidelines for the protection of indigenous peoples in isolation and in initial contact”, the result of consultations with the countries of the region and which validates the right to isolation.

- On June 4, 2016, the member states of the Organization of American States adopted the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is the most specific instrument in the region regarding indigenous peoples.

- The Andean Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Andean Community - CAN, through Decision No. 896, created the Andean Committee of Government Authorities on the Rights

13 Make a list of main sentences.
14 I/A Court HR, Case of the Mayagna (Sumo) Awas Tingni Community v. Nicaragua. Case of the Saramaka People v. Suriname, Case of the Yakye Axa Indigenous Community v. Paraguay, among others.
15 I/A Court HR, Case of indigenous communities members of the Lhaka Honhat Association v. Argentina.
of Indigenous Peoples as a body for coordinating public policies on indigenous peoples that allows improving the effectiveness in the construction of subregional strategies, programs and policies for the promotion and respect of their rights.

- On April 22, 2021, the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (“Escazú Agreement”) entered into force, which is the first regional treaty of Latin America and the Caribbean and the first in the world to contain specific provisions for the protection of human rights defenders in environmental matters.

- For their part, indigenous peoples have been creating cultural consultation and self-consultation protocols as mechanisms to guarantee autonomous decisions through their own rules and procedures on the measures that affect them.

PROPOSALS

The Summit of Presidents of the Amazon must adopt for the first time a strong and effective resolution to guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples based on the following proposals.

a) Amazon States must comply with current legislation, agreements and international obligations such as ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (1989), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement, 2018) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People who Work in Rural Areas (2018) and the favorable jurisprudence that Their advocacy efforts have resulted in the national ratification of this regulation, as well as in the achievement of legislation and constitutional rulings favorable to the exercise of their rights, the participation and exercise of the self-determination of the peoples.

b) The Amazon States must respect the forms of self-identification, self-organization and self-determination of indigenous peoples and nations, as subjects of law and populations that pre-existed the colony and the current States.

c) Finalize within a period of no more than two years and through expedited procedures the process of recognition, demarcation and titling of Indigenous Territories with a gender approach in those Amazonian countries that still have these legal processes pending, prioritizing this objective in financial agreements derived from this summit, be it with international cooperation or multilateral banking.

d) Prohibition, moratorium or redefinition of extractive activities and commercialization of the natural spaces that make up the territories and lands of the indigenous peoples and native peasants respectively, particularly in those territorial spaces of peoples in a situation of vulnerability, initial contact or voluntary isolation.

e) Guarantee, through timely and effective mechanisms, the conservation of Protected Areas, prohibiting any extractive activity and/or project that is incompatible with the zoning and limitations of established uses.

f) Recognize the consultation and self-consultation protocols carried out by the indigenous peoples of the Amazon as mechanisms of political participation through their own norms
and procedures, guaranteeing respect for their autonomous decisions, without the need for a single national rule, guaranteeing that women be an active part in decision making.

g) Guarantee the integral security (legal and physical) of the collective property of indigenous territories, taking all necessary measures to make the rights of indigenous peoples prevail over other actors (companies, mining cooperatives, intercultural cooperatives, cocaleros, others) and, especially, the protection and defense of defenders in the face of the growing violence of legal and illegal extractivism.

h) Establish protection mechanisms for women defenders of the territory who continue to be victims of discrimination and devaluation, due to the multiple expressions of systemic violence based on gender, origin and social class.

i) Promote a process of differentiated treatment with respect to the highly vulnerable indigenous peoples of the Amazon to guarantee their territorial rights; as well as the intangibility of the territories of the peoples in isolation and initial contact.

j) Guarantee indigenous autonomies and self-governments by establishing expedited pathways for their recognition that in no case should be greater than a period of 3 years.

k) Guarantee the intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples, combating biopiracy and assuming indigenous proposals on collective and transgenerational intellectual heritage.

l) Ratify and comply with the Escazú Agreement for the protection of human rights defenders in environmental matters. And guarantee a safe and conducive environment in which people, groups and organizations that promote and defend human rights in environmental matters can exercise their rights without restrictions.

m) Prioritize public policies with the allocation of human and financial resources to make prevention and adequate care sustainable for indigenous women in the Amazon region.

n) Strengthen, through public policies, programs and projects, designed in a participatory manner and with budget allocation, the economies that indigenous peoples develop in their territories and/or promote new activities in accordance with the vocation and potential of the Amazon.

o) Guarantee that there are defined spaces for the binding participation of organized civil society in the elaboration and implementation of policies, programs and projects, as well as for the exercise of oversight and supervision of these initiatives; ensuring specific spaces for women in the Amazon.

p) Guarantee the participation of traditional and indigenous peoples, and organized civil society, including women's organizations, in the council and in the management of environmental financing funds for the Amazon, at the national and regional levels.
Let's save the Amazon from mining and mercury

STATE OF SITUATION

According to the 2021 Amazon Assessment Report of the Scientific Panel for the Amazon\(^\text{16}\), mining is a significant source of environmental impacts in the Amazon, with 45,065 mining concessions in operation or awaiting approval, of which 21,536 overlap with protected areas and indigenous lands.

While the expansion of the agricultural frontier is the main source of deforestation in the Amazon, mining is the main driver of deforestation in French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname, and parts of Peru and Venezuela. In Guyana, mining led to the loss of 89,000 ha of forest between 1990 and 2019, an area 18 times greater than the loss to agricultural expansion in the same period. In Suriname, 71% of deforestation is attributed to mining. 20% of the area originally occupied by the Amazon cangas in Brazil (144 km\(^2\)) has been lost due to the extraction of iron ore. Between 2016 and 2020, more than 140,000 hectares of primary forest were lost in the Venezuelan Amazon. Deforestation in Venezuela was driven by illegal mining, agricultural expansion, and fires\(^\text{17}\).

It is estimated that there are 453 illegal mining sites in the Brazilian Amazon and more than 2,500 for the entire Amazon basin. Gold mining, which is largely illegal, has ceased to be largely artisanal and has become a semi-mechanized activity that uses expensive and large machinery, such as prospecting drills and hydraulic excavators. High concentrations of total mercury (Hg) and methylmercury (MeHg) have been documented in aquatic food webs since the 1980s. Mercury bioaccumulation causes concentrations to rise considerably in top predators such as large catfish, black caiman, otters and dolphins. Several studies report mercury concentrations in fish well above the acceptable limit defined by the World Health Organization. The consumption of fish by human communities in the Amazon causes some of the highest recorded mercury levels in the world in human hair, along with associated health problems. The Kayabi indigenous populations of the Teles Pires river, in the Brazilian Amazon, had 12.7 μg/g of mercury in their hair, while the Munduruku indigenous people of the Tapajós river, also in the Brazilian Amazon, had levels ranging from 1.4 and 23.9 μg/g. (Dórea et al. 2005; Basta et al. 2021). Similar studies were carried out in populations of the Caquetá river basin in the Colombian Amazon, with 79% of individuals with mercury levels in their hair greater than 10μg/g (Oliveiro-Verbel 2016). A similar situation has been verified in the indigenous peoples of northern La Paz, Bolivia (CPIAP 2022). The internationally recommended limit for mercury concentration in hair ranges from 1 to 2 μg/g (WHO 1990). In Venezuela,

MeHg reaches high levels in both maternal and fetal circulation, with the potential to cause irreversible damage to child development, including decreased intellectual and motor capacity. Hg can also affect the health of adults, since it affects the nervous, digestive, renal and cardiovascular systems. Central nervous system effects include depression and extreme irritability; hallucinations and memory loss; tremors affecting the hands, head, lips, and tongue; blindness, retinopathy and optic neuropathy; hearing loss; and a reduced sense of smell. Minamata disease was recently confirmed in Amazonian communities, as a result of exposure to high levels of MeHg, with symptoms including tremors, insomnia, anxiety,

\(^{16}\) [https://www.laamazoniaquequeremos.org/spa_publication/informe-de-evaluacion-de-amazonia-2021/](https://www.laamazoniaquequeremos.org/spa_publication/informe-de-evaluacion-de-amazonia-2021/)

\(^{17}\) [https://maaproject.org/2022/deforestacion-venezuela/](https://maaproject.org/2022/deforestacion-venezuela/)
Since the signing of the Minamata Convention, several countries have reduced the sale of mercury. Brazil, Peru and Colombia reported a sharp drop in imports. It was in this scenario that Bolivia emerged as the world's largest mercury importer, ignoring treaty objectives to reduce its use and taking advantage of loopholes in the treaty that allow continued imports and use of mercury in small mining operations. In 2020 Bolivia was the world's leading importer of mercury with a 24.6% global share and 165 imported tons dedicated mainly to illegal gold mining and smuggling to Peru, Brazil and Colombia.

Between 2017 and 2021, the import of mercury to Bolivia almost doubled from Mexico with the participation of Peruvian businessmen who registered their companies in La Paz. Between 2014 and 2022 Bolivia imported more than 1,100 tons of mercury, 55.5% was shipped from Mexico and the remaining 44.5% from Russia, India, Vietnam, Tajikistan and other countries. Of the total imports made by Bolivia since 2014, 70% correspond precisely to the years after the Minamata Convention came into force. It is estimated that approximately half of imported mercury has been sent to illegal mining operations in Peru and Brazil.

Legal and illegal mining activities are unleashing ethnocide and ecocide as can be seen from their severe impact on the indigenous Yanomami peoples in Brazil and the Madre de Dios river basin in Peru.

REGULATIONS AND MECHANISM

ACTO

- The Amazon Cooperation Treaty signed by 8 of the 9 Amazon countries in 1978 does not explicitly mention mining, but it does include it in its first article when it states as the objective of cooperation: “the preservation of the environment and the conservation and rational use of the natural resources of those territories”.
- In the declarations of the three meetings of presidents of the Amazon (1989, 1992 and 2009) there is not a single mention of mining. In the eleven meetings of the ACTO (Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization) foreign ministers, we only found three very brief mentions of mining (2000, 2005 and 2011). In the ACTO Amazon Cooperation Council, which is made up of high authorities from the 8 countries that comprise it, there is only one mention in the documents of its XVI meeting to manage financing for an "Illegal Mining Working Group" of which there is no There is history of its operation.
- The ACTO Strategic Agenda for the 2010-2018 period does not include mining as a topic or subtopic, and only mentions it once in the water resources subtopic: "Promote common

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20 The declaration of the VI Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (TCA) of the year 2000 states "their decision to promote, within the framework of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, initiatives aimed at solving problems, among others, illicit crops, drug trafficking, indiscriminate felling of forests, biopiracy and illegal mining". The IX Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Organization of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (OTCA) in 2005 decided to "adopt measures that contribute to control and mitigate illegal practices, such as forest fires, illegal mining activities, mainly gold..." And the XI Meeting of Foreign Ministers of 2011.
discussion spaces to establish control policies of mining activities that generate water pollution”.

MINAMATA

- With the exception of Venezuela, which only signed the Minamata Convention, all ACTO countries have ratified said international instrument on mercury that entered into force in 2017. The Minamata Convention establishes the obligation of the signatory States to reduce imports and use of mercury, as well as maintaining an adequate record of the traceability of this metal, its treatment, commercialization, final disposal, and identification of the places with the greatest impacts. However, countries like Bolivia, far from reducing the import of mercury, have substantially increased its use since 2017, and have not complied with their international obligation to present a National Action Plan to reduce the import and use of mercury. Every three years, the countries that declare they have small-scale artisanal mining must submit an evaluation of the progress and compliance with their National Action Plan.

DOG

- The Andean Community (CAN), which is a supranational body unlike ACTO, and of which four Amazonian countries are part, approved Decision 774 in 2012, which approves the "Andean Policy to Fight Illegal Mining" for:
  i. Comprehensive, cooperative, and coordinated confrontation with illegal mining and related activities, which threaten security, the economy, natural resources, the environment, and human health;
  ii. Optimize the control and surveillance of the import, export, transport, processing, commercialization and any other type of transaction, at the Andean level and with third countries, of minerals and their products from illegal mining, as well as machinery, equipment, inputs [such as mercury] and hydrocarbons that can be used in it; and,
  iii. Develop cooperation actions that contribute to mining formalization, encourage social and environmental responsibility, and promote the use of efficient methods and technologies for the rational use of natural resources and environmental sustainability...
- The Andean Policy to Fight Illegal Mining determines that member countries undertake cooperative actions to “1) Combat money laundering and related crimes from illegal mining; 2) Strengthen control mechanisms and traceability of machinery, hydrocarbons, equipment and inputs used in mining, as well as the final product thereof; 3) Plan and execute operations against illegal mining through coordinated actions in border areas; 4) Collaborate in the identification and persecution of those who participate in devices or structures organized outside the law to carry out illegal mining and related crimes; 5) Restore, remedy or rehabilitate transboundary ecosystems affected by illegal mining; 6) Implement programs, projects and actions to combat illegal mining and social economic development in the Border Integration Zones; 7) Exchange experiences on processes for the formalization or regularization of small-scale, artisanal or traditional mining and on the fight against illegal mining; and, 8) Other matters that may be decided...”. This decision authorizes the member countries to "seize and seize, immobilize, destroy, demolish, render useless and neutralize, the goods, machinery, equipment and inputs used in illegal mining, for which the Governments will regulate...".
- In 2014, the CAN created the Andean Ad-Hoc Committee on Illegal Mining (CAMI) through Decision 797, and in 2019 it adopted Decision 844 creating the “Andean Observatory in charge
of managing Official Information on Mercury”. Up to 2022, six CAMI meetings were held, and in 2022 the first Observatory report was published, covering the first semester of 2021. Ecuador has prohibited the use of mercury in mining since 2015 and in Colombia since 2018. Peru has regulations for the elaboration of a Mercury Management and/or Reduction Plan is not effective, and Bolivia does not have specific regulations for the control and reduction of mercury. According to the first and only report of the Observatory, only Colombia and Peru have made seizures of mercury for a total of 369 kg.

PACT OF LETICIA

- The Leticia Pact only mentions illegal mining in a subsidiary way in its fifth term: “Specify initiatives for restoration, rehabilitation and accelerated reforestation in areas degraded by forest fires and illegal activities, including the illegal extraction of minerals with a view to the impact mitigation, and recovery of species and functionality of ecosystems.

PROPOSALS

a) Towards an Amazon free of mining. Just as it is not possible to face the climate crisis without moving away from fossil fuels, it is not possible to save the Amazon and its peoples without a transition away from mining. Legal, illegal, large-scale and small-scale mining contribute to the point of no return in the Amazon, and therefore the preparation and implementation of a transition plan for an Amazon free of mining is urgent.

b) The transition plan towards an Amazon free of mining must include:

c) Prohibition of alluvial mining in the entire Amazon basin (recommendation of the Scientific Panel of the Amazon).

d) Prohibition and creation of control mechanisms against the expansion of all mining activities in protected areas and indigenous territories.

e) Definition and execution of actions for the reduction and elimination in five years of illegal mining.

f) Establishment of effective mechanisms for the control and traceability of machinery, hydrocarbons, equipment, mercury, and supplies used in mining (CAN 774).

g) Planning and execution of operations against illegal mining through coordinated actions in border areas (CAN 774).

h) Identification and persecution of those who participate in apparatuses or structures organized outside the law to carry out illegal mining and related crimes (CAN 774).

i) Implementation of programs, projects and actions to combat illegal mining and social economic development in the Border Integration Zones (CAN 774).

j) Closure of the markets for illegal products such as mercury and gold that are traded illegally (recommendation of the Amazon Scientific Panel).

k) Adoption and execution of measures to combat money laundering and related crimes from illegal mining (CAN 774).

l) Carrying out financial evaluations/audits of national and foreign individuals and companies that participate in illegal mining networks.

m) Restoration, remediation or rehabilitation of transboundary ecosystems affected by illegal mining (CAN 774).

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https://territorioslivres.org/
n) Comprehensive and mid-term environmental impact assessments of the legal activities of mining companies, by independent entities, to reinforce socio-environmental mitigation plans, and establish the terms of their continuity and future closure.

o) Execution of plans for the remediation of impacts on human health and the environment caused by mining.

p) Study and development of community economic alternatives as transition proposals to overcome the colonial narrative of mining as an essential activity.

q) Establish as a goal the progressive reduction of imports and use of mercury in gold mining until its total elimination by 2027, promoting mercury-free mining practices and promoting training and technology transfer processes that contribute to the transition towards Amazon free of mining and mercury.

r) Actions against illegal mining must be comprehensive in nature and include initiatives to improve health, education, housing, communication, the fight against human trafficking and smuggling, and the defense of human rights and rights. rights of nature. The development, promotion and promotion of community-based, agroforestry, eco-tourism, artisanal and other economic alternatives should be a central component of ACTO’s Strategic Agenda against mining.

s) Establish at the ACTO level a special window for the presentation of complaints by people, communities and social organizations in the Amazon against abuses and violations of human rights, the rights of nature and the rights of defenders committed for legal or illegal mining ventures, so that they may be investigated, prosecuted and sanctioned within the framework of the legal system of each country.

t) Promote an energy transition that does not come at the cost of expanding mining in the Amazon and generating new sacrifice zones in this biome.

u) Approve a Pan-Amazon Regional Comprehensive Plan for the protection of human rights against extractive, exploitation and development activities. Mineral exploitation in countries with weak institutions very often entails economic, political, social and institutionally fragile problems such as the Amazon.

v) Form the Amazon Mining Committee to collect, expand, strengthen and above all make effective the experience of the Andean Ad-Hoc Committee on Illegal Mining for the implementation of the Transition Plan towards an Amazon free of mining and compliance with the mandates contained in the preceding paragraphs. The Amazon Mining Committee will be made up of senior representatives of the state and indigenous peoples, civil society and academia from the 9 Amazonian countries, and will carry out semi-annual public accountability reports.
Water for life in the Amazon

STATE OF SITUATION

According to the Scientific Panel for the Amazon, the Amazon region is an important source of moisture for several regions of South America, such as the Andes, providing moisture and precipitation to glaciers, páramos and large cities, and also to the La Plata river basin. The recycling of precipitation and evapotranspiration is strongly correlated in the Amazon.

Different studies on the regulation of the temperature of the earth's surface indicate that the Amazon forests act as a gigantic air conditioner. This is mainly due to the ability of forests to transport large amounts of water vapor from the ground to the atmosphere through evapotranspiration. Forest roots pump wet season soil moisture into the air to maintain rainfall during the dry season. The transport of water vapor occurs in relatively narrow spaces in the atmosphere known as "aerial rivers" or "flying rivers".[22] The daytime temperature of the land surface in forested areas of southeastern Amazonia tends to be 5°C lower than in deforested areas during the dry season.

The aquatic biodiversity of the Amazon is relevant worldwide. So far 2,406 species of fish have been described. Amazon rivers and streams connect distant parts of the vast Amazon basin that are vital for fish migration and sediment flow. In the last four decades, and especially in the last two, many Amazonian aquatic ecosystems have become less connected and more polluted.

The aquatic systems of the Amazon are fragile and suffer the cumulative impact of deforestation, mining, pesticides, dams, urban pollution, mega-waterways, and others. The effects of these actions not only feedback, but have repercussions thousands of kilometers away.

To the extent that the impacts of deforestation and mining have been addressed in the respective proposal documents for the Summit of Presidents of the Amazon, we will briefly develop the other factors that affect the aquatic system of the Amazon.

Hydroelectric dams block fish migration and the associated transport of water, sediment, and nutrients. They also alter river flows and oxygen levels. Hydroelectric dams have a negative impact on fish communities, both upstream and downstream of reservoirs. Amazonian dams and their ineffective fish passages have already seriously disrupted the migration routes of many fish species, such as the Madeira River 'giant catfish'. On the Madeira River, sediment transport downstream of the Santo Antônio and Jirau dams was reduced by 20% compared to pre-dam amounts, which may have contributed to the sharp declines observed in fish catches offshore. below the dams.

Roads are also a major threat to aquatic systems in the Amazon because they are often built without adequate water passages, such as culverts or bridges, breaking up small tributaries and acting as dams on seasonal streams.

Likewise, the large waterways have serious repercussions on aquatic ecosystems, as a result of drastic interventions such as dredging, rock blasting, deviations from the natural course of the river, construction of port terminals, as well as incentives for the expansion of agribusiness and mining. On a large scale. In the Peruvian Amazon, the recently contracted 2,700 km Hidrovía Amazónica could significantly alter the morphology of river channels, affecting the diversity of fish and the productivity on which local economies depend.

The overexploitation of fish such as the giant pirarucú or paiche and the great tambaqui or gamitana generates a significant impact on the aquatic system of the Amazon. Added to this is the use of invasive species for agriculture, the cultivation of ornamental and exotic species, and recreational fishing that feed on native species and reduce their abundance, even affecting Ramsar sites in the Amazon.

Pesticides, herbicides, and other contaminants present in agrochemicals, as well as precursors used in drug trafficking affect fish species and the biodiversity of rivers and lagoons. The herbicide glyphosate and the pesticide malathion have been shown to cause metabolic and cellular damage in fish, and the pesticides have been detected in river dolphins and Amazonian turtles. Laboratory experiments with fish have shown that glyphosate and other herbicides cause liver and gill damage, as well as DNA breakage and an increased risk of cancer.

Another issue to highlight is pollution and oil spills, especially present in Ecuador and Peru. To this we must add the serious impact of urban wastewater and plastics that affect fish and aquatic invertebrates.

REGULATIONS AND MECHANISMS

- Within the framework of ACTO, the Amazon Basin Project is executed under three lines of action, the first to promote the integrated management of water resources (GIRH) creating a Permanent Mechanism for this purpose, the second to face climate variability and change and the third to address knowledge management. This initiative includes early warning systems in some basins, water quantity and quality monitoring networks, hydrogeological evaluations, and also proposes, in the case of Suriname, the creation of "Blue Forests for Blue Economy" carbon credit mechanisms and the promotion of "climate-smart agricultural practices" in Venezuela.
- The Andean Community has approved the "Andean Strategy for the Integrated Management of Water Resources (Decision 763 of 08/22/2011) which has seven major lines of action ranging from knowledge management, the strength of governance, the conservation and sustainable use of water resources, the response to the effects of climate change on water resources, up to supporting the integrated management of water resources. There is little evidence on the effective progress of this Andean Strategy.
- Ecuador and Bolivia have recognized the rights of nature/Mother Earth in their constitution and national legislation. In Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia, there are different judgments and initiatives for the recognition of rivers and lakes as subjects of rights, notably the judgments of the Supreme Court of Justice of Colombia that recognizes the Atrato River, its basin, and
Proposals as a entity subject to rights to protection, conservation, maintenance and restoration by the State and ethnic communities23, and one that recognizes the Colombian Amazon as an "entity", "subject of rights".

PROPOSALS

a) Promote the creation of protected aquatic areas to conserve aquatic biota and the health of rivers and lagoons in the Amazon.

b) Establish cooperation agreements to manage the sustainable and multidimensional use of transboundary aquatic systems in the Amazon.

c) Prohibit the construction of hydroelectric dams with an installed capacity of more than 10 MW (proposal of the Scientific Panel for the Amazon).

d) Promote coordination between states for the protection of Ramsar sites in the Amazon.

e) Promote renewable energy alternatives, especially small-scale solar for consumption by local populations.

f) Promote research in the hydrographic basins throughout the Amazon for the protection of the genetic diversity of the different species.

g) Adopt the measures proposed to avoid the point of no return in the Amazon and achieve zero deforestation before 2030 (see proposals on deforestation).

h) Develop a Transition Plan to exit legal and illegal mining and reduce the use of mercury until it is eliminated (see proposal on mining).

i) Prohibit the use of agrochemicals classified as toxic and dangerous (WHO Classification I and II) in agricultural activities.

j) Guarantee the effective application of the Free and Informed Prior Consultation in accordance with ILO Convention 169, international standards and the opinions of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, respecting the autonomous consultation protocols of the Amazonian peoples (see proposal on peoples of The Amazon).

k) Carry out comprehensive and cumulative strategic environmental impact assessment studies by independent entities for all works, activities and projects that may have an impact on the aquatic system of the Amazon.

l) Classify and incorporate the crime of ecocide into the laws of the Amazon countries to punish the perpetrators of this massive and high-impact crime against nature, including acts of devastation of rivers by hydroelectric dams, mining, and other predatory activities.

m) Declare the rivers, lagoons and the aquatic system of the Amazon as subjects of rights and guarantee their rights to exist, not to be contaminated, to flow, to preserve their vital and regeneration cycles and to the timely and effective restoration of their water life systems.

23 https://systemicalternatives.org/2022/03/29/reconocimiento-del-rio-ataro-como-sujeto-de-derechos/
Direct, transparent, participatory financing and not to commercialize the Amazon

In recent years, the Amazon has received great attention from different financing initiatives that involve governments, banks and companies. Amazonian indigenous peoples have been excluded from financing. Less than 1% of climate finance reaches indigenous peoples\textsuperscript{24}. While all these initiatives have as a discourse to contribute to the preservation of the Amazon through sustainable development; however, the region has reached a point of no return. Not all of them have been contributing in an effective and practical way to saving the Amazon and its peoples.

Some of these initiatives are: the IDB Amazon Initiative (IDB-IAMZ), the GCF Amazon Bioeconomy Fund (Green Climate Fund/Fondo Verde del Clima), created in 2021 and executed by the IDB in Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Brazil and that seeks to reduce the impacts of climate change in the Amazon biome. This program, which is part of the IDB-IAMZ, which seeks to raise $1,000 million with other donors (Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, etc.), has USD 279 million from the GCF and seeks to reach $600 million to promote private investment with the aim of reduce 6.2 million tCO\textsubscript{2}e per year over the 20 years of life foreseen for said private investments.

The Amazon Fund, which has been implemented in Brazil and managed by BNDES since 2008, has reached contributions of more than USD 800 million, mainly from Norway and Germany, and recent announcements from the United States (USD 500 million) and Great Britain (USD 100 millions). The Joint Declaration of Reduction of Emissions, for USD 300 million in Peru, with Norway, Germany, the United States, England.

There are 629 million hectares that are Priority Areas in the Amazon\textsuperscript{25}: 33% are primary ecosystems and 41% are systems with low degradation. The preservation of the region is a global responsibility. Recognizing the indigenous territories that survive in the region and designating protected or mixed areas requires billions. The mandate of the Global Biodiversity Framework is a historical milestone that is integrated for the first time in the texts of the Biodiversity Convention\textsuperscript{26}, to indigenous and traditional territories as a different category to preserve these key regions for life on the planet. The recognition of territories and the creation and maintenance of protected areas and the restoration of several key areas cannot fall solely on the budgets of the countries and economies of the Global South. All these actions are urgent to stop the regressive death or point of no return of the Amazon and achieve at least 80% protection by 2025. Ecosystems such as the Tibetan Plateau and the Western Antarctic depend on the Amazon\textsuperscript{27}.

These figures pale when we compare them with the financing received by large companies that cause deforestation on the planet. According to Forests & Finance, banks around the world have provided $267 billion worth of loans with companies at risk of destroying tropical forests in Brazil, Southeast Asia and Africa since the Paris Climate Agreement\textsuperscript{28}. In other words, the financing for

\textsuperscript{24} Rainforest Foundation Norway-RFN-2021
\textsuperscript{25} Quintanilla, Marlene, Alicia Guzman Leon, Carmen Josse. 2022. The Amazon against the clock: A Regional Assessment on Where and How to protect 80\% by 2025. https://amazonia80x2025.earth/
\textsuperscript{28} https://forestsandfinance.org/news/report-global-bank-policies-dangerously-inadequate/
companies that deforest the Amazon is dozens of times greater than the funds that are intended to be used to stop deforestation.

a) In this context, the main appeal of the Summit of Presidents of the Amazon should be to the governments and banks of the European Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, China and their own countries to stop financing agricultural companies, mining, oil, energy, transportation and mega-infrastructure builders that are destroying the Amazon. Financing for the Amazon must begin by reducing financing or disinvesting in activities and companies that cause the devastation of the Amazon. No financing for the devastation of the Amazon should be tolerated. Banks must have robust control systems that guarantee that they will not finance illegal activities.

b) In Ecuador alone, European banks have provided $10 billion in financing for the trade of more than 155 million barrels of oil from the Ecuadorean region between 2009 and 2019. Strategies from indigenous peoples and civil society stopped these flows and they called on international banks to apply a geographical exclusion for the Amazon in its entirety. Two banks have advanced in this exclusion (ING and BNP Paribas). This exclusion has already been implemented in other regions such as the Arctic. We demand a geographic exclusion that stops investments for extractivism in the Amazon.

c) In relation to financing to save the Amazon, it is essential to guarantee mechanisms so that these billions of dollars are not lost in the administrative bureaucracy, in consultancies, in planning that remains only on paper. The funding roadmap must essentially start from the bottom up. From indigenous territories and communities, Afro-descendants, original peasants and local actors who know the reality and are key to any initiative that seeks to effectively stop the destruction of the Amazon. The financing mechanisms must start from the territorial management plans of the indigenous peoples and original peasants and not from the desks.

d) Indigenous and Amazonian peoples' participation should not be decorative, nor limited to the presence of an indigenous representative on the boards of financing funds. Mechanisms for social participation in financing funds must be at all levels and encourage the involvement of the broadest sectors, in each country and each public investment program.

e) Experiences of misuse, waste and corruption around the financing of socio-environmental projects make it necessary to create mechanisms of transparency, control and social surveillance for financing for the Amazon.

f) Funding cannot be channeled primarily through the private sector, which always puts profit maximization before preserving the environment. Initiatives such as the Fund for the Amazon of the Green Climate Fund administered by the IDB and the IDB’s Amazon Initiative as a whole should be redirected, above all, to financing in an expeditious and non-bureaucratic manner the initiatives of indigenous peoples, local organizations and the municipalities.

g) The concept of bioeconomy is a broad term that encompasses a diversity of competing approaches ranging from greenwashing of corporations, the commodification of nature, even practices of harmony with nature of indigenous peoples, and economic ventures under certain limits that seek to preserve the vital cycles of nature. Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen (1906-1994), a pioneer in the formulation of bioeconomy, pointed out that the economy was a subsystem of ecology and that it did not have an existence outside of nature. Consequently, the economy had to be subordinated to the geophysical limits of the Earth and could never pretend to grow without limits on a finite planet. Distorting this approach, a concept of bioeconomy has been developed that falls within the framework of
green capitalism, and that proposes applying the rules of capital to nature, valuing it in monetary terms to make it attractive to investors and markets. This concept of bioeconomy has been used by the IDB to promote a fund for private investors in order to save the Amazon.

h) It is essential that States initiate a public debate on the various bioeconomies in progress, and not maintain the biases and privileges of the bioeconomy of commodities. The Amazonian peoples develop their own economies, of Good Living / Full Life, which dispute the meaning of public policies on the bioeconomy of commodities, towards the prioritization of indigenous, Afro-descendant and traditional community holistic bioeconomies.

**CLIMATE DEBT**

The proposal to exchange climate action in the Amazon for payment of external debt is an approach that is based on the experience of the nineties and beginning of the century of the relief initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (IADDM) that were applied in countries like Bolivia. These initiatives halved Bolivia's external debt for the year 2006 on the condition that the resources for the payment of the external debt service will be allocated to social programs for the reduction of poverty.

Different studies agree that the change from debt to social action was important for Bolivia's public finances, but not relevant for poverty reduction because a large part of said resources were not allocated for said purpose and/or ended up being consumed in the framework of the state bureaucracy.

i. Reversing the point of no return requires systemic measures. Debt is the other side of the extractivism coin. Amazonian countries grant concessions of mineral, oil, agricultural and other resources to acquire or pay debt. A mechanism is required to break these perverse financial cycles. A conditional cancellation of the debt that serves as an umbrella for the region and that takes into account the innumerable systemic functions that the Amazon provides to the planet should be the basis for a regional debt negotiation.

ii. With this experience, any debt swap for climate action for the Amazon should be the product of a participatory process that directs financing to relevant activities to preserve the Amazon and its peoples, and that has control and transparency mechanisms that guarantee compliance with the goals that are pursued, mainly from the territorial surveillance of the Amazonian peoples.

iii. The debt-for-weather swap should not serve to legitimize illegitimate external debts contracted due to external impositions and unconsulted decisions linked, in many cases, to serious acts of corruption.

iv. Debt-for-climate swaps should not include speculative mechanisms and the commodification of nature, such as payment with carbon credits from the Amazon, as the IMF considers\(^\text{29}\).

\(^{29}\) [https://www.imf.org/es/Blogs/Articles/2022/12/14/swapping-debt-for-climate-or-nature-pledges-can-help-fund-resilience](https://www.imf.org/es/Blogs/Articles/2022/12/14/swapping-debt-for-climate-or-nature-pledges-can-help-fund-resilience)
CARBON MARKETS

Carbon markets are commercial spaces in which countries and companies can sell and buy greenhouse gas emission reduction certificates. In the carbon markets, on one side are the buyers who have certain goals or obligations to reduce their emissions, and on the other side are the sellers of carbon certificates that carry out actions to reduce emissions. Through the carbon markets, the buyers of these bonds supposedly offset the emissions that they had to reduce in their company or country. They are based on the serious error that fossil carbon is the same or “compensable” for biotic carbon. In other words, this compensation mechanism (‘offsets’ in English) allows polluting companies and countries to buy permits to continue polluting.

Emission reduction certificates are imaginary goods that are created from what is expected to happen elsewhere and are therefore speculative in nature. For example, in the Clean Development Mechanism, which is one of the carbon markets created under the Kyoto protocol, carbon certificates were mainly granted to industries that should never have been built to eliminate hydrofluorocarbons and nitrous oxide, as in the case of mega-hydroelectric plants in the Amazon approved to receive carbon credits, such as UHE Jirau on the Madeira River, a joint venture of the French multinational Engie (ex-GDF Suez) with Eletrobras. These initiatives, among other negative aspects, ignore the significant methane emissions from these projects, the impacts on biodiversity in freshwater ecosystems,

The Clean Development Mechanism included the granting of emission reduction certificates for afforestation and reforestation projects, and later the mechanism for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, better known as REDD and REDD+, was approved. This mechanism proposes the granting and trading of carbon credits for the reduction of future emissions avoided due to deforestation. While afforestation and reforestation imply the planting of new trees to store carbon, with all the complications that this implies due to the development, often of invasive monocultures, the REDD mechanism proposes granting carbon credits for the deforestation that it intends to avoid by favoring those who They deforest more because they start from a higher deforestation baseline.

Most of the governments of the Amazon, with the exception of Bolivia, have signed up to the REDD mechanism. This mechanism reduces the forests and the jungle -which are essential for the water cycle, biodiversity, the protection of ecosystems, food sovereignty and the provision of natural medicines for the peoples who inhabit it- to only one of their functions which is carbon capture and storage. This "environmental service" of the forests of being a carbon sink is valued in monetary terms, its price fluctuating according to supply and demand.

Like the other emission reduction certificates, the carbon bonds of REDD projects contribute to: a) failure to comply with the effective emission reduction commitments of developed countries and polluting companies, b) intermediaries and financial institutions appropriate much of the value of carbon credits reaching very little to the countries, indigenous populations and forests, c) a speculative financial bubble is generated from the purchase and resale of said certificates, that feeds the "carbon piracy" (Carbon Cowboys) that expands with scams and conflicts in all Amazonian countries d) new rights are established on the carbon capture capacity of forests that generate conflicts within indigenous populations and with the State and the institutions that manage REDD projects.
1) Financing to save the forests and the Amazon must be comprehensive, direct, transparent, take into account local realities and the participation of the people, and not generate carbon credits or emission reduction certificates that only serve to prevent others from complying with their obligations. Emission reduction commitments as established by the REDD+ mechanism. The Amazon is not a commodity for the development of carbon markets. Far from a commercial approach to save the Amazon, it is necessary to create financing mechanisms that effectively influence the structural causes that are behind the devastation of the Amazon and that guarantee the rights of the peoples who inhabit it and of nature.

2) Establish carbon tax mechanisms to allocate said resources to the Amazon.

3) Faced with the position assumed by the majority of the governments of the Amazon, indigenous peoples have developed their structural criticisms of conventional REDD+, and raised a proposal for "Amazonian Indigenous REDD+" to try to reformulate and condition REDD+, by not selling carbon credits, the priority of life and territorial security plans to which REDD+ must be adapted, and the control and sanction of carbon piracy. Said proposal of the "REDD+ Indigenous Amazonian" has been included in Peru (with 4 legal norms), Colombia, Ecuador and must be considered by the Amazonian States.
In defense of the bodies and territories of Andean-Amazonian women in their diversity

Today we are in a new historical moment for the Amazon. The voice and participation of indigenous women, quilombolas, peasants, blacks, feminists and social organizations and civil society as a whole must be heard by the leaders of the Pan-Amazon region. The presidents of Colombia and Brazil have opened this space to place our political proposals to eradicate the conditions that sustain and reproduce the violence that is exercised by states and companies against the Amazonian peoples and the bodies of women, of which the most impacted are indigenous and black women.

During the last 8 years, in our wide diversity in the Pan-Amazon, we have managed to jointly build in Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, a process of organization, struggle and resistance through the implementation of the Court of women in defense of their bodies and territories and of our Action Initiative that collectively shapes this route that we support in a context of fundamentalist and militarist offensive in the territories that aggravates the violation of our rights.

As part of this walk we want to place our voices at the Summit of Presidents. We want to reaffirm the political strength of women and claim respect for their voice in the construction of proposals, initiatives, commitments and policies of the States to stop the processes of violation of rights, and advance in the defense and guarantee of the same in the Andean-Amazonian territories. For this we have called ourselves and we reaffirm that patriarchal violence occupies a central place in the lives of the great diversity of women, especially indigenous women, whose territories are increasingly threatened and occupied, being deprived of their livelihoods, persecuted and killed for defending them.

The judgments of the Courts that we have promoted have verified the violence that women face in the territories and the ignorance of their leadership as defenders, as well as the criminalization of their bodies. And they have also recognized them as political subjects in the Pan-Amazonian and Latin American context.

We recognize ourselves as part of a process that is committed to continuing to expand and strengthen our ties and alliances to face the conflict between capital and life. We affirm our steps towards the construction of a democracy from spirituality that overcomes the dualities that oppress us, where there is no patriarchy or oppressive system of our bodies and lives, territory and nature.

Indigenous, peasant, black, popular, water and city women, trans and lesbian women, are a force of political expression in defense of life, biodiversity, seeds, knowledge, reforesters that protect life in the Panamazonia. The companies and economic forces that expropriate the territories impose the violation and the governments have a great responsibility for their action, allowing the arrival, exploitation and impunity against the violence that affects women due to the action of extractivism in the territories. These governments are also, themselves, in many territories, agents of these violations.

To overcome this reality, we want to present our proposals and demands to the presidents of the Amazon countries so that they act, adopt institutionalized measures that do not change when the governments of the region change; making the right to a dignified life of indigenous women a reality; respecting their culture and ancestral identity; assuming the commitment to eradicate
violence against the bodies of women, girls, cultures and worldviews; guaranteeing their political and citizen rights; stopping violence and threats against women leaders; establishing firm and effective security and sanction measures against the groups and forces that promote violence against women who fight in defense of their territories, biodiversity and their ways of life. In addition, we demand the firm commitment of the Presidents to stop the extractivist offensive that promotes the dispossession and displacement of land in the Amazon basin. This commitment requires that in all processes of dialogue and construction of commitments the presence and word of women’s organizations be guaranteed in the face of the Summit of Presidents of the Amazon.

We, the Andean-Amazonian women, reaffirm ourselves in demanding the recognition of our rights to live a life free of violence, to the enjoyment and access to the territory, to comprehensive health, sexual and reproductive health, to a healthy environment, to intercultural education, to the defense of natural resources, to the enjoyment of our territories.

We call to see the connections between the different points of the agenda for the Pan-Amazon region. We reaffirm the need for national consultations prior to the presidents’ event, because they are an opportunity to present women’s initiatives. Likewise, we will hold a parallel event to the Summit where women have their own voice with the right to be part of the political decisions about our bodies and territories.

PROPOSALS

We present to the presidents of the Amazon the following proposals and demands:

a) Guarantee the right to a dignified life of indigenous women, respecting their culture and ancestral identity.
b) Sanction and eradicate all violence against the bodies of women, girls, cultures and worldviews.
c) Guarantee political and citizen rights and the protection of women’s lives and consolidate security measures for women leaders who are threatened
d) Guarantee a gender approach in the distribution and titling of land.
e) Punish the violence exerted against the bodies and cultures of women and those responsible for the displacement and dispossession of lands in the Amazon basin.
f) Recognize the conditions of vulnerability of Amazonian communities, with emphasis on the eradication of discrimination that is exercised in public establishments towards women.
g) Guarantee that in the regional cooperation structure to be agreed upon by the Summit of Presidents for the Amazon, such as ACTO and the Leticia Pact, there are defined spaces for the binding participation of organized civil society in the development and implementation of policies, programs and projects, as well as for the exercise of oversight and supervision of these initiatives, ensuring specific participation spaces for the women of the Amazon.
h) Guarantee the participation of traditional and indigenous peoples and organized civil society, including women’s organizations, in the management mechanisms of financing funds for the Amazon, at the national and regional levels.
i) Ensure that in all projects for the Amazon, Free, Prior and Informed Consultation protocols are established and carried out, in accordance with Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization, guaranteeing that women are an active part in decision-making.
j) Promote regional integration policies of a popular nature, respecting and promoting the self-determination of the Amazonian peoples;
k) Urge that the proposals and actions of the Charter of Belém (prepared at the X Pan-Amazonian Social Forum) be considered in the planning of the national and subnational governments of the Amazon.