

AMAZON WATCH - 2010 PRIORITIES



Forcing Occidental Petroleum to Clean Up Peru

From 1971–2000, Occidental Petroleum's (Oxy) oil operations contaminated one million acres of the Achuar indigenous people's territory in Northern Peru. Oxy transferred the concession to the Argentine company Pluspetrol in 2000, which continued to use the same poor practices and technology. As a result, over nine billion barrels of highly toxic wastewater and hundreds of oil spills polluted local streams and waterways causing cancer and other health problems. Since 2005, Amazon Watch has waged a campaign urging Oxy to fund a full environmental remediation and compensate affected communities. In 2007, we joined the Achuar in filing a lawsuit against Oxy in U.S. District Court. We are now pursuing the lawsuit in the U.S. while exploring the options for legal action in Peru.



Chevron: Clean Up Ecuador Campaign

During decades of drilling, Chevron (then Texaco) left 17 million gallons of crude oil spills, 917 unlined crude pits, and deliberately dumped 18 billion gallons of toxic waste water. Local people have since suffered a wave of birth defects, illness, cancers, and death. Chevron is currently facing a \$27 billion judgment in court on behalf of the 30,000 Ecuadorians from the area. The oil giant has managed to stall this historic legal process for over 16 years. Amazon Watch is running an awareness-raising campaign alongside the local communities in Ecuador, as well as Rainforest Action Network, Global Exchange, Avaaz.org and CREDO. This week the campaign delivered a petition with over 325,000 signatures to Chevron demanding a clean-up and compensation for the affected communities. A ruling in the lawsuit is expected this year.



Stopping the Belo Monte Dam, Brazil

In February, the Brazilian government approved the Belo Monte hydroelectric dam project in spite of the warnings and condemnation of local and international civil society. The dam, which would be the world's third largest, will divert the flow of the Amazon tributary Xingu River, an area of enormous biodiversity and home to over 14,000 Indigenous peoples, including the Kayapo who have vowed to stop the project. For people living beside the river, the dam will bring an end to their way of life. Yet, Belo Monte will generate no energy during the 3-5 dry months of the year making it one of the most inefficient dams in the world. Amazon Watch is working in solidarity with the people of the Xingu River and with dozens of NGOs worldwide to stop the project, next week reaching out to the Brazilian President.



Climate Change and the Amazon

As the world's largest rainforest, the Amazon plays a major role in the planet's climate stability. Amazon Watch is working to ensure that indigenous stewardship of tropical rainforests remains at the center of emerging climate solutions by advancing indigenous rights in proposed mitigation measures such as REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation). In 2010, we are organizing indigenous delegations to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, indigenous summits on climate change in Bolivia, Brazil and Ecuador, and UN COP 16 in Cancun, Mexico. We will also organize training workshops with indigenous organizations to strengthen their capacity to influence the international policy process and pilot REDD projects already underway in the Amazon. This initiative supports indigenous forest stewardship as a strategy to protect the well-being of the planet.



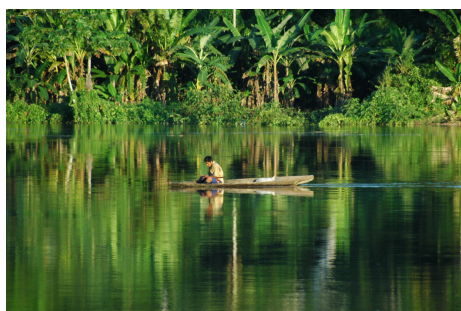
Founded in 1996, Amazon Watch works to protect the rainforest and advance the rights of indigenous peoples in the Amazon Basin. We partner with indigenous and environmental organizations in campaigns for human rights, corporate accountability and the preservation of the Amazon's ecological systems.

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Greening the Brazilian National Development Bank

BNDES is a central player in financing harmful "development" projects in Latin America, currently loaning more to the region than the World Bank and IDB combined. It is the main proponent of IIRSA, a development blueprint of over 500 infrastructure projects that threatens to industrialize the Amazon. Researchers warn that the current pace of development could result 30-50% of the Amazon lost or severely degraded by the 2020. Amazon Watch is strengthening civil society campaigns against BNDES-funded projects (such as the Madeira Dam Complex, Manta-Manaus transportation corridor and the Belo Monte Dam) that threaten to destroy large swathes of territory in the heart of the Amazon rainforest. We are working to broaden regional and international coalitions, document project impacts, garner media attention and ultimately challenge project financing.



Supporting the Achuar in Stopping Talisman Energy Inc., Peru

In 2004, Talisman entered Northern Peru, and now holds exploration interest in 4.5 million net acres of pristine and road-less rainforest. Many of the communities and federations are steadfastly opposed to new oil activities. While Talisman has made a public commitment to not enter Achuar territory where they do not have community consent, the company is using flawed protocol to determine this consent and is gradually attempting to establish oil-drilling operations there. Amazon Watch has catalyzed a coalition of socially responsible investors to confront the company. This resulted in Talisman being forced to commission an independent report assessing whether the company was in fact properly respecting the rights of indigenous peoples. The report will be released in spring 2010. We will bring the Achuar to confront the company at its next annual stockholders meeting in Calgary.



Defending the U'wa's Sacred Lands, Colombia

The U'wa people of Colombia are threatened by Ecopetrol, the Colombian state-owned company. Ecopetrol took over after the U'wa and supporters, including Amazon Watch, forced U.S.-based Occidental Petroleum to abandon the project in 2002. Since then, Ecopetrol has been carrying out exploratory drilling from the Gibraltar Platform and has been seeking regulatory approval to explore within the boundaries of the U'wa Reservation. Amazon Watch continues to wage an international campaign and support a domestic campaign in Colombia pressuring Ecopetrol and the Colombian government to cancel the oil project on U'wa lands. Given that Ecopetrol is currently in the process of partial privatization, Amazon Watch has worked to alert the international financial community to the human and environmental costs of its plans for U'wa territory.



Greening the Inter-American Development Bank

The IDB is a significant force as the ideological promoter and architect of IIRSA with current annual lending of some \$10 billion. This year, the IDB is seeking re-capitalization of \$50-\$180 billion, which would more than double its size. This request is troubling in light of the Bank's 50-year legacy of both increased socio-economic inequality and environmental devastation and its tendency to invest in projects that fuel carbon emissions. The IDB's largest shareholder is the U.S. Government, which controls a 30% interest in the Bank. There is a major opportunity to engage U.S. government officials, including Congress and the U.S. Treasury in order to seek reform of the institution. Reforms include a more comprehensive climate change strategy that phases out fossil fuel lending, reduces deforestation and protects indigenous rights, among others.



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