



Indigenous Leaders call for global support to stop new oil drilling and mining in the heart of the Amazon at COP 25

Madrid, Spain: Indigenous leaders representing 20 nationalities from Ecuador and Peru called for global support to stop oil drilling and mining in the Amazon Sacred Headwaters region - the most biodiverse terrestrial ecosystem on the planet. A new report released today "The Amazon Headwaters: Territories for life Under Threat", demonstrates that more than a regional issue, this is a global crisis that endangers the world's 1.5 C goal.

"Enough is enough. For decades we have made it clear that we don't want drilling and mining in our territories" said Marlon Vargas, President of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE). "Now western science shows that it is not just fossil fuel emissions, but also the forest destruction that comes with it. With less than a decade to stop climate change, we need to draw a line and decide what is the price we are willing to pay for some barrels of oil".

The Sacred Headwaters region, which encompasses the watersheds and forests at the source of the Amazon river is considered globally significant due to its biological and cultural diversity. The region spans 30 million hectares in Ecuador and Peru - an area the size of Italy - and is home to over 20 indigenous nationalities, some of them uncontacted. Leaving the region's estimated 5 billion barrels of unexplored oil reserves in the ground is equivalent to avoiding over 2 billion metric tons of CO₂. Deforestation promoted by the advance of industrial development could lead to the additional emission of 4 billion tons of carbon.

"It is absurd that all these countries come to talk about stopping climate change while at the same time forcing new oil drilling in our territories, in the heart of the Amazon rainforest" said Wrays Perez, President of the Wampis Nation of Peru.





A new research report released today shows that there are 27 oil blocks that threaten this region and that, companies from Chile, the original host of COP25 and China, the host of next year's Conference on Biodiversity, threaten the future of the Amazon. *"Our investigation shows that a massive portion of the existing and expanded crude oil production is being used to pay off billions in loans to China - a country with a stated ambition to advance an ecological civilization, and that over 50% of the crude oil from the Western Amazon goes to California's refineries, a state that prides itself as a climate leader,"* said Kevin Koenig, Climate and Energy Director from Amazon Watch

Moved by the threat posed by proposed oil drilling and mining to their lands, the regional Amazonian indigenous confederations of Ecuador --CONFENIAE-- and Peru --AIDSESP-- have joined together in an initiative to permanently protect their lands and the invaluable ecological functions they provide to the world. *"We have been protecting our forests. We have kept many oil companies away. We are asking for a model of development aligned with climate science that respects our rights and allows our forests to continue to flourish"* said Sandra Tukup, director of territories leader for the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE).

Later, Belén Paéz Executive Director of the Pachamama Alliance explained, *"under the direction of Indigenous leaders we have created an International Commission of experts to support the development of a Green New Deal for the Amazon of Ecuador and Peru locally"*.

"The world needs to understand that the Amazon goes beyond Brazil, and that us -indigenous from Peru and Ecuador- can work hand in hand with governments and philanthropists in the creation of a new economic model for the Amazon Forest." Lizardo Cauper President of the Inter-ethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Forests (AIDSESP)





The Amazon Sacred Headwaters Initiative is led by Amazonian indigenous federations CONFENIAE (Ecuador) and AIDSESP (Peru) in partnership with Pachamama Alliance, Amazon Watch, Fundación Pachamama, and Stand.earth.

www.sacredheadwaters.org (english) | www.cuencasagradas.org (español)

Livestream: 2:30pm – 3:00pm CET, December 9, 2019

<https://unfccc-cop25.streamworld.de/embed/amazon-watch-and-standearth-climatehuman-rights-im>

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Read full report [here](https://sacredheadwaters.org/report/) - <https://sacredheadwaters.org/report/>

