

WORLD RAINFOREST MOVEMENT



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OUR VIEWPOINT



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WOMEN RESISTANCE:
DEFENDING TERRITORIES AND LIFE



The resistance struggle of indigenous women in defence of life

Throughout history, indigenous women have been committed to the struggles of their peoples and communities, although often their contribution has been invisible in the dominant official version of history. Indigenous Mapuche women are renowned for their bravery in battle against the Spanish colonizers. In Chile today, peasant and indigenous women continue fighting different problems, such as the serious drought that is affecting springs and wetlands, or the disappearance of medicinal plants. Most of these situations have been caused by forestry companies and their industrial plantations of eucalyptus and pine trees.



Trading communal rights in Gabon: The 'Sustainable Development' Law

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Josefina and the Water Springs against Pine Plantations in Ecuador's Páramos

Twenty years ago, a Dutch company paid communities to establish pine tree plantations in the high mountains of Ecuador. The aim was for the trees to absorb carbon dioxide to "offset" the emissions generated by a thermoelectric plant built in The Netherlands. In 2001, the community of Mojandita de Avelino Ávila signed an agreement with Ecuadorian company Profafor, a subsidiary of the Dutch consortium FACE. The project changed the use of the lands formerly used for livestock grazing and agriculture, while destroying important water sources and sacred sites.



Peru: Women defend mountain lagoons and promote "Living Well"

Popular resistance to the Conga Mine mega-project in the Andean region of Cajamarca, Peru has been going on for more than three years. The present government's policy of criminalizing and persecuting

community leaders, both women and men, has not let up; neither has violence by the company against local people who refuse to give up their lands, as shown by the emblematic case of Maxima Acuña and her family. Self-organized peasant rondas or patrols to guard the lagoons started in 2012. One of the organizations that brings together and organizes the work of the women guardians is the “Central Committee of Women’s Patrols of Bambamarca”. The participants became known as “the guardians of the lagoons,” a movement that is a source of hope.



African Amazons fight destruction of forests

In recent decades, the sustainable management of natural resources and the conservation of biological diversity have become a major concern at all levels. On the African continent, threats to forests are rapidly increasing with the penetration and expansion of multinational corporations that benefit from the complicity of governments. But facing these threats are the determination and commitment of grassroots communities, and especially women. Like the Amazon warrior women of King Behanzin (in the 19th century), more and more of them are rising up, creating a powerful barrier against the destruction of ecosystems, and particularly forests.



Safeguarding Investment: Safeguards for REDD+, women and indigenous peoples

The meaning of the term “safeguards” depends on who uses it and in what context. It may imply positive action in terms of human rights or the environment, or it may simply be a rhetorical flourish aimed at preventing losses of investments and profits. Nowadays there is much talk around the world about safeguards for the implementation of REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) projects, conservation, sustainable forest management and increasing forest carbon stocks.

PEOPLES IN ACTION



International Women’s Day: Until we are all free!



Women’s Struggle: for Food Sovereignty: against violence and agribusiness!



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[Máxima's story: a peasant woman confronts a powerful mining company in Peru](#)



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[Voices from the Second Congress of the National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women of Chile \(ANAMURI\)](#)



[Struggles for territory and Living Well in Colombia: Resistance by Afro-Colombian women](#)



[Radio Mundo Real video: "Financialization of Nature"](#)

OUR VIEWPOINT



Learning from India's Chipko movement: fighting for feminism and for the environment

March 8 is not just a day to celebrate and give visibility to women's struggles, it is also a day to remember and appreciate the valuable inspiration they provide for every other struggle today. One example is the Chipko women's movement in India, and the struggle they have led for nearly 40 years to protect forests and resist tree monocultures in the Himalayan region, in the provinces of Garhwal and Kumaon. The brave struggle of these Indian women is still continuing.

The Chipko movement was inspired by a struggle that took place in India over 300 years ago and was led by a woman. In those days, members of the Bishnoi community in Rajasthan sacrificed their lives trying to save sacred khejri trees by hugging the tree trunks. In the 1970s the Chipko movement, a grassroots movement made up mainly of women, carried out similar resistance actions, embracing trees to prevent their felling by groups of loggers. The movement used (among other things) a poem from that historic time that says: "Embrace our trees, save them from being felled. The property of our hills, save it from being looted." The first action of the Chipko movement took place in 1973, when local people marched into Mandal Forest beating drums to save 300 ash trees that were about to be felled by a timber company. When the chainsaw operators saw that the community was well-organized and determined to hug the trees, they backed off and did not cut down the trees. Many other victories followed.

This is an admirable example of struggle; without wishing to mythologize it, it contains lessons worth learning and strong, valuable inspiration to remember and share. For instance, prior to taking decisive action, the women examined and clearly identified the causes of deforestation on their lands: the goal of unstoppable deforestation and monoculture pine plantations is, above all, profit. They analyzed how these destructive activities caused floods and soil erosion, directly affecting traditional economic activities like agriculture and livestock herding. In the case of the Garhwal region, they became aware that the disappearance of native trees, especially banj trees, contributed decisively to the deterioration of the region's ecology. Replacing the banj with pine monocultures further jeopardized the environmental stability of the region.

Ecological imbalance was affecting women, above all, since they carry out 98 percent of agricultural and herding activities, something that is very common throughout the developing world. In a context where

sawmills and the exploitation of forests were increasing, the Chipko movement realized that forest conservation was essential for the continuation of the economic activities that were their livelihood. As one of the women leaders said: "Today I see clearly that installing sawmills in the mountains is a way of supporting the project to destroy Mother Earth. Sawmills have an insatiable appetite for trees and will raze the forests to satisfy it." Forty years later, it is evident that timber extraction by logging companies, even though it is called "sustainable forest management" and is highly profitable, continues to destroy the world's last regions of forest with valuable hardwood trees. These companies' "appetites" can never be satisfied.

The movement illustrates a conflict between two opposing sides which is entirely contemporary: on the one hand, the ethic defended by the women of the Chipko movement, especially that of sharing, producing and nurturing life. When they talk about nature, they speak of "Mother Earth," which expresses the feeling of belonging to the land, the forests and nature and the desire to care, not destroy. On the other hand is the desire for dominion over and exploitation of nature, reflecting the Western worldview which separates human beings from nature. This side advocates the "development" created by the money-as-capital economy, which has also created extreme poverty and addictions like alcoholism. It should be recalled that before women in the Chipko movement began to fight for the forests, they had begun the fight against alcohol which affected the life and health of their husbands, especially those who were actively engaged in logging activities, and so also affected the women and their families.

Finally, the movement showed the importance of feminism as a component in the struggle to conserve the forests and protect the environment. This was very important because at the same time the women were defending the trees, they were confronting their own husbands who worked for the logging companies and were felling the trees. The story is told that once a group of women of the Chipko movement confronted their own husbands because they were going to participate in deforestation. One of the men said, "You foolish women, how can you prevent tree felling by those who know the value of the forest? Do you know what forests hold? They produce profit and resin and timber." The women sang back in chorus: "What do the forests hold? Soil, water, and pure air. Soil, water, and pure air, sustain the Earth and all she holds."

The Chipko Movement shows that women's liberation is not only about liberation from the oppression of the patriarchal societies that dominate the world, but also about the liberation of all men and women "colonized" by the economic logic of domination and the unlimited and irrational exploitation of nature by capital.

Source: Vandana Shiva. *Staying Alive: Women, ecology and survival in India*. Kali for Women, 1988.
<http://gyanpedia.in/Portals/0/Toys%20from%20Trash/Resources/books/stayingalive.pdf>

WOMEN RESISTANCE: DEFENDING TERRITORIES AND LIFE



The resistance struggle of indigenous women in defence of life

Throughout history, indigenous women have been committed to the struggles of their peoples and communities, although often their contribution has been invisible in the dominant official version of history.

Indigenous Mapuche women like Fresia, Guacolda or Janequeo won renown for their bravery in battle against the Spanish colonizers. They inspired chroniclers like Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga to write his epic work “La Araucana,” which recognizes and sympathizes with the indigenous peoples’ claims in its narration of the war between Spaniards and Mapuche.

In Chile today, peasant and indigenous women continue fighting different problems, such as the serious drought that is affecting springs and wetlands, or the disappearance of medicinal plants, which impacts upon the role of the “machi” (traditional Mapuche healers, usually women). Most of these situations have been caused by forestry companies and their industrial plantations of eucalyptus and pine trees. The Chilean state, in turn, has encouraged these companies’ actions by subsidizing them under decree 701, introduced under the Pinochet dictatorship and still in force.

Further problems include land scarcity, impoverishment of the communities, migration of women and young people to the big cities, and seasonal migration of farm workers to the centre-south of the country as wage labour for transnational companies. Here they are exposed to pesticides and endure appalling working conditions. Meanwhile, the country prides itself on exporting the best wine and fruit to European markets, but does not promote public policies to protect peasant and indigenous women and put a stop to their exploitation.

A number of women’s assemblies and meetings are demanding a new society without capitalism, free from both oppression and machismo. They are calling for a new and more equitable society in which diversity in all its forms is respected and there is full harmony with mother nature.

Women’s and indigenous peoples’ organizations emerged in the 1990s in Chile and in many other countries in the region, in the context of a return to post-dictatorship democratic governments, after the implementation of neoliberal economic policies which privatized most natural resources, and that are still supported by present-day states.

In Chile’s case, indigenous women’s organizations were first promoted by the state under the 1993 Indigenous Peoples Act No. 19,253. There were several reasons why they appeared at this time,

including access to state resources, lack of opportunities in mixed organizations and the need to address specific issues such as sexual and reproductive health and intra-family violence.

In order to make their demands more visible, indigenous women felt it necessary to make alliances with other rural organizations. In 1998 the National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women (ANAMURI) was created, which in turn is part of networks like the Latin American Coordinating Committee of Rural Organizations (CLOC) and the global organization Via Campesina. From these platforms, indigenous women voice their criticism of current state policies and development programs, and forcefully confront the present neoliberal economic system that excludes and marginalizes them and attempts to assimilate them into a single homogeneous cultural identity.

One of the debates present within grassroots organizations is related to the proposal on “Peasant and popular feminism” which emerged at CLOC’s Fourth Women’s Assembly and the Fifth CLOC Congress, held in October 2010 in Quito, Ecuador.

It is important to say that frequently some concepts are assumed as true without an in-depth analysis of their meanings. This led indigenous women belonging to ANAMURI to make an assembly in 2013 to discuss the concepts they regard as alien to their culture and requiring further debate. For many leaders, although they recognize the contribution of the feminist movement in all its variety, the word “feminism” is still violent and they resist being referred to as “indigenous feminists”. What they seek, rather, is balance and complementarity between men and women, the old and the young, and harmony with nature: these are constitutive elements of their worldview.

Mapuche women have historically resisted the Spanish crown and the subsequent nation states which tried to folklorize and commercialize their customs and traditions. In the present context of capitalism and globalization, these indigenous women consider it essential to connect the struggles of peasants and native peoples, and to seek alliances with sectors of the urban population that suffer discrimination.

To conclude, indigenous women will continue to defend their cultures, traditions, and the rights of their peoples, and to strengthen spirituality for good living in harmony with nature. Together with other social movements they will continue to resist and raise their voices against capitalism, buoyed by the hope that nothing is written in stone and everything can change.

Millaray Painemal Morales, founding member of ANAMURI
koigueche@yahoo.es



Trading communal rights in Gabon: The 'Sustainable Development' Law

The government of Gabon adopted a new 'Sustainable Development' Law in August 2014. This Law is the first that introduces credits not only for carbon or biodiversity (1), but also for 'community capital', the latter being defined as the "sum of the natural and cultural assets belonging to a community." Without further explanation, 'community capital' could include things like community lands, crops, water resources, culture, or education. In this context, women stand to be the most affected as they are most often the care-takers, educators, medicine makers and the ones growing food within communities.

The new Law establishes that companies in Gabon can compensate the destruction they generate to forests or traditional territories by buying 'sustainable development credits'. These credits are divided into four different types: carbon credits, biodiversity credits, ecosystem credits and community capital. The trading system seems to allow full exchangeability across all credit types, meaning it could be possible to trade 'community capital' with other components of 'sustainable development'. The Law however is unclear and open to interpretation. In practice, this could mean taking away community land in one province for industrial tree plantations in exchange of building a school for a community in another province. The Law seems to be in contradiction with local communities' rights, affecting in particular indigenous peoples and women. Destructive companies, such as OLAM, which owns extensive areas of oil palm plantations in Gabon, stand to benefit the most from such policy.

What does the new Law implies?

According to an analysis made by the platform Gabon Ma Terre Mon Droit (GMTMD) the main aim of the Law is establishing a market where companies can use 'sustainable development projects' to offset their negative impacts on the environment and local communities by trading what the Law calls 'sustainable development credits' (2).

Areas eligible for the generation, purchase, and sale of these sustainable development credits are called 'sustainable development concessions'. The Law does not provide additional information on the identity or function of these concessions. Are these concessions to include or overlap with concessions for exploitation of 'natural resources' (forests, agriculture, mining, protected areas, etc.) or with the land available for community use? Will these concessions reduce even further the land available to communities? These

'sustainable development concessions' generate 'sustainable development credits', which come from the creation, improvement or maintenance of 'sustainable development assets' related to a 'sustainable development activity'. Thus, a 'sustainable development credit' can be generated, for example, by maintaining a high biodiversity area, or by promoting the creation of a number of jobs.

This environmentally destructive and socially unjust logic of offsetting is being promoted at a global scale by a consortium of transnational corporations supported by industrialised countries which continue to depend on ever-growing and unlimited access to 'natural resources'. It is also endorsed by international agencies like the World Bank, private banks and large conservation NGOs. Those who promote the idea of compensation maintain that it is the 'best' way to conserve nature, disregarding much more effective forest conservation policies and practices (3). Forest-dependent populations, and women in particular, are affected twice by such a mechanism: on the one hand, communities living inside the area of an industrial plantation and/or other compensation project lose their forest and territory. At the other end of the transaction, the communities that live in the place chosen to 'compensate' the damage from the industrial plantation will also be negatively affected, losing access to their forest territory and/or facing severe restrictions in how they can use their territory.

Women in Gabon and the impacts of the law

Tropical rainforests cover 85% of the land area in Gabon, and some 300,000 people depend on forests for their survival, through hunting, gathering, fishing and small farming. In February 2015, representatives of civil society organizations from Gabon expressed concerns about persistent gender-based discrimination in laws and practice, gender-based violence and lack of access to justice for women (4). Women in Gabon undertake 95 per cent of farming work and yet there were persistent legal barriers for women in realizing their equal rights to land and property. Within the family, the Civil Code provided that the husband was considered the head of the household, while discriminatory provisions in domestic law, specifically dealing with inheritance, existed.

The expansion of large-scale plantations, like the ones from OLAM, will further aggravate the food insecurity already suffered by the general population as a result of the loss of land and deforestation and the depletion of water sources. A resident of Doubou in the region of Mouila said for a study on the impacts of agro-industrial oil palm and rubber tree plantations on local populations in Gabon: "This forest allows us to survive and we do not want to share it. If we cannot plant food, fish or hunt, how are we going to survive?" (5). Moreover, health problems increase due to the heavy use of agrotoxins in the plantations. The consequences mostly fall on women's shoulders, increasing their exploitation and poverty.

The new 'Sustainable Development' Law is very vague and open to interpretation. It is difficult to understand and introduces new concepts without providing full explanations of key definitions and implications. Most importantly, no mention is made in particular of the rights of local and indigenous communities. In relation to women, the Law only makes a reference to the importance of the participation of women within the "Principles for the National strategy to implement the Law" (6), without a proper analysis of the implications that this Law will have, especially on women.

Another crucial problem arising from the so-called 'community capital' described in the Law is about ownership. As the GMTMD Platform asks, "Who owns it?", the vague definitions suggest that 'community capital' belongs to the community. However, the use of the word 'capital' implies the immersion of what is considered communal into a market logic where the main objective is profits and not rights. In addition, treating 'community capital' as a type of 'sustainable development credit', and as part of the 'sustainable development heritage' of Gabon, that is recorded in a national register, suggests that 'community capital' would be administered by the state, and not the communities themselves.

Also of great concern is the apparent proposal to make 'sustainable development credits' exchangeable throughout the territory. Would this mean that a company could take over and degrade the customary lands of a community and 'compensate' for this by buying or producing credits through the construction of a school for

another community 300 kilometres away? If the 'community capital' is negotiated against other credits, this could imply that decisions on the 'value' of rights, lands, and resources of a community for the national register will be taken by the government and corporate lobbies for economic interests, undermining the rights of communities. It is not clear either whether the geographic exchangeability relates to regions within the same country or between different countries. Could the 'compensation' of forest degradation in Gabon be done with a project in Cameroon, for example?

Final remarks

The government of Gabon is expecting to generate demand for the 'sustainable development credits' through the 'sustainability impact assessment' reports that companies need to do when requesting a project (like a mine, a plantation or any 'sustainable development' activity)'s approval. Reports will quantify the amount of credits considered necessary for 'compensating' the social impacts (on communities) and environmental impacts (on ecosystems, carbon stocks and biodiversity) of the industrial activity. According to the government, the 'carbon footprint' will be one of the main tools for implementing the Law in order to assist companies and institutions "in their decision-making process towards a low carbon economy". For this, the government is accompanying pilot companies in the calculation of their carbon pollution. Among these are large retailers like Casino Mbololo and Cecado, mines like COMILOG, oil companies like Total Gabon, Shell Gabon, Perenco, timber companies like Rougier and SNBG, and agribusiness like OLAM and SIAT (7).

This approach will affect communities twice: In addition to the social and environmental harm done by destructive companies they will face the negative impact caused by the 'compensation' project – in particular where such 'sustainable development' involves replacing territories and forests with large-scale monoculture plantations. The root of the destruction problem is hidden by selling the idea that one could count all this harm, package it in separate units, categorize and exchange the damage. So-called 'sustainable' policies, which further intensify over-consumption and over-production, maintain and expand an oppressive and patriarchal political and economic system. These exacerbate land pollution and dispossession, violence and oppression, especially to indigenous peoples and women. And, where does this leave communities' autonomy to decide over their own lands, practices and lives?

(1) To see more information on carbon offsets and biodiversity offsets, see: "Carbon Trading: how it works and why it fails", Carbon Trade Watch", <http://www.carbontradewatch.org/publications/carbon-trading-how-it-works-and-why-it-fails.html> and, "A Tree for a Fish: The (il)logic behind selling biodiversity", Carbon Trade Watch, <http://www.carbontradewatch.org/articles/a-tree-for-a-fish-the-il-logic-behind-selling-biodiversity.html>

(2) Plateforme GABON Ma Terre, Mon Droit, Gabonese Civil Society Position Paper about the Law No. 002/2014 regarding the direction of Sustainable Development in the Gabonese Republic, 24 January 2015.

(3) <http://wrm.org.uy/actions-and-campaigns/letter-to-be-sent-to-the-president-of-gabon-to-express-opposition-to-the-creation-of-a-national-and-international-ecosystems-services-market/>

(4)

[http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B9C2E/\(httpNewsByYear_en\)/FF512252F17C44E6C1257DEE0058B51D?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B9C2E/(httpNewsByYear_en)/FF512252F17C44E6C1257DEE0058B51D?OpenDocument)

(5) <http://wrm.org.uy/articles-from-the-wrm-bulletin/section3/gabon-new-study-warns-of-impacts-of-the-expansion-of-oil-palm-and-rubber-tree-plantations/>

(6) Presidence de la Republique, Law N. 002/2014 for Sustainable Development in the Gabonese Republic

(7) See https://seors.unfccc.int/seors/attachments/get_attachment?code=EK33Y1EQDDFKDGLYHDAHVGO3JVHAF0Y9 and https://seors.unfccc.int/seors/attachments/get_attachment?code=X8AS9M9B9ALUZKIGOREOWS2OKT5863M3



Josefina and the Water Springs against Pine Plantations in Ecuador's Páramos

Twenty years ago, a Dutch company paid communities to establish pine tree plantations in the high mountains of Ecuador. The aim was for the trees to absorb carbon dioxide to "offset" the emissions generated by a thermoelectric plant built in The Netherlands. In 2001, the community of Mojandita de Avelino Ávila signed an agreement with Ecuadorian company Profafor, a subsidiary of the Dutch consortium FACE. The project changed the use of the lands formerly used for livestock grazing and agriculture, while destroying important water sources and sacred sites.

Josefina Lema lives in the community of Mojandita de Avelino Ávila, in Ecuador's northern mountains. She belongs to the Otavalo people of the Kichwa (Quechua) nation. About 200 people live in her community. Twenty years ago, people arrived in their territory offering money in exchange for permission to establish plantations of pine trees in the páramos, a unique ecosystem in the Andean highlands. They promised jobs, income and benefits. But these never materialized. Quite the contrary: not only did the community lose money, the negative social and environmental impacts from planting pine trees have persisted to this day.

Josefina's community is not the only one to be affected. The Dutch-Ecuadorian company FACE-Profafor planned at least 20,000 hectares of tree plantations in Ecuador. Contracts for a significant proportion of these (8,000 hectares) were agreed with 39 local communities in the Ecuadorian sierra, according to the company's managing director. A resident in the community of SigSig, one of the supposed beneficiaries of FACE-Profafor's plan, told how his community signed up for plantations on their land in exchange for the promise of a great deal of money:

"A stranger appeared, saying that they (the company) had heard that the community possessed extensive areas of páramo, and they wanted to put a plantation there. He turned our heads, saying they would pay I don't know how many thousands of dollars. You know that we country people sometimes do not know about such things, we are naive and easily convinced. There was a meeting and the engineer was present. He said thousands of dollars would come into the community, and we would be paid to go and plant the seedlings. We would have jobs until the final harvesting of the trees, and we would be paid I don't know how much money, and we agreed. The community council signed." (1)

The Dutch foundation, Forest Absorbing Carbon Dioxide Emissions (FACE), was created in 1990 by NV SEP, the Dutch Electricity Generating Board. FACE planned to grow trees on about 150,000 hectares around the world "to absorb large quantities of carbon dioxide." With the motto "More Forest. Less CO₂," the foundation promotes the mistaken notion that monoculture plantations are equivalent to forests. (2) Profafor is an Ecuadorian service company dedicated to supporting the establishment and management of forestry plantations to capture atmospheric carbon dioxide. Profafor also conducts projects related to other "environmental services," recently including REDD+ projects.

In 1994, Josefina's community was offered US\$ 21,450 to plant pine seedlings on 130 hectares of páramo. Operating costs were deducted from that amount, and only US\$ 11,700 was eventually handed over. One of the clauses in the contract signed with the company stipulated that in the case of contractual differences or non-fulfilment, the indigenous community would have to pay the Dutch-Ecuadorian company US\$ 35,100 - much more than the community had received.

Under the agreement, FACE-Profafor keeps 100% of the carbon credits generated by the pine

plantations. These credits were originally intended to "offset" emissions from a new 600 MW coal-fired electric plant to be built in Holland, which would have continued to emit CO₂ into the atmosphere for the 25 years of its lifespan. The plant was not built but FACE continued to invest in carbon offset projects and sell the carbon credits to other corporations and individuals. (3) While FACE-Profafor gets the credits, the community of Mojandita is left with the obligations arising from the maintenance and the environmental impacts of Profafor's plantation. As Josefina explained:

"The FACE-Profafor company is now our boss. They have been exploiting our labour. We had to carry on working for free as our contribution to the project. We had to cut firebreaks and thin and prune the trees, without payment." (4)

In addition, FACE-Profafor obtained use of the community's land, appropriated the labour of community members and their collective efforts known as "mingas," (5) and also drained money from the community and its members, as the community council had to pay for agricultural materials and hire technicians. They were also obliged to rent land for their own animals to graze on, and the plantations dried up several of their water sources, depleted soil nutrients, destroyed large areas of the páramo, and robbed them of cosmic energy centres and sacred sites by destroying springs and pools.

"In my community, we realised the pine plantations were poisoning our native plants. They were poisoning the grasses which retain and store water. And the pine trees were drying up the springs of water. (6) That is why, about eight years ago, Pachamama (the Earth Mother) turned against the pine plantations and about 70 hectares were burned in a fire. After some time there was another fire which consumed the rest. Now we see that the water springs are being recreated." (7)

Although it was Pachamama in her wisdom that destroyed the plantation, Profafor attempted to exact penalties from the community, but its claims have not prospered. A few days ago, the community of Mojandita sent a letter to Profafor terminating the contract. The struggle of the women of this community in defence of the páramo, led by Josefina Lema, has been a remarkable example. (8)

"Were it not for the water in the páramo
There would be no life in our planet and our country.
Some talk of god, but we do not see him:
We see our Pachamama and our nature." (9)

Ivonne Yanez, Acción Ecológica, Ecuador
Email: ivonne@accionecologica.org

(1) Testimonial from the community of SigSig, one of the "beneficiaries" of FACE-Profafor.

(2) Riofrancos, T. 2015. Pines on the Páramo: The disastrous local effects of the carbon market, NACLA, <https://nacla.org/news/pines-páramo-disastrous-local-effects-carbon-market>

(3) Acción Ecológica/WRM. 2005. Carbon Sink Plantations in the Ecuadorian Andes: Impacts of the Dutch FACE-Profafor monoculture tree plantations project on indigenous and peasant communities.

(4) Josefina speaks on Acción Ecológica's video: "La Pachamama no se vende" (Pachamama is not for sale) (in Spanish), <http://www.accionecologica.org/servicios-ambientes/multimedia/1503-video-la-pachamama-no-se-vende>.

(5) Minga: the term for community efforts where the entire community carries out work for the common good.

(6) Springs of water, called "pukyu" by the Kichwa people, are sacred sites, charged with cosmic energy.

(7) Personal communication. Josefina Lema. 2013.

(8) For more information on the impact of the plantations on women, see: Bonilla, N. and Ramos. I. 2008. Women, Communities and Plantations in Ecuador: Testimonials on a socially and environmentally destructive forestry model, Acción Ecológica, http://www.wrm.org.uy/oldsite/countries/Ecuador/Women_Ecuador.html

(9) Josefina Lema.



Women defend mountain lagoons and promote “Living Well”

Conga: Lagoons versus mines

“I had never been to the lagoons before the marches began and we had to go and defend them. The Elders said that (the Celendín lakes) were sacred, no one was allowed to set foot there, they were the sites for sacred ceremonies and traditional healers came here to collect medicines. The Elders called this place Conga,” said a young rondera (peasant patroller) from Cajamarca when she saw the lagoons.

Popular resistance to the Conga Mine mega-project in the Andean region of Cajamarca, Peru has been going on for more than three years. The project is owned by Minera Yanacocha, a Peruvian company, in partnership with the Buenaventura mining company, the U.S. Newmont Mining corporation and the World Bank’s International Finance Corporation (IFC). Yanacocha has been operating in Cajamarca for over 20 years and has been accused of several environmental crimes, such as a mercury spill in the province of Choropampa in 2011. The Conga mine is an extension of the Yanacocha mining project, spread over large areas of the provinces of Bambamarca, Celendín and Cajamarca, a zone of river basins with highland bogs, marshes, wetlands, lagoons and the headwaters of the most important rivers of the region. This area is formally protected by the General Environmental Law and the Water Resources Law because it is regarded as a fragile ecosystem.

In 2012, affected local people organized a huge march for water and for life that flowed like a river through several of the country’s regions and culminated in Lima, the capital, demanding social and environmental justice. New faces and new voices backed proposals for change, based on the agricultural and livestock potential of the region and in defence of biodiversity, water, land and community organization. Months later a serious conflict occurred in which five peasants were murdered and dozens were injured as a result of police repression. Since then, the present government’s policy of criminalizing and persecuting community leaders, both women and men, has not let up; neither has violence by the company against local people who refuse to give up their lands, as shown by the emblematic case of Máxima Acuña and her family.

In late 2012, self-organized peasant rondas or patrols to protect their lands and keep order in the community were started to guard the lagoons, camping on one of the mountains that overlook them. The participants became known as “the guardians of the lagoons,” a movement that is a source of hope.

Women guardians of water and of life

Most of the communities affected by the mining company organized themselves to defend the lagoons and water, the symbol of life, against extractive mining. Adults, young people, men and women formed groups that took turns to go into the highlands: the men kept watch and patrolled, the women kept watch, cooked and looked after the ronderos (patrollers). When they went back to their homes, communities or cities, the women carried on their watch-keeping duties. One of the organizations that brings together and organizes the work of the women guardians is the “Central de Rondas Femeninas de Bambamarca” (Central Committee of Women’s Patrols of Bambamarca), created more than 30 years ago after the powerful peasant mobilization that secured land reform in Peru.

“At the height of the resistance, we would get up at three o’clock in the morning, we would go around the houses to call people out to the march; later we would fetch donated food from market stalls and shops

that supported us. Once the marches were under way we set up communal soup kitchens, no one went without food. Some of us would walk in the front line, singing our marching songs and facing down the repression. We did not mind the weariness, the blows, the frequent railing of our husbands or the incomprehension of our family. We were fighting for water, which is life; for our children, and our children's children," said the ronderas.

My territory as body, my body as territory

One of the innovative things about this movement is a different way to conceptualize territory which can be attributed to the active presence of women in the resistance. One of the reflections that emerged from dialogues among women at feminist meetings or political education activities in peasant communities was that: "Violence is done to the Earth, our mother, in the same way that violence is done to women. They want to exploit her like they exploit our labour, they do not see or recognise her, they make her invisible in the same way that our contributions and our words are made invisible. It is the same pattern of power that oppresses us, because in the Eurocentric capitalist worldview both women and nature can be appropriated, exploited and controlled." Thus territory is conceived as comparable to women's bodies.

By mapping mining-related problems, we found that wherever mining projects are located the cases of violence against women, ranging from human trafficking to labour exploitation, are more numerous and reinforce each other. "The route travelled by minerals, as well as oil, is also the route of trafficking in women," it was concluded. State violence, like the criminalization of women leaders, also occurs. The spread of social programmes to assist poor families, together with the absence of men who are working in the mines, generate a great burden of work on women and limit their political and social participation.

Indigenous women and urban migrants are recovering a spiritual dimension and a holistic and interconnected approach to their territories. Nature takes on a new meaning: we are reconciled with her and we are consciously part of her. Nature is not passive or oppressive, but rather sovereign and free, like the peoples and bodies that live in her: bodies like women's bodies, with memory and identity, interdependent and profoundly autonomous, belonging to a common body which is the territory. This is the picture drawn by women who share the multi-hued vision of Living Well. As a whole, all this energizes a historic challenge to the prevailing power structures, inspiring many women to rise up, organize, create alternative knowledge, different ethics and transformative practices. The defence of territory as body and the defence of the body as territory open up a huge fissure in the capitalist system's new phase of expanding intensive extraction, and in patriarchy and colonialism which are two facets of subjugating power.

Alternatives: Women promoting Living Well

The organization of women's patrols in Bambamarca had been declining before the resistance movement, which brought women from different villages and communities together once again. Now there are more women's organizations, and more women are taking part in mixed organizations. Arrangements were made to meet women from other regions of the country, such as Cusco, Loreto, Piura, Pasco, Valle de Tambo and the community of San José de Cañaris. In all these territories the economic model based on unlimited extraction of common goods (such as water and minerals) is causing serious environmental harm, social conflicts, greater poverty and violence against women. In November 2014, as part of the social preparation for the People's Summit on Climate Change held in Lima, more than 120 diverse women from these territories – peasants, indigenous women, wage earners, students, artists, teachers, activists – came together to discuss their problems, strengthen ties and share experiences of building alternatives. These alternatives already exist, they do not need to be invented from scratch.

Among these alternative projects, several road maps were proposed. Instead of extractivism and its colonial, patriarchal and capitalist pillars, the women proposed an alternative way of life based on equity, identity, and social and environmental justice, called "Buen Vivir" or Living Well. In contrast to land grabs, pollution, deprivation, food insecurity, the neglect of agriculture and dependence on oil and minerals, they proposed the solidarity economy, energy and food sovereignty, and diversification of production with prior consultation and popular participation in economic planning, support for agroecology and the unconditional defence of common goods and the rights of Mother Earth. Instead of loss of identity and of the basic principles for harmonious living like respect, collective work, complementarity and reciprocity, they called for the recovery and practice of ancestral wisdom and respect for collective and individual human rights. In opposition to violence done to women's bodies, they proposed life with dignity and non-violence, treating the body as sovereign territory, as well as recognition for women's historic caring work in homes and ecosystems, and fair distribution of this work between men and women, the state and society.

Finally, they concluded that the strands that make up Living Well as an alternative proposal are derived from all the liberating experiences of the past and of the present. It is therefore important to recover and

keep alive our memories of struggle and to reinforce collective experiences of democratic coexistence in every organization and movement. Solidarity between peoples and sisterhood between women are the only possible way forward.

Mar Daza, Programa de Democracia y Transformación Global (PDTG –Democracy and Global Transformation Program)
mar@democraciaglobal.org



African Amazons fight destruction of forests

In recent decades, the sustainable management of natural resources and the conservation of biological diversity have become a major concern at all levels. On the African continent, threats to forests are rapidly increasing with the penetration and expansion of multinational corporations that benefit from the complicity of governments. But facing these threats are the determination and commitment of grassroots communities, and especially women. Like the Amazon warrior women of King Béhanzin (in the 19th century), more and more of them are rising up, creating a powerful barrier against the destruction of ecosystems, and particularly forests.

In numerous African communities, in countries like Benin, Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa and other parts of the continent, large numbers of women are organizing and speaking out to be the voice of the voiceless. They are developing alternatives as a means of putting up fierce resistance against those terrorizing the forests.

Although women were long treated as vulnerable beneficiaries by all sorts of 'development' projects, their leadership in protecting what they consider to be the source of life has now been amply demonstrated. Large popular movements are established and defended by these African Amazons. Many women, through organizations like Eco Ecolo or Mother Jah, travel through hills and valleys, like missionaries, raising awareness. They help local communities to stand on guard against the destructive impacts of the enemies of the forests and of the environment as a whole.

To an ever greater extent, these Amazons advocate the return to endogenous values and traditions to ensure the protection and sustainability of the sacred forests, which serve as a refuge for many different animal and plant species, as well as the religious practices and cultural identities of peoples and communities. For the communities, the divinities found in the forest play the role of protectors of communities and territories. Purification, initiation, induction and other ceremonies are often held in the forest.

To ensure the sustainable management of these forests, the Amazons have undertaken a series of measures in which culture and beliefs are at the heart of their means of struggle and resistance. They promote the practice of vodun ("voodoo") and other rituals in locations within the forests, which helps to protect these areas and curb the voracious advance of the destroyers of the forests. Women, whether

priestesses or followers, fervently perpetuate the rites and traditions that help maintain the centuries-old forests that they have inherited. For some spiritual cults, like Oro in Benin, the forest serves as the foundation and means of expression. As a result, the followers of this very popular cult are mobilizing to halt the violations that threaten the survival of the forests. Other endogenous cults or secret societies such as zangbéto, kouvvito, hêviosso and others are promoted and valued by women, who are increasingly playing a leading role. For many African women and their communities, the sacred forests ensure health, happiness, prosperity, procreation, fertility and rain. Today large numbers of women are returning to tradition in order to stop the advance of the predators of the forest.

These Amazon women now frequently appear on local radio and television stations to defend the forests. They advocate the use of alternative energy sources, and strive to serve as models themselves. They organize civil society to fight for the defence of the environment, and in doing so, they put forward alternative reports to those produced by governments.

In numerous villages and towns, they initiate and train women in the strategy of savings for change. Mechanisms such as “bio-rights” – a micro-credit system - are highly sought after by these women for transforming communities and spreading their message. The African Amazons carry out lobbying and advocacy to ensure respect for the law for the benefit of local communities. They strengthen the capacities of local communities to defend their endogenous knowledge and sacred rituals and resources, at the same time strengthening their own capacities through the sharing of experiences. To as great an extent as possible, they support communities in claiming legal recognition of their rights and valuing the history of their origins and traditional knowledge, which reinforces the communities’ attachment to their heritage. They promote the transfer of endogenous knowledge from generation to generation, to perpetuate traditions and preserve the legacy of their ancestors.

It is clear that in many African communities, the role of women in sacred rituals is very important. As a result, the sacred forests have been preserved until today, unlike ordinary forests, which have suffered the wrath of human activity.

Fiacre NOUWADJRO e Apollinaire OUSSOU LIO,
African Biodiversity Network (ABN)



Safeguarding Investment: Safeguards for REDD+, women and indigenous peoples

The meaning of the term “safeguards” depends on who uses it and in what context. It may imply positive action in terms of human rights or the environment, or it may simply be a rhetorical flourish aimed at preventing losses of investments and profits. Nowadays there is much talk around the world about safeguards for the implementation of REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) projects, conservation, sustainable forest management and increasing forest carbon stocks. (1)

Safeguards have an economic origin. When the World Trade Organization (WTO) was created in 1995, there was already debate about trade safeguards. The idea was to protect or look after national interests when problems arose related to international trade. However, they generated countless controversies and ultimately all safeguards were declared illegal. This shows that when the interests of trade conflict with any other interests, trade interests always win. Given this history, nothing better could be expected in the case of REDD+ safeguards.

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank (WB) have also established their own safeguards and social and environmental standards for the projects they fund. However, we know that instead of protecting communities and nature, what they seek is to protect their projects or “the natural resource assets implicated in the execution of a project.” (1) The World Bank is currently revising its safeguards and standards policies downwards, as it is seeking even greater flexibilisation of environmental and social “requirements” for its projects. The consequences are serious, as the World Bank influences and guides social and environmental policy standards for many public and private, national and international entities. It is no coincidence that this review is taking place now. It is framed within the context of the new international scenario defined by the application of the REDD+ mechanism.

The seven REDD+ safeguards approved at the 2010 United Nations climate negotiations (2) are: complementarity and consistency with national forestry systems and natural forest conservation, transparent and effective governance, full stakeholder participation, respect for the knowledge and rights of native peoples, and two other “safeguards” of a clearly commercial nature to do with reversals and emissions displacement.

REDD+ project safeguards seem to be a merely formal requirement, almost in the shape of a checklist, with the goal not of ensuring respect for the rights of local communities, but of avoiding social conflict at minimum cost, while guaranteeing the working of the carbon market. These safeguards would in fact be aimed at effective implementation of REDD+ through minimizing – not preventing – the social and environmental risks inherent in REDD activities. (3)

As in every similar process, the United Nations REDD+ program (UN-REDD) has set up phony participation processes for national endorsement of the safeguards, carrying out consultations with different stakeholders to arrive at a “consensus” on the safeguards to be instituted to ensure the success of REDD+. (4) Moreover, in addition to the safeguards there is a series of “guidelines,” “principles” “participation systems,” “fair value assignment,” and other tools. Behind the jargon they hide purely commercial interests.

Indigenous peoples obviously had to be included in these safeguards since they are the owners of most of the world’s remaining natural forests. Women, too, were quickly incorporated as stakeholders in REDD+ national programs, a decision that was part of social pacification policies in the face of increasing conflict and rejection – above all by women in local communities – of projects and public policies of an extractivist nature, and others. So in order to sugar the pill of these developments, indigenous people and women were integrated as “stakeholders” in all investment projects, including REDD+.

No “safeguard” will liberate women

The UN-REDD process has incorporated the concept of gender equality to make “REDD+ more efficient, effective and sustainable.” (5) This approach has already attracted criticism of various kinds. For instance, the Global Alliance of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on Climate Change against REDD+ and for Life has said: “It is clear that REDD+ also constitutes a new form of violence against women because it limits or prohibits women’s access to the land where we farm, gather food and draw water (for) our families.” (6) Women are responsible for 90 percent of these activities in rural communities worldwide. Moreover, women own less, inherit less, and in general have less access to community goods than men.

It should also be noted that under the mechanisms of payment for environmental services – like the carbon credits marketed through REDD+ – it is generally the men of the communities who receive the benefits, since the agreements are signed with associations or organizations’ councils, made up mostly of men. And when women are the recipients of payments, usually incentives for planting forestry plantations, it may lead to increased domestic violence, with men wanting to control the money. Worse still, women are tasked with preventing forest clearance (7) although they are not responsible for the problem. In this way, women have been recruited to the global pool of cheap labour that watches over the merchandise (carbon, water, biodiversity, or any defined environmental service) from which capital derives profits. They are obliged to travel for hours to receive the payments; they must not only act as rangers in their own forests, but police officers in their own communities. They have become exploited workers (8) toiling for a pittance.

We are experiencing a global economic crisis due to overproduction and overaccumulation which has led to poverty, debt, unemployment and so on; and an environmental crisis with serious effects, such as climate change, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, pollution, etcetera. In such a context, inequalities are always exacerbated, affecting mainly women and indigenous peoples. This is a foregone conclusion, since under capitalism and its crises, the weakest are obviously the most vulnerable. Women are exposed to a double risk: they face capitalist exploitation, and on top of that, the oppression of the crises it generates.

According to feminist author Silvia Federici, (9) the United Nations has effectively redefined the feminist agenda. The inclusion of the gender perspective in instruments like REDD+ is an example of this. But in practice it might turn out to be a trap. According to Federici, when women receive payment for their work, they are not really gaining autonomy or liberation. This is not to say there should not be differential subsidies for women; however, the capitalist system undervalues the work of caring, and women care for their families, their farm plots and the forest. Therefore capitalism devalues the lives of women in order to continue devaluing workers. By means of REDD+, capitalism is extracting the labour of millions of indigenous women. This signifies a commodification of women's emotions and particular needs. That is why no "safeguard" can liberate women.

This thesis is fundamental to an understanding of why we must oppose the marketing of environmental services. A woman, or a community, given a payment for looking after the forest under REDD+ is indirectly allowing capitalism to reproduce and be strengthened through the exploitation of workers who produce goods, extract oil, work in mines, etcetera. By making these payments, States, banks and companies buy the right to continue to overproduce and overaccumulate by means of the exploitation of workers and nature.

This is a fundamental issue that is not being taken into account in the debate on REDD+, but is key in the agenda of the defence of women's rights and debates on climate change, forests and environmental services.

Ivonne Yanez, Acción Ecológica, Ecuador
Email: ivonne@accionecologica.org

(1) World Bank. Social and Environmental Safeguards Workshop. July 14, 2012 - in Spanish <http://www.bancomundial.org/es/news/feature/2012/07/14/taller-de-salvaguardas-sociales-y-ambientales-bolivia>

(2) <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf>

(3) On the Road to REDD+. The UN-REDD Programme's Support to REDD+ Readiness 2008-2013, UN-REDD Programme, Geneva. 2014. <http://www.un-redd.org/Portals/15/documents/FINAL%20Road%20to%20REDD%2017-06-14.pdf>

See also, REDD: A Gallery of Conflicts, Contradictions and Lies, WRM, 2014, <http://wrm.org.uy/books-and-briefings/redd-a-gallery-of-conflicts-contradictions-and-lies/>

(4) Developing Social and Environmental Safeguards for REDD+: A guide for a bottom-up approach. Imaflora, 2010, http://www.imaflora.org/downloads/biblioteca/guiaREDD_ingles_digital2.pdf

(5) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Women in REDD+. UN-REDD Programme, http://www.leafasia.org/sites/default/files/public/resources/GenderLit_LessonsLearnBrochure.pdf

(6) <http://www.ienearth.org/global-alliance-of-indigenous-peoples-and-local-communities-on-climate-change-against-redd-and-for-life/>

(7) The forest grant programme and payment systems for environmental services (in Portuguese), JUS, <http://jus.com.br/artigos/32871/o-programa-bolsa-floresta-e-os-sistemas-de-pagamento-por-servicos-ambientais>

(8) See WRM Bulletin 208. November 2014. Why are women fighting against extractivism and climate change? <http://wrm.org.uy/articles-from-the-wrm-bulletin/section1/why-are-women-fighting-against-extractivism-and-climate-change/>

(9) The Italian writer has pointed out that capitalism seeks to control all the sources of the workforce, all the sources that produce workers, and women's bodies are the primary source of this wealth. See Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation, 2004, <https://libcom.org/files/Caliban%20and%20the%20Witch.pdf>

PEOPLES IN ACTION

International Women's Day: Until we are all free!



March 8, International Women's Day, is also the launch date of the World March of Women's (WMW) Fourth International Action. The World March of Women takes place every five years and through it, feminist organizations from every continent give voice to their struggles and demands. The Action is decentralized and comprises demonstrations, street actions, workshops, training events and other activities that will last until October 17. See the Call to Action at:

<http://www.dunyakadinyuruyusu.org/index.php/duyurular/3-women-on-the-march-until-we-are-all-free>, and a Radio Mundo Real program featuring an interview with Tica Moreno, a member of the Brazilian organization Sempreviva Organização Feminista which is part of the WMW (in Spanish), at: <http://www.radiomundoreal.fm/8155-hasta-que-todas-seamos-libres>



Women's Struggle: for Food Sovereignty; against violence and agribusiness!

The international network of peasants, La Via Campesina, calls for the coordination of actions during the International Women's Day to highlight the fundamental role played by women in guaranteeing Food Sovereignty. On this day of struggle, it denounces the prevailing violence, against women specifically, because the agribusiness model, patriarchy and the capitalist interests in the countryside have exacerbated social and gender inequalities. In this context, Food Sovereignty is key not only as a means of confronting the food crisis but also as an essential ethical principle that has as its basis social justice and equality. See linked articles, audios and other materials from La Via Campesina at:

<http://tv.viacampesina.org/March-8-International-Women-s-Day-475?lang=en>



A grandmother standing up to mining and logging companies in the Solomon Islands

When mining and logging companies come to villages asking for resource rights, how can communities make an informed decision without truly understanding all the impacts that these activities entail? Moira Dasipio, 55, lives and works in the Isabel Province of the Salomon Islands and is determined to give local populations access to more information about large-scale projects. Providing clear information on the real effects of plantations or logging is crucial as the country's economy is based mostly on the industrial production of logs, tuna, gold, and palm oil. Yet, Dasipio has a long way to go. "We are striving [for] ourselves, my women, and all people. We are all working together for a better future." See full article here:

<http://www.takepart.com/article/2014/12/31/mining-logging-solomon-islands>



Máxima's story: a peasant woman confronts a powerful mining company in Peru

Máxima Acuña, a mother of four in the northern Andes of Peru who was never able to learn to read or write, won a lawsuit against the Yanacocha mining company, South America's leading gold producer. In spite of this, the company has continued its violent intimidation against her. So far in 2015, Máxima has been threatened at least twice by police and agents for Securitas, Yanacocha's private security firm, entered her property. On February 12, a World Day of Solidarity with Máxima was held. See the full article (in Spanish) at: <http://servindi.org/actualidad/122765>



Femicide and Impunity: A humanitarian crisis in Central America, and a growing problem worldwide

El Salvador has the highest rate of femicide in the world, Guatemala the third and Honduras the seventh. In Guatemala and Honduras only 2% of murdered women's cases were investigated in 2013. And in El Salvador, in 2014 alone, between January and October, over 300 women between the ages of 12 and 18 years were found in unmarked mass graves. The victims of femicide often show signs of torture, rape, or breast and genital mutilation and dismembered body parts. In this violent context, the international peasant movement La Via Campesina is leading a Global Campaign to End All Forms of Violence Against Women, which aims at increasing public awareness of the root causes of, and all the types of expressions of, violence against women, and to demand an end to impunity. See full article here: <http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php/main-issues-mainmenu-27/women-mainmenu-39/1715-femicide-and-impunity-a-humanitarian-crisis-in-central-america-and-a-growing-problem-worldwide>

In defence of life in the Amazon, humanity and the planet

Leaders of indigenous peoples of the Brazilian Amazon participating in the World Social Forum on Biodiversity held in Manaus, Brazil in January 2015, repudiated countless actions by the Brazilian state that violate the national constitution and international law. Construction of large



hydroelectric plants in the Amazon region without consulting affected communities, a clear bias towards agribusiness, strong pressure from mining companies seeking approval of a bill that would open up indigenous lands to exploitation and the militarization of the Amazon are some of the threats to the environment and indigenous peoples' life and culture, including native groups that have no contact with the society around them. See the declaration (in Portuguese) at: <http://www.vozesdaamazonia.com.br/2015/02/em-defesa-da-vida-na-amazonia-da.html>

RECOMMENDED



Women speak: climate justice stories from the frontlines

On December 8, 2014, a group of extraordinary women leaders gathered in Lima, Peru during the UN climate negotiations to speak out against issues of social and ecological injustice, and to share stories and plans of action for building a liveable, equitable world. Indigenous women from different places shared their experiences and struggles. As Patricia Gualinga, Indigenous Kichwa leader of Sarayaku, Ecuador, said, "The destruction of nature is the destruction of our own energy and of our own existence here on Earth. The destruction of our spaces is the destruction of indigenous populations. And even though you might not believe this, this is your destruction, as well". See full article and a video of the event from the TV show Democracy Now! here:

<https://wecaninternational.wordpress.com/2014/12/30/stories-solutions-from-the-frontlines-climate-women-unite-at-wecan-event-in-lima/>



Voices from the Second Congress of the National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women of Chile (ANAMURI)

Radio Mundo Real produced a special program on caring for Nature, highlighting the voices of women from different Latin American organizations who participated in the ANAMURI congress. Listen to the program (in Spanish) at: <http://radiomundoreal.fm/8114-la-tierra-es-madre>



Struggles for territory and Living Well in Colombia: Resistance by Afro-Colombian women

An article by Charo Rojas, Marilyn Machado, Patricia Botero and Arturo Escobar charts the cumulative processes that have infringed the rights of Afro-descendant populations and destroyed their territories. These processes, they say, are of such magnitude that they may be regarded as crimes against humanity, ecocide and ethnocide. The defence of ancestral territories clashes head-on with the one-dimensional, neocolonial, capitalist and Eurocentric notion of individual ownership of land as the economic means of production and exploitation. Women have been the key factor in this resistance. Many of them have shed their blood on the land they defended in order to create hope for a decent life for their children. Read the full article (in Spanish) at:

<http://censat.org/es/analisis/luchas-por-el-territorio-y-el-buen-vivir-en-colombia-las-mujeres-negras-en-resistencia>



Radio Mundo Real video: "Financialization of Nature"

The video by Radio Mundo Real on Financialization of Nature was produced in collaboration with the Biodiversity Alliance, Friends of the Earth Latin America and the Caribbean and the World Rainforest Movement. The video attempts to explain what financialization of nature is, what mechanisms it employs, what it does in the territories, its impacts and the resistance it generates. The video is available in English at: <https://vimeo.com/117966465>, and in Spanish at: <https://vimeo.com/117971293>



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Managing Editor: Joanna Cabello
Editorial Assistants: Elizabeth Díaz, Jutta Kill, Flavio Pazos, Teresa Perez

WRM International Secretariat
Maldonado 1858 - 11200 Montevideo - Uruguay
ph: 598 2413 2989 / fax: 598 2410 0985
wrm@wrm.org.uy - <http://www.wrm.org.uy>