

INDIGENOUS LEADERS PROTECTING THE AMAZON AWARDED BY THE GOLDMAN ENVIRONMENT PRIZE

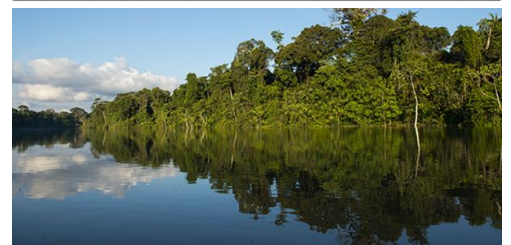
The [Goldman Environmental Foundation website](#) published an article informing that the IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Marseilles (France) in September 2021 approved a motion requesting a global commitment to protect 80% of the Amazon Basin by 2025, in support of the campaign [Amazonia for Life: 80% by 2025](#). Sixty-one governments and government agencies, 600 NGOs and Indigenous peoples' organizations voted in favor of the motion.

[This motion is part of the commitment approved by the IUCN Congress](#) to support the implementation of the first IUCN *Global Indigenous Agenda for the Governance of Indigenous Lands, Territories, Waters, Coastal Seas and Natural Resources*, a self-determined strategy developed and owned by Indigenous Peoples, as a contribution to the work of the Union and global conservation.

The [Amazonia for Life: 80% by 2025](#) campaign is led by the [COICA Organization Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica](#). COICA was founded in 1984 as an umbrella organization of the indigenous federations of the Amazon Basin countries: Perú, Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia and Brazil. It advocates for indigenous peoples' rights of 511 nationalities and groups that live in the Basin which include close to 100 uncontacted communities. In this framework the Goldman Environmental Foundation highlights that several editions of the Goldman Prize have recognized the contributions of three Indigenous Leaders protecting the Amazon.

In particular, the [Goldman Environmental Prize 2021 was awarded to Liz Chicaje Churay](#) a leader from the Indigenous Bora community of Loreto Region in Peru, president of an agricultural cooperative and former president of the Federation of Indigenous Communities of the Ampiyacu River. In January of 2018, as a result of the work carried out during seven years and led by Liz Chicaje Churay involving local indigenous communities, the Peruvian Government created the Yaguas National Park, covering more than 868,000 hectares of Amazonian rainforest in the Loreto northeastern region of Peru, on the border with Colombia and Brazil. The area of the Yaguas National Park is uninhabited, but 29 Indigenous communities reside just outside its borders, depending for their economic development of the rich natural resources of this ecosystem, which they help to conserve.

The Yaguas area is home to between 3,000 and 3,500 species of plants, 110 species of amphibians, 100 species of reptiles, 500 species of birds, and 160 species of mammals. Among the animals that roam Yaguas' forests and rivers are manatees, river dolphins, giant otters and wooly monkeys. The area also includes tracts of



peatlands, the world's largest carbon sinks, creating a valuable ecosystem for biodiversity, that helps safe drinking water, flood control and mitigate climate change.

Facing increased invasion from illegal loggers and miners in the area, Liz Chicaje Churay and 23 among the 29 indigenous communities decided that the formal status of a national park would help protect the region's rainforests and river systems. They launched a campaign on multiple fronts to promote the park recognition working with government officials, conservationists and scientists, including researchers at the [Field Museum of Chicago](#), who conducted participatory mapping and satellite image analysis. Liz Chicaje Churay and representatives of indigenous communities also traveled to meet government ministers, elected officials, and foreign ambassadors, advocating for the park. In 2017, Liz Chicaje and Benjamin Rodriguez traveled to Bonn, Germany, in occasion of COP23 as part of Peru's official delegation

In the process carried out to obtain the recognition of the park, indigenous communities have also achieved other important results through their participation in co-management bodies established by local governments. For example, the participation in the Ampiyacu Apayacu Regional Conservation Area Management Committee, promoted by the Regional Government of Loreto, has allowed obtaining the titling of 100,000 hectares for 13 indigenous communities and channeling financial support from the National Climate Change Mitigation Program managed by the Ministry of the Environment of Peru. Within this framework, many successful experiences for commercial management of forest resources, management of fisheries and the consolidation of indigenous community surveillance were also carried out.

The creation of the Yaguas National Park in 2018 was a key step in conserving the country's rich ecosystems of the Loreto region, safeguarding thousands of unique wildlife species and maintaining carbon-rich peatlands while protecting the ancestral lands of Indigenous peoples. According to a report by Peru's National Service of Natural Protected Areas (SERNANP), upgrading Yaguas to national park status will sequester about 1.5 million tons of carbon for the next 20 years.

[The article of the Goldman Foundation](#) also presents the [winner of the Goldman Prize 2020 for Ecuador, Nemonte Nenquimo](#), a member of the Waorani community for the [our rainforest is not for sale campaign](#) resulted in the preservation of 500,000 acres of rainforest in Ecuador.

[In 2007 the Goldman Prize was awarded to Julio Cusurichi](#) a member of the [Shipibo-Conibo](#) indigenous community in the Peruvian Amazon for leading a successful campaign to protect the [Madre de Dios region](#) of southeastern Peru.

These experiences recognized by the Goldman Prize show the great contribution ensured by indigenous communities for the protection and sustainable management of the natural resources of the territories where they live, bringing benefits to local population as a whole and contributing to the efforts of governments engaged in ecological transition and in contrasting negative effects generated by climate change.

To know more

[Article in Goldman Environmental Foundation website](#)



[Amazonia for Life: 80% by 2025](#)

[Goldman Prize 2021 - Liz Chicaje Churay](#)

[Paisaje Yaguas in fzs.org website](#)

[Parque Nacional Yaguas in minam.gob.pe](#)

[Plan Maestro Parque Nacional Yaguas](#)

[Protejamos Yaguas in Facebook](#)

[Yaguas National Park in mongobay.com](#)

[Article in bbc.com](#)

[Goldman Environment Prize 2021](#)

[Goldman Environment Prize in Facebook](#)

[2021 Goldman Environmental Prize Winners in mondobay.com](#)

[Article in Scientific American Magazine](#)

[IUCN World Conservation Congress 2021](#)

[IUCN World Conservation Congress 2021 Manifiesto](#)

