



AMAZON
SACRED
HEADWATERS

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

WE PROTECT THE AMAZON
WE PROTECT THE FUTURE



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Our heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to the just cause of protecting the rights of Indigenous peoples, and the permanent protection of the Amazon—the world’s most biodiverse, and largest rainforest.

We want to thank you, and continue to ask you to stand with us as we realize our collective vision of protecting our Sacred Headwaters bioregion. Hope is with us.

Let’s work together with open minds and open hearts and ensure that future generations can also enjoy a livable world. We are very grateful for your collaboration.

”

Uyunkar Domingo Peas
Nampichkai
ASHA Board President

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AIDSEP	Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest
ASHA	Amazon Sacred Headwaters Alliance
COICA	Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin
CONAIE	Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador
CONFENIAE	Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon
EVA	Living School of the Amazon
PIACI	Indigenous Peoples in Isolation and Initial Contact

2023 WAS A MAJOR YEAR FOR THE AMAZON SACRED HEADWATERS ALLIANCE (ASHA)...

Together with the help of our dedicated allies, strategic partners, and donors, we made great strides in advancing Indigenous rights and the rights of nature in the world's most biodiverse ecosystem—the Amazon rainforest.

The Amazon can be thought of as the planet's heart, driving rainfall and weather patterns while cooling and regulating our global climate. **But the Amazon rainforest is in great danger: Deforestation and land degradation are pushing the entire system past an irreversible tipping point of ecological collapse, which will cause massive dieback of the rainforest.** The consequences of this are significant for our entire planet.

Climate scientists acknowledge protecting the Amazon is key to addressing the global climate crisis, and this is most effectively done by the securing rights of Indigenous peoples. [1]

In recognition of this planetary tipping point, at COP26 in Glasgow, 141 nations pledged to end deforestation by 2030. Their success hinges on the policy makers' ability to actively support Amazonian governments in their ecological transition pathways, and in particular, supporting Indigenous peoples who steward this headwaters bioregion.

Such a transition requires engaging myriad stakeholders and transforming our worldviews, as well as our economic and governance systems. A holistic suite of strategies and interventions are needed

that support forest stewards, and our own Indigenous visions and programs for protecting our territories.

ASHA is responding to this crisis with our bold mission to protect 86 million acres of tropical rainforests in the Sacred Headwaters of the mighty Amazon River—the Napo, Pastaza, and Marañón rivers of Ecuador and Peru.

We represent the world's largest Indigenous-led conservation and stewardship initiative. Coordinated by Indigenous organizations whose territories comprise the majority of the Amazon Sacred Headwaters bioregion, this initiative is uniquely positioned to deliver significant results: **supporting 30 Indigenous nations, and protecting the Amazon while catalyzing necessary ecological transitions.**

We're excited to share top outcomes of our work in 2023 which were collectively established as priorities by ASHA's Secretariat. This report features key updates on the following areas:

- I. Organizational Evolution
- II. Implementing Our Bioregional Plan
- III. Alliance Strengthening
- IV. Research and Learning
- V. Financial Report

ORGANIZATIONAL EVOLUTION



ASHA in Quito during a Governance Meeting. June 16–17, 2023.

Since ASHA's conception in 2017, our Assembly of Members has grown from 11 to 27 member organizations [2]—23 Indigenous organizations, and four non-Indigenous organizations. In 2023, ASHA became a legally established, independent nonprofit organization in Ecuador.

Our Assembly of Members elected 11 individuals to the Board of Directors for a three-year period. The board meets virtually once a month to collectively decide programmatic priorities and exchange information related to current events in the Amazon. The Assembly includes permanent seats for AIDESEP, CONFENIAE, and the pan-Amazonian Indigenous organization COICA; four seats

for founding members of the Alliance, two rotating seats for Indigenous base organizations of Peru and Ecuador, and two rotating seats for representatives of international NGOs.

ASHA proudly presents the elected Board of Directors for 2023–2026:

1. Uyunkar Domingo Peas Nampichkai (Achuar), president of the board and founding member
2. Wrayz Pérez (Wampis Nation), founding member
3. Jorge Pérez (AIDESEP), founding member
4. Lolita Piaguafe (CONFENIAE), founding member
5. Lourdes Jipa (Nación Quijos)
6. Elaine Shajian Shawit (CORPI)
7. Olivia Bisa (Chapra Nation)
8. Saúl Calapucha (PAKKIRU)
9. Kim Chaix (Rainforest Foundation US)
10. Belén Páez (Fundación Pachamama)
11. Jamner Manihuari (COICA)

IMPLEMENTING OUR BIOREGIONAL PLAN

2023 was a major year for implementing our programs across the Amazon Sacred Headwaters bioregion.

Some accomplishments include:

- **Increasing the visibility of the Bioregional Plan 2030** as a robust and viable roadmap for the permanent protection of this bioregion, and for a transition to a post-carbon economy focused on collective *buen vivir* (wellbeing) among national, regional and local governments and civil society, at international events, fora, and in decision-making spaces
- **Starting the design of an online project portfolio** to showcase Indigenous organizations' initiatives to boost visibility and funding to programs supporting the standing forest economy, education, and organizational strengthening
- **Supporting a number of projects focused on a regenerative bioeconomy**, including several small-scale agroforestry production with crops such as vanilla, and traditional crafts
- **Launching a one-year training course at the Living School of the Amazon** (Escuela Viva de la Amazonía, EVA) including youth from 11 Indigenous nationalities in Ecuador.
- **Continuing reforestation projects** in nine communities in the Ecuadorian Amazon
- **Developing a comprehensive, online Geographic Information System (GIS)** including socioeconomic indicators to monitor the state of the bioregion, and help build strong legal cases
- **Deepening our alliances with supporters and allies**, including securing financial support from donors for the implementation of projects in the territories included in the Bioregional Plan

Photo: Wampís Nation



“Crafts Capacity Building Project” was a 12-day workshop held in April 2023 for Wampís Nation female artisans working on craft techniques, product development, and distribution strategies for fair trade.

REFORESTATION BIOECONOMY PROJECT

With the generous support of ReforestAction, we made significant progress ([see progress dashboard](#)) on our program to reforest key zones in the Ecuadorian Amazonian provinces of Pastaza and Morona Santiago. We are repopulating endemic tree species selected for their ability to improve their surrounding ecosystems and strengthen chacras (local agricultural plots) – contributing to livelihoods and food security for Amazonian land protectors while supporting our vision of a thriving bioeconomy. The project, managed by Fundación Pachamama, aims to reforest key areas with 170,000 trees and plants selected to regenerate degraded forests.

In 2023, our Ecuador reforestation project engaged 219 families from 8 indigenous nationalities. Agreements have been signed in 41 communities. We held nine community assemblies, and coordinated follow-up and monitoring visits to families working as caretakers of the trees. Additionally, a georeferenced survey of more than 950 hectares was carried out in these communities, of which 643.5 hectares have been reforested.

As of December 2023, a total of 103,699 plants of 102 species have been delivered to participating households for planting. Of these species, 20% are on International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red lists, flagged as near-extinct or high-risk.

We have signed two agreements with local governments to ensure a sufficient, ongoing supply of propagated plants in order to meet our goal of planting 100,000 plants next year.



Photo: Fundación Pachamama



Photos: Fundación Pachamama



THE LIVING SCHOOL OF THE AMAZON (ESCUELA VIVA DE LA AMAZONÍA, EVA)

The Living School of the Amazon (EVA) is an initiative designed to train and support future generations of Indigenous leaders who, rooted in their cosmovision, will foster autonomous territorial leadership and advance the permanent protection of the Amazon rainforest.

The curriculum includes a range of topics including leadership development, governance, legal rights, project design, and Indigenous cosmovisions in the Amazon.

Students become versed in the core components of the Bioregional Plan while learning practical skills and tools to prepare them for leadership roles at community, regional, and global levels.

On March 9th 2023, EVA was inaugurated, welcoming the first cohort of 34 students representing 11 Indigenous nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon for the one year program. [3] In 2023, EVA contracted 12 teachers who held scheduled classes with students receiving training for 14 weeks at the CONFENIAE headquarters in Puyo, Ecuador.

Funding supported the construction of temporary dorms for students, two classrooms, and a kitchen serving students three meals a day.

EVA students listened to inspiring lectures by Indigenous leaders and other professionals, including former Indigenous territories coordinator Nanki Wampnkit.

ASHA's staff facilitated three workshops for students: one centered on the Escazu Agreement's significance for environmental defenders, while the other two focused on crafting the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (ME&L) system ASHA has been designing.

EVA students also engaged in internships with Indigenous organizations representing their nations, participating in virtual workshops alongside wisdomkeepers of the Amazon who shared traditional ecological knowledge and their cosmovisions.

Students also collaborated with these wisdomkeepers, returning to their communities to lead workshops for younger peers on ancestral wisdom, exploring traditional medicine and plant diversity, all co-created and executed by students. Additionally, students shared practical training on waste management methods. At the end of the year, EVA students prepared independent project proposals for presentation to their peers. EVA students prepared for their graduation set for March 2024.

Similarly, the EVA coordination team began the process of selecting up to 46 students for the second cohort set to begin their year in March 2024.

Photos: Fundación Pachamama



In April the “Planting Edible Forests” project, led by Fundación Pachamama, took EVA students to visit the farm of Mr. Marco Montaguano where they helped restore the land with hardwood and fruit trees. Students developed teamwork skills and advanced their knowledge of permaculture and sustainable agroforestry.



DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR ALTERNATIVE FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

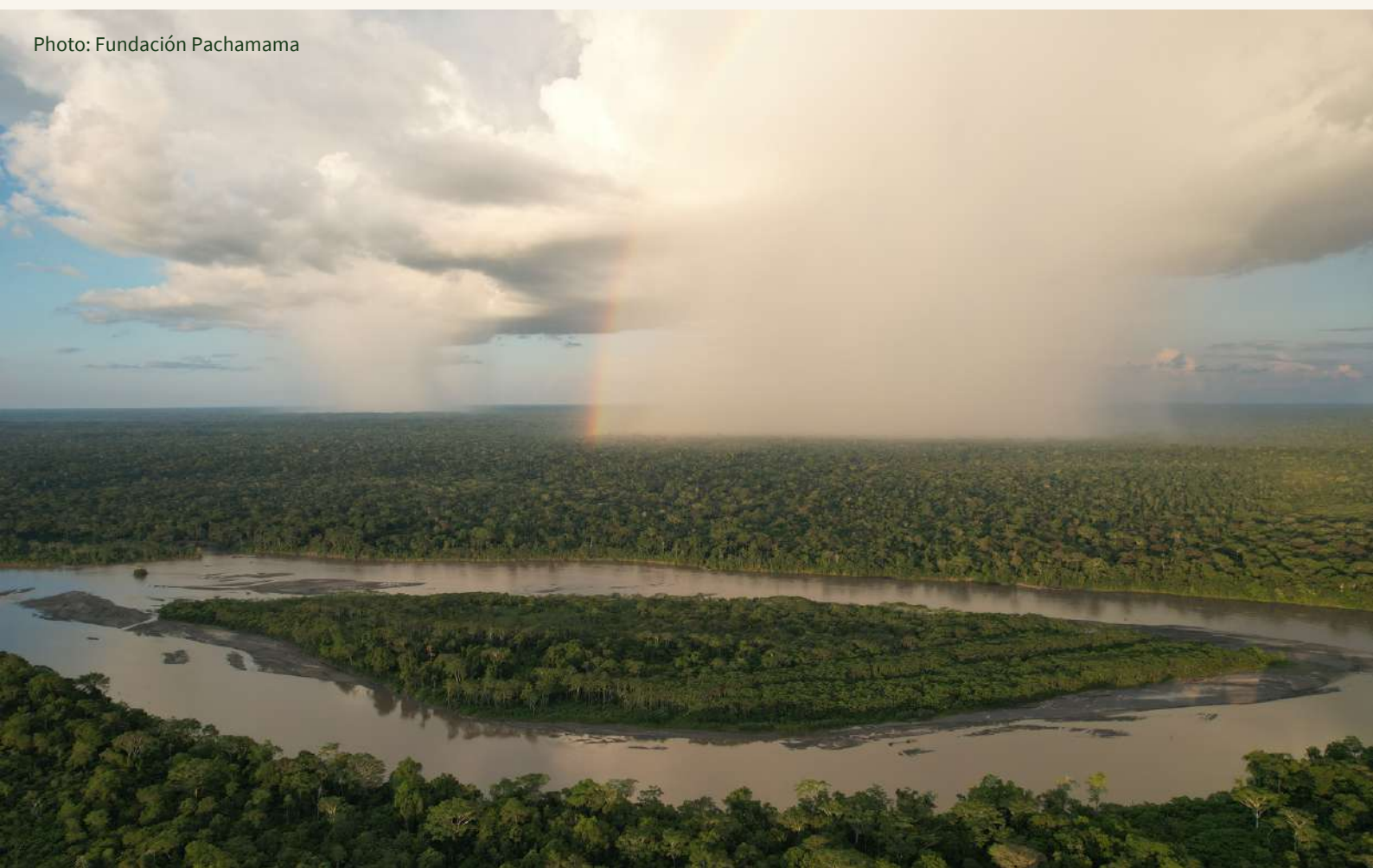
In light of the current boom in voluntary carbon markets and payments for ecosystem services, ASHA's Secretariat is exploring ways to ensure safeguards apply to protect Indigenous Amazonian peoples who might participate in such activities.

ASHA's member communities are frequently approached by companies representing carbon markets, and we've determined that it is of utmost importance to ensure Indigenous nations are appropriately educated, protected, and compensated if they choose to engage in such markets.

ASHA's Secretariat is identifying challenges and opportunities related to these new mechanisms, carefully considering how to leverage capacity for local forest guardians so they may meaningfully engage in decision-making processes.

Our team held a meeting with CONFENIAE in Puyo, Ecuador, which includes 11 nationalities from the Amazon of Ecuador, focused on generating a shared understanding about the topic. Our team has also held recurring meetings with Ecuador's Ministry of the Environment Under-Secretary of Climate Change, and other members of the Ministry in Ecuador.

Photo: Fundación Pachamama



ALLIANCE STRENGTHENING, ADVOCACY, LEGAL, AND COMMUNICATIONS

Photos: ASHA, Amazon Watch, and COICA



ASHA'S LEGAL STRATEGIES

Ecuador

Taromenane Case at the Inter-American Court on Human Rights (IACHR) – In 2023, the Ecuadorian Court held a hearing on the historic Taromenane Case which concerns the massacre of Indigenous people in voluntary isolation and initial contact (PIACI) that occurred in 2003, 2006 and 2013. In 2023, the court announced it would visit the territories before issuing its verdict. The legal team has been working to coordinate and support this site visit. Due to the increasingly complicated political situation in Ecuador, the visit—originally planned for May 2023—was postponed. [4]

A Precautionary Measure Petition in Support of the Shuar of Taisha – ASHA's legal team submitted a request for precautionary measures to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, citing the urgent threat to the fundamental rights of 285 Shuar and Achuar families in the Taisha in the Morona Santiago province. The families face imminent danger due to the actions of the Ministry of Defense, which is depriving them of their ancestral land.

Legal assistance and monitoring are being offered to Indigenous leaders in the area who are facing criminalization processes initiated by the military.

Legal assistance and monitoring are being offered to Indigenous leaders in the area who are facing criminalization processes initiated by the military. These processes aim to impede their efforts to defend their territory. To date, 21 criminal proceedings have been initiated against multiple Achuar and Shuar defenders.

Case Sapara Nation (NASE) vs. Sociobosque – In 2021, the Ministry of Agriculture, without consulting the organizational structure of the Sapara Nation of Ecuador, altered the title deed of their ancestral territory, allocating 70% of their land to an association named Naruka. On July 31, 2021, ASHA's legal team helped the Sapara Nation to file a protective action, citing the violation of their rights to ancestral lands by the action of the Ministry. On October 18, 2021, the Civil Judicial Unit of Pastaza accepted the protective action, ruling that the Sapara Nation's right to territory had been violated.

The Ministry of Agriculture filed an appeal. On July 22, 2022, the Provincial Court of Pastaza denied the appeal and upheld the violation of the rights of the Sapara Nation. In May 2023, the Constitutional Court denied a constitutional action presented by the Ecuadorian State against the July 2022 ruling. In 2023, our team presented a contentious administrative recourse due to failure of the Sociobosque initiative to make \$300,000 in conservation payments under their contract with NASE for the period of time when NASE's territory under contract was being usurped by the Ecuadorian State.

The legal team has convened several meetings with the Sociobosque Management and officials from the Ministry of Environment to monitor the administrative ruling pending since March 2023 for the funds rightfully owed to NASE.

While the authorities have acknowledged the injustice of withholding the funds, they have opted against payment due to concerns about potential administrative action by Ecuador's Comptroller General against the responsible public officials.

In response, we are considering initiating new judicial-constitutional processes, as well as seeking opportunities to dialogue with the new authorities at the Ministry of Environment.

Cóndor Mirador Mining Case – On October 27, 2023, E-Tech released a scientific study regarding the serious and immediate risks of a breach from the tailings dams of the “Mirador” open-pit, mega-mining project, one of the world's largest tailings dams.

Such a breach could result in irreparable environmental and social harm to Indigenous and peasant communities in the Cordillera del Cóndor (Morona Santiago and Zamora Chinchipe provinces), as well as to the Wampis nation in Peru.

In December 2023, ASHA team submitted the E-tech report as evidence in the 2022 case before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), along with a petition for precautionary measures.

The objective of the measures is for the Ecuadorian State and the mining company to take urgent actions to prevent damages, and ensure transparency regarding the project information held by the State. Likewise, protection has been requested for the president of CASCOMI (an Indigenous and peasant organization of Tundayme, a community directly affected by the mine), who was threatened and harassed by unknown individuals in December 2023 due to his territorial defense activity.

Case of Unconstitutionality of Executive Decree No. 754 – On June 13, 2023, a joint action of unconstitutionality was filed with the Constitutional Court, together with CONAIE, CONFENIAE, and the Center for Human Rights of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador (PUCE), against Executive Decree No. 754 regulating environmental consultation. The Decree undermines the right to prior, free, and informed consultation, and the right to pre-legislative consultation of Indigenous peoples.

On July 31, 2023, the Constitutional Court admitted our lawsuit and accepted the precautionary measures requested in the case. Thus, the Court temporarily suspended the executive decree until its unconstitutionality can be deliberated, managing to halt the progress of 176 pseudo-consultation processes in peasant and Indigenous communities that were intended to be imposed within 3 months through coercion.

On September 14, 2023, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for South America (OHCHR) issued a Technical Opinion on Executive Decree No. 754, alerting the Ecuadorian State to the serious threats posed by said norm to the right to prior, free, and informed consultation of Indigenous peoples; as stipulated in International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169. The OHCHR observed that the decree allows companies to start mining operations without prior, free, and informed consultation with Indigenous communities; it has been a trigger for violence in Indigenous and peasant communities where its implementation has been attempted, and described the norm as “a worrying setback in the protection of the rights of Indigenous peoples.”

On September 18, 2023, the Constitutional Court held the hearing within the process. [5] During the hearing, it was possible to demonstrate the unconstitutionality of Decree 754.

On November 9, 2023, the Constitutional Court issued its ruling, declaring Decree 754 unconstitutional, and prohibiting its application in consultations with Indigenous peoples. The Court gave the National Assembly a period of one year to enact a law for the regulation of the right to environmental consultation and a law for the regulation of the right to prior consultation, in accordance with national

and international human rights standards and through appropriate participation procedures. [6]

Other Legal Actions and Strategies – ASHA members are currently co-authoring a report with the Coordinating Entity of Ecuadorian Environmental Organizations and the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN) on the 15-year anniversary of Rights of Nature in the Ecuadorian Constitution. The report will be released in the summer of 2024.

We are also conducting a legal review of recent debt-for-nature swaps, including a report for internal discussion on the swap in development for the Ecuadorian Amazon by the national government.

Peru

Advocacy, the Inter-American System, and Precautionary Measures – On March 31, 2023, ASHA member organizations participated in a virtual workshop held by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Alliance members learned about the work of the Indigenous Peoples Rapporteur, and the Mechanism of Precautionary Measures. ASHA coordinated the participation of members representing the Indigenous organizations from the Achuar, Wampis and Chapra nations, as well as Peru’s regional Indigenous organization AIDSEP.

Protecting the Napo-Tigre Reserve – ASHA is working to advance the legal recognition of proposed reserves for Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact (PIACI), which includes the Napo-Tigre Reserve.

We have also been fighting repeated attempts by the Peruvian Congress to roll back the rights of PIACI. ASHA's Secretariat worked closely with Peruvian Indigenous organizations AIDESEP and ORPIO to successfully defeat the modification of the Forest Law bill No. 3518/2022, which was advancing in the Peruvian Congress; if passed, it would have revoked an existing law protecting PIACI.

Challenging Illegal Highway Construction

– In November 2023, Peruvian Law No. 31938 was passed, giving a green light to construct and improve roads for public and private use across the Amazon. This law threatens the biodiverse territory of the Shawi people, and if executed, will certainly bring invasions, deforestation and the loss of land for our partners.

ASHA stands behind the Autonomous Territorial Government of the Shawi Nation, which has prepared an action to repeal the unconstitutional law.

We're currently providing support to regional assemblies who contest the construction of these highways. More threats rolled in during December of 2023 when Peruvian Congress approved Law 31937, which negatively affects the Forestry and Wildlife Law, effectively weakening judicial influence of the Ministry of Environment.

Defending Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact (PIACI) – ASHA's Secretariat continues to advocate for the rights of PIACI on a number of fronts. We're providing funding

for legal advisors for regional organizations AIDESEP and ORPIO to counteract the blatantly anti-Indigenous political attacks on PIACI.

We've also drafted technical options for AIDESEP to present in court against Peruvian Legislation 3518/2022, helping to galvanize the participation of academic and civil society groups to present similar opinions in contestation of the bill.

In addition, ASHA's Secretariat:

- Helped organize meetings with the IACHR's rapporteur for Indigenous peoples, in which we accompanied AIDESEP and helped draft a letter also to the UN Rapporteur for Indigenous Peoples. [\[7\]](#)
- Supported AIDESEP's request submitted to the Secretary of Environmental Affairs of the Trade Promotion Agreement Peru United States for non-compliance in the application of environmental standards in the preparation of Bill 3518.
- Provided legal and technical support, drafting four legal actions in defense of PIACI in which AIDESEP is either a plaintiff or defendant and accompanied AIDESEP's participation in the court hearings.
- Coordinated a virtual hearing in the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights together with AIDESEP and the IDL, which is scheduled to take place in March 2024.

Photos: ORPIO and SERNANP



ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Campaigning for the Defense of Isolated Peoples

In Peru, our team focused on supporting a campaign in defense of Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation (PIACI).

In partnership with Indigenous leaders and civil society organizations, ASHA played a major role in advancing efforts to raise awareness about Forest Law bill No. 3518/2022 and expose its backers: namely miners, loggers and oil lobbyists. [8]

The law would have stripped these isolated populations of their land rights, and enabled a new wave of invasions, destruction and violence.

We helped recruit partners like Oxygen Project and Avaaz, with whom we collected over [595,000 signatures worldwide](#) to stop the bill. On June 23rd a special committee of Peruvian Congress voted to shelve the bill—a significant victory for the rights of isolated Indigenous peoples, and for the protection of the forest.



Ecuador's Referendum to Keep Yasuní Oil in the Ground

In a much-awaited moment, on August 20, 2023 Ecuador's citizens took to the polls and cast a historic popular vote in favor of stopping oil extraction and forgoing the exploitation of an estimated 726 million barrels of oil in Yasuní National Park. This victory sent a message of hope for the global climate movement and Indigenous peoples, demonstrating a popular desire to protect the Sacred Headwaters rainforest for future generations.

Our team helped with support a group of regional and local Indigenous

organizations including CONAIE and CONFENIAE in the run up to the vote. Together with CONAIE and CONFENIAE, we launched a bilingual campaign to raise awareness about the referendum.

This campaign included social media content production, national activities and gatherings, and press releases.

Following the passage of the referendum, we are working with the Indigenous members of our Alliance in advocacy efforts aimed at ensuring that the government of Ecuador complies with the mandate of the referendum to protect Yasuní National Park and stop further hydrocarbon extraction.



Oil Contamination in Chapra Territory

In 2023 our Communications and Legal teams continued to support Olivia Bisa, president of the Chapra Nation (GTANCH), with her demand that Peruvian authorities ensure the cleanup of an oil spill that occurred on September 11th, 2022. Our legal team provided advice and drafted documents including meeting minutes, letters and declarations submitted to government agencies.

ASHA supported efforts to document and publicize the conflict between the communities and Anexos Consultores, a contractor of the Peruvian national oil company, Petroperu. [9] This contractor has a track record of leaving toxic contamination from industrial supplies, and has illegally pitched five worker camps without consulting the Chapra Nation.

In response, the Peruvian government's Agency for Environmental Assessment and Enforcement visited the illegal camps and contaminated Chapra territories to impose legal procedures and sanctions. Journalists responded to the news. [10]



DELEGATIONS AND ACTIONS AT GLOBAL EVENTS

Meeting on Biodiversity Framework, London, United Kingdom

In February of 2023, ASHA's Board President Uyunkar Domingo Peas and our Director of Global Strategy Atossa Soltani were invited to participate in a high-level gathering, "Nature Action: Private Sector Mobilization" at the Lancaster House in London. The event aimed to catalyze and demonstrate delivery of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework following the Convention on Biological Diversity at COP15 in Montreal. Conversations focused on how the private sector can work with Governments, Indigenous Leaders and civil society to support the delivery of the Kunming-Montreal Framework—a plan for financing biodiversity, shifting towards a nature-positive economy.

The event was followed by a reception at Buckingham Palace where ASHA leaders met with King Charles III. Uyunkar gifted him a necklace, a ceramic bowl and a bracelet with a warm invitation to visit the Amazon, and thanked the King for sending his team (Marc Palahi of the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance) to the rainforest in 2022. Uyunkar's presentation to the King received widespread media attention. [\[11\]](#)

On May 4th 2023, just prior to the King's coronation, Uyunkar Domingo Peas and Atossa Soltani returned to London and participated in a private audience at Buckingham Palace with King Charles III, and presented him a crown of feathers symbolizing our deepening alliance. Uyunkar also thanked King Charles for the support provided to the Indigenous nations of the Amazon by the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance. [\[12\]](#)



ASHA Board President Uyunkar Domingo Peas and ASHA Director of Global Strategy Atossa Soltani meet-and-greet King Charles III. London, February 2023

COP 2 of Escazú Agreement, Buenos Aires, Argentina

In April 2023, ASHA participated in the Defenders Forum [13] as part of the COP2 of the Escazú Agreement that brought together various groups in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

We also participated in conversations at COP2, adding Indigenous voices to the conversation. We articulated our ongoing position that the rights and inclusion Indigenous Peoples are critical in the official proceedings of efforts to advance the Escazú Agreement. [14]

Photo: CEPAL



Leaders of the Peruvian Amazon at COP2/Escazú held in April 2023 in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, New York City, USA

Representatives of ASHA attended the twenty-second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues of the United Nations in New York, and delivered a strong message for the permanent protection of the Amazon.

A call was made to the Ecuadorian government to maintain the oil moratorium to favor life. [15]

Aspen Climate Ideas, Miami, USA

Belen Páez, President of Fundación Pachamama and ASHA board member, participated in a panel discussion titled “A perspective on compensation as a mechanism to stop deforestation”. The panel addressed deforestation and its particularly on people who live in and depend directly on forests. Panelists discussed the pledges made by corporations, investors and governments to end deforestation, pointing out where there is progress and where they are falling short.

Future Horizon, Sintra, Portugal

In June, Uyunkar Domingo Peas and Rafaela Iturralde, from the ASHA Secretariat, attended the Future Horizon gathering in Sintra, Portugal. Uyunkar was a panelist in a discussion on “[Frameworks for Distributing Value](#),” alongside Future Horizon ED Angela Bermudo, Founder and CEO of EQX Biome, Matthias Pitkowicz, and CEO at Mural, Sinclair Toffa. [16]

Pre-Amazon Presidents' Summit in Leticia, Colombia & Amazon President's Summit in Belem, Brazil

The Amazon Presidents' Summit was convened by Presidents Lula da Silva and Gustavo Petro, aiming to bring together eight countries of the Amazon (and French Guiana) to commit to a joint action plan to prevent the tipping point of no return. In July, ASHA sent a small delegation to participate in the negotiations for creation of the joint action plan that would later be presented to the Presidents of the Amazon Basin during the Summit in Belen do Pará, Brazil.

During the negotiations, our alliance's President, Uyunkar Domingo Peas, and Director of Global Strategy, Atossa Soltani, worked closely with Fany Kuiru, General Coordinator of COICA and María Susana Muhamad González, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia.

In August, a larger delegation of representatives of ASHA attended the Summit in Belem, where the Belem Declaration was adopted. We participated and gave talks in various panels and actions aimed at elevating the important role of Indigenous peoples in programs and policies aimed at protecting the Amazon.



Photos: ASHA



Climate Week, New York City, USA

ASHA participated in major events such as the World Biodiversity Summit, Global Futures Forum, Path To Scale convening, The People's Forum, and other civil society events. Thanks to the generosity of our dear friends and allies Rachel and Mikkel Vestergaard, ASHA hosted a gathering for allies and donors at their home in Manhattan. ASHA had a strong presence at the *March to End Fossil Fuels*, walking alongside other Indigenous partners before the 70,000-person crowd.



Latin America Regional Climate Week, Panama City, Panama

To amplify Indigenous people's voices and demands at the regional level, a small delegation from ASHA attended this gathering in Panama. Our delegation participated in a number of official events, focusing specifically on advancing outcomes from COP28 towards COP30.



UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, COP28, Dubai, UAE

A delegation composed of members of the Alliance board and staff attended the COP in Dubai to present ASHA's vision, find new and deepen existing alliances for the protection of the Amazon. Our team participated in numerous events and attended key strategic meetings. In that context, we executed a tailored media strategy securing 23 media hits during the COP.



Photos: ASHA and AIDESEP



Communications Strategies

A key facet of ASHA's strategy focuses on communicating the under-publicized realities of our Alliance members in the Amazon. Our communications team aims to elevate ASHA's profile, educate a global audience on the imminent threats people face in the Amazon, and engage and grow our global network of supporters.

ASHA made a number of headlines in 2023. Our bold initiative earned media coverage in a number of publications including Bloomberg, Scientific American, Democracy Now, CBC News, Associated Press, Mongabay, Hola!, Telemundo, El País, Standard, Mirror and the UK Daily Mail. [17]

Our communications team produced 182 unique pieces of content (114 in Spanish, 68 in English), which included individual flyers, infographics, audio clips, short reels, and longer videos.

ASHA co-produced the second season of our podcast [La Amazonia Habla](#) [18] (The Amazon Speaks) in partnership with Emergencia Amazónica and Lanceros Digitales. Our new season includes episodes in English and Spanish, recorded

directly from the Indigenous territories of the Sacred Headwaters, and covers topics from climate justice and technology to territorial defense and Amazonian cosmovision.

Selected Webinars and Virtual Events in 2023

- **Indigenous Youth for Climate Action and the Protection of the Indigenous Peoples in Isolation.** On April 20th, during COP2 Escazú, we organized an online event together with OPIAC, AIDSEP and Fundación Kambak. The event was attended by 1,210 virtual participants.
- **The Protection of the Indigenous Peoples in Isolation of the Sacred Headwaters.** Held virtually on April 28th, this event was organized together with Jóvenes del Milenio-Junín.



- Universal Basic Income and Degrowth as Pathways for the Socio-ecological Transition.** Held on May 31, both physically and virtually, this event included Fander Falconí, economist and former Minister of Planning of Ecuador, Belén Páez, President of the Fundación Pachamama and General Secretary of ASHA, and Alberto Acosta, economist and former Ecuadorian Minister of Energy. The event was moderated by Ivette Vallejo, researcher and teacher at Flacso Ecuador. The live event was attended by a combined 1,903 people virtually and in person.



- In Defense of Indigenous Isolated Peoples and Law 28736.** Held on June 20th, this event was co-organized with AIDESEP and Congresswoman Sigrid Bazan. Indigenous representatives delivered to members of Congress Sigrid Bazán and Jorge Marticorena more than half a million signatures of people from all over the world, who have raised their voices in defense of PIACI through a virtual petition, co-promoted by Avaaz, which supported the request for the shelving of Bill 3518.



RESEARCH AND LEARNING

The Research and Learning working group was formed in response to a growing need to collect and make sense of our organization's impact. The group works on widely disseminating updated information generated about the bioregion, so that it may be used by other working groups more effectively. Outcomes of this working group include comprehensive packets of material which can be used to influence decision-making by the different actors within the bioregion, and at a global level.

Through strategic communication and publications in academic journals and other media, this working group seeks to disseminate our impact, in close coordination with strategic alliances with universities, and ASHA's Global Commission of Experts.

This working group is also tasked with designing and implementing the internal Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (ME&L) system for ASHA and the Bioregional Plan's implementation.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Methodology

This year we took a big step in advancing our ME&L capabilities, hiring experts to support us in designing a system that suits our unique biocultural landscapes. This culminated in the fully operational beta version of our Geographic Information System (GIS) platform, which also

includes a social atlas (socio-economic and population/census data) of the Sacred Headwaters bioregion (Ecuador, Peru, and even some data for the border region of Colombia), which is now publicly accessible. This is the first comprehensive Indigenous Amazonian designed-and-developed map representing our territories.

We thank our research partners and collaborators from the Socio-environmental Research Unit of the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, the Technical University of Quevedo, and Earth InSight for their continued guidance and collaboration with this monumental achievement.

PLATAFORMA DE INFORMACIÓN DE LAS CUENCAS SAGRADAS

Inicio Geovisor y datos Indicadores Cuencas Sagradas Atlas socio-económico Covid-19

Límite área efectiva Cuencas Sagradas
Área efectiva de las Cuencas Sagradas

Límite área de influencia Cuencas Sagradas
Área de Influencia de las Cuencas Sagradas

Áreas Prioritarias Conservación_1_Ecuador
Escenario 1 - Áreas Prioritarias de Conservación. ÁREAS...

Áreas Prioritarias Restauración_1_Ecuador
Escenario 1 - Áreas Prioritarias de Restauración. ÁREAS...

Áreas Prioritarias Restauración_1_Peru
Escenario 1 - Áreas Prioritarias de Restauración. ÁREAS...

Territorios Indígenas_CS
Territorios Indígenas - RAISG (Red Amazónica de Información...)

Territorios Integrales_Peru
Territorios Integrales de Perú

ÁREAS NATURALES PROTEGIDAS
Datos consolidados de Áreas Naturales Protegidas Nacional...

Aplicaciones interactivas

En esta sección podrás explorar indicadores a nivel demográfico, social, ambiental y territorial de las Cuencas Sagradas y Nacionalidades Indígenas. Las aplicaciones te permiten navegar por el territorio de Cuencas Sagradas y actualizar automáticamente los indicadores según el área en donde te encuentres en el mapa. ¡Disfruta y aprende!

Demografía - Cuencas Sagradas

Indicadores Áreas Prioritarias Conservación

Indicadores Sociales

2023 ASHA REVENUE AND EXPENSES

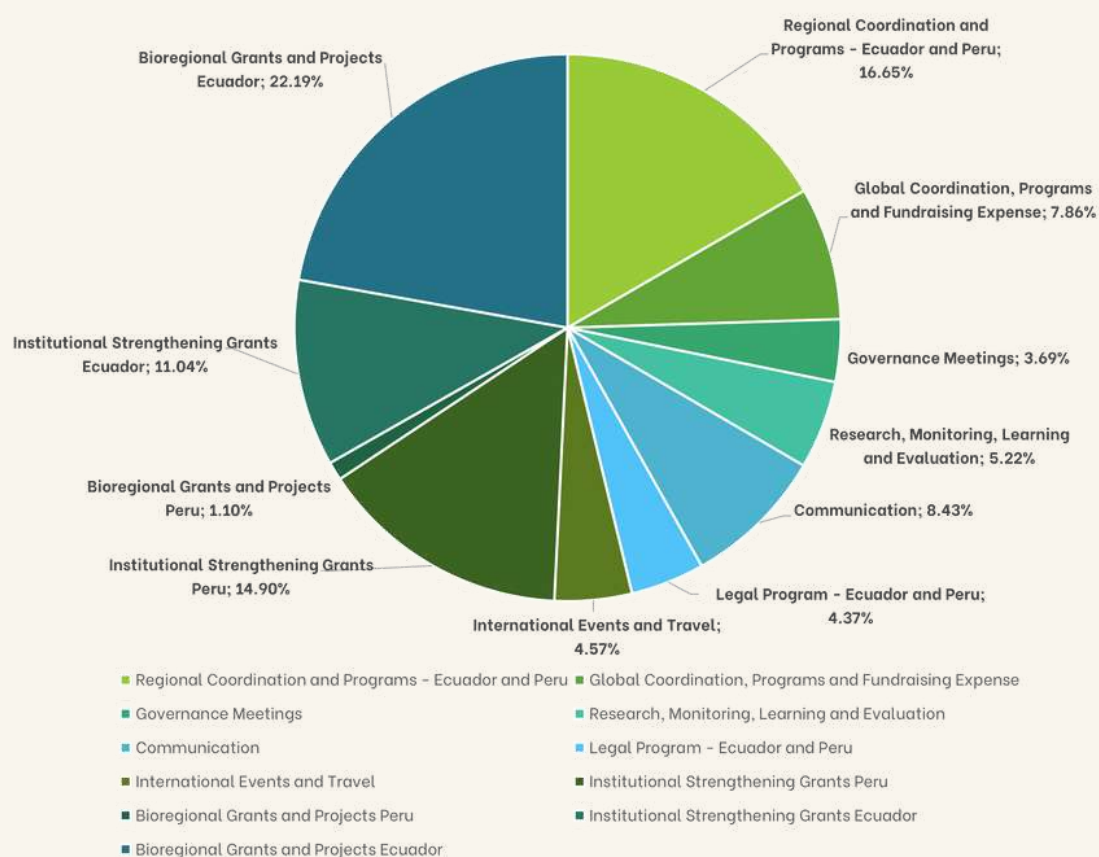
2023 REVENUE BY CATEGORY	AMOUNT	%
Foundations and Institutional Donors	\$587,218	31.1%
Individuals and Family Foundations	\$1,298,663	68.7%
Grassroots Online Donations	\$4,290	0.2%
TOTAL	\$1,890,171	100%

Photo: ASHA



2023 EXPENSES BY CATEGORY	AMOUNT	%
Regional Coordination and Programs in Ecuador and Peru	\$310,179	16.60%
Global Coordination, Programs and Fundraising	\$146,380	7.90%
Governance Meetings	\$68,671	3.70%
Research, Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation	\$97,278	5.20%
Communication	\$156,997	8.40%
Legal Programs in Ecuador and Peru	\$81,354	4.40%
International Events and Travel	\$85,182	4.60%
Institutional Strengthening Grants Peru	\$277,540	14.90%
Bioregional Grants and Projects Peru	\$20,500	1.10%
Institutional Strengthening Grants Ecuador	\$205,741	11.00%
Bioregional Grants and Projects Ecuador	\$413,419	22.20%
GRAND TOTAL	\$1,863,242	100%

2023 Expenses by Category



GRAND TOTAL: \$1,863,242

Institutional Strengthening & Bioregional Grants in Detail

ECUADOR	INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING	PROJECTS	TOTAL
CONFENIAE	\$116,108.00		\$116,108.00
CONAIE	\$30,000.00	\$24,650.00	\$54,650.00
COICA	\$3,480.00		\$3,480.00
PUEBLO SHUAR ARUTAM	\$5,000.00		\$5,000.00
COPNAEP (ECU)	\$19,500.00		\$19,500.00
WAYUSENTSA	\$6,000.00		\$6,000.00
BIO WARMI	\$0.00	\$5,619.90	\$5,619.90
COMUNA SAN JACINTO / PONAKICS	\$5,000.00		\$5,000.00
PAKKIRU	\$1,360.00		\$1,360.00
NACIÓN ORIGINARIA QUIJOS + Sarayaku	\$4,000.00		\$4,000.00
NACIÓN ANDWA DE PASTAZA	\$7,000.00		\$7,000.00
NASHIE	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
ONISE	\$1,492.50		\$1,492.50
NACIONALIDAD SIEKOPAI	\$2,000.00		\$2,000.00
EMERGENCY AND OTHER SMALL GRANTS	\$3,800.00	\$12,612.00	\$16,412.00
REFORESTATION PROJECT	\$0.00	\$170,082.85	\$170,082.85
LIVING AMAZON SCHOOL	\$0.00	\$200,454.71	\$200,454.71
TOTAL ECUADOR	\$205,740.50	\$413,419.46	\$619,159.96

PERU	INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING	PROJECTS	TOTAL
ORPIO	\$63,900.00		\$63,900.00
GTANW (WAMPIS)	\$12,375.00	\$10,000.00	\$22,375.00
FENAP	\$23,000.00		\$23,000.00
COPNAEP (PE)	\$22,300.00		\$22,300.00
CORPI	\$16,715.00		\$16,715.00
ORPIAN	\$4,000.00		\$4,000.00
CODEPISAN	\$2,000.00		\$2,000.00
TERRITORIO KANDOZI	\$5,000.00		\$5,000.00
GTA CHAPRA	\$5,000.00		\$5,000.00
CTA SHAWI	\$5,000.00		\$5,000.00
GTAN - AWAJUN	\$0.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00
AIDSESP	\$118,250.00		\$118,250.00
EMERGENCY AND OTHER SMALL GRANTS	\$0.00	\$5,000.23	\$5,000.23
TOTAL PERÚ	\$277,540.00	\$20,500.23	\$298,040.23

We are grateful to ASHA's 2023 funders:

- AVAAZ
- Biome Trust
- Bullens, Heimann & Friends
- Chantecaille
- Charities Aid Foundation
- Chris Lindstrom / David Rockefeller Foundation
- Circular Bioeconomy Alliance
- CISCO Foundation
- Daughters for Earth
- Earth Insight / Resources Legacy Fund
- Earth Legacy Alliance
- Energy Transition Fund
- Helvellyn Foundation
- Henry Luce Foundation
- InterAmerican Clean Energy Institute
- Jeremy and Britta LLOYD Charitable Trust
- Jessica and Adam Sweidan
- New England Biolabs Foundation
- Nicole Sahin
- One Project
- RedWood Foundation
- Reforestacion
- Renewables 100
- RSF Social Finance
- Silicon Valley Foundation
- Synchronicity Earth
- Values.co / CELO Foundation
- Wendy's Wish Foundation

Additionally, ASHA's secretariat engaged in strategic activities to increase our partnerships including:

1. Improving our donor tracking systems alongside grant and financial reporting processes.
2. Participating in international events / conferences to elevate the visibility of our Alliance and our role in the broader context of the protection of the Amazon Basin and Indigenous Peoples' Rights.
3. Organizing 2 donor delegations to Indigenous territories to cultivate existing and potential supporters. Two additional delegations were canceled due to concerns about unrest in Ecuador during the last quarter of the year.
4. In June, ASHA's Technical Team participated in a four-day field visit in the Ecuadorian Amazon to learn first hand about the bioeconomy projects that Fundación Pachamama and ASHA are helping implement or funding. The projects visited produce vanilla, chocolate, biocosmetics, plantain chips, beer, and other regenerative natural products.

Photo: Eduardo Pichilingue (ASHA)



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

Our Alliance is building upon the strong systems of governance we've developed in 2023. Looking ahead, in 2024 we will continue to follow our strategy outlined in the Bioregional Plan, focusing on:

1. Strengthening **institutional capacity** of Indigenous member organizations for territorial governance, advocacy, project implementation, and financial management;
2. Securing funding for **Indigenous-led initiatives** for food security, livelihood alternatives, forest monitoring, intercultural health /education, and renewable energy;
3. Accompanying and supporting the pilot **reforestation** project and the **Living School of the Amazon**;
4. Organizing or participating in **joint communications / advocacy campaigns and legal actions** to deter extractive industries and defend Indigenous rights and the rights of nature;
5. Advancing legal recognition of Indigenous land claims covering 22 million acres of rainforests;
6. Presenting **systemic solutions to incentivize forest protection and halt deforestation** (canceling debt, wellbeing indicators, universal basic / intact forest income, bioeconomy hubs, financial mechanisms); and
7. Launching the **monitoring and evaluation system and the GIS platform**, and completing and launching a **project portfolio platform** for showcasing our programs and projects.

We thank all of our donors, collaborators, advisors, and allies who form part of this ambitious and crucial journey to protect the Sacred Headwaters of our planet's greatest treasure and beating heart.



Notes

1. [4 Ways Indigenous and Community Lands Help Fight Climate Change](#)
2. [See ASHA's complete Assembly of Members](#)
3. Many hands made this dream a reality, including the leaders from CONFENIAE, Fundación Pachamama, and our donors Bullens Heimann & Friends, Synchronicity Earth, and ReforestAction. To see photos of the inauguration, interviews from youth leaders, and to learn more about EVA, [please visit this link](#)
4. [#MesadeAnálisisPlanV: Mario Melo y Helena Gualinga](#)
5. [Audiencia Pública Caso Nro. 51-23-IN](#)
6. [El Pleno de la Corte Constitucional del Ecuador, en ejercicio de sus atribuciones constitucionales y legales, emite la siguiente sentencia 51-23-IN/23](#)
7. [AIDSEP y la Alianza Cuencas Sagradas informamos sobre la situación y amenazas que enfrentan los pueblos en aislamiento a la CIDH](#)
8. Learn more about [our campaign to roll back Forest Law Bill No. 3518/2022](#), and [our co-produced webinar](#)
9. [Anexus Consultores EIRL, contratista de Petroperu, contamina territorio de la Nación Chapra](#)
10. [Loreto: Nación Chapra denuncia a contratista de Petroperu por contaminar su territorio con residuos tóxicos](#)
11. [King Charles is gifted a colourful necklace from an indigenous leader as he hosts global biodiversity reception at Buckingham Palace](#)
12. [Amazon Indigenous people recognize King's visionary leadership in pre-coronation event](#)
13. [Foro Defensores - COP2 Escazú](#)
14. [Comunidades indígenas de Latinoamérica esperan más del Acuerdo de Escazú](#)
15. [Manari Ushigua, miembro de los sabios de la Alianza Cuencas Sagradas, participa en el 22 período de sesiones del Foro Permanente para las Cuestiones Indígenas](#)
16. [Frameworks for Distributing Value](#)
17. See a [complete list of ASHA's press mentions](#)
18. Podcast ["La Amazonía Habla"](#)



AMAZON SACRED HEADWATERS

For more information about our programs and initiatives, please write us at **info@cuencasagradas.org** or through our social networks.



<https://sacredheadwaters.org/>



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