INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ISOLATION IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON

BEATRIZ HUERTAS CASTILLO
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ISOLATION IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON

Their struggle for survival and freedom

Beatriz Huertas Castillo

IWGIA
Document No. 100 - Copenhagen 2004
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ISOLATION IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON
Their struggle for survival and freedom

Beatriz Huertas Castillo

Copyright: Beatriz Huertas Castillo and IWGIA
2004 – All Rights Reserved

Cover design, typesetting and maps: Jorge Monrás

English translation: Elaine Bolton

Editorial production: Alejandro Parellada

Prepress and Print: Centraltrykkeriet Skive A/S
Skive, Denmark

ISBN: 87-90730-77-1
This book has been produced with financial support from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
CONTENT

Preface ............................................................................................................ 10

Introduction .................................................................................................... 14

Chapter 1
Indigenous Peoples in isolation ................................................................. 20
Who are they? ............................................................................................. 20

Chapter 2
Madre de Dios, a general overview ......................................................... 24
Geo-environmental context ....................................................................... 24
Historic context ......................................................................................... 25
Economic context ....................................................................................... 33
Cultural context: the indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios today .......... 37

Chapter 3
Indigenous peoples in isolation in the north of Madre de Dios .......... 42
Areas of transit: geographical and biophysical features ......................... 42
Experiences of direct contact with peoples in isolation. A chronology ... 43
Possible causes of their isolation ............................................................... 49
Demographic and physical features ......................................................... 55
Cultural features ....................................................................................... 56
Settlement and migration pattern ............................................................ 61
Land occupation ....................................................................................... 63
The rationale behind resource exploitation ............................................. 64

Chapter 4
The current problem .................................................................................. 66
Logging ....................................................................................................... 66
Hunters, fishermen and gatherers .............................................................. 71
The tourism sector .................................................................................... 72
Colonization ............................................................................................... 74
The missionaries ....................................................................................... 75
Oil ............................................................................................................... 78

Chapter 5
The risks ..................................................................................................... 82
Sightings ..................................................................................................... 82
Clashes .................................................................................................. 82
The new raids ..................................................................................... 83
Territorial dislocations and inter-ethnic problems .............................. 84
The effect of tools - the Alto Purús case ........................................ 87
Prior to initial contact ........................................................................ 88
Post-contact problems ...................................................................... 97
Loss of territory: from nomadism to a sedentary life ...................... 99
Creating new needs, dependency and begging .............................. 99

Chapter 6
The Territorial Reserve for indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact ........................................... 102
Current legislation ............................................................................... 102
Officially established reserves ............................................................. 104
Nahua Kugapakori State Reserve ..................................................... 104
The Camisea Project ......................................................................... 105
Irregularities in the Camisea Project and its socio-environmental impacts ................................................... 106
Illegal logging ................................................................................... 112
Territorial Reserve for the Murunahua ethnic group ....................... 114
Territorial Reserve for the Mashco Piro ethnic group ......................... 116
Territorial Reserve for the Isconahua ethnic group ......................... 119
Reserves in the process of being established .................................... 120
Other proposals ................................................................................ 122

Chapter 7
The Territorial Reserve for indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios: FENAMAD’s experience ......................................... 124
FENAMAD ......................................................................................... 124
Negotiations for the protection of the territory of the peoples in isolation: a long history .................... 127
History repeats itself .......................................................................... 134
FENAMAD’s complaints: the State’s silence and impunity ................ 135
The role of the local organisations .................................................... 137
The Reserve for peoples in isolation .................................................. 139

Chapter 8
Isolated peoples along the Peru/Brazil border, Brazilian policy and proposals for joint work ..................... 142
The isolated peoples of the area .......................................................... 143
A little background ............................................................................ 144
Peoples in isolation and conflicts
along the border ................................................................. 145
FUNAI’s role ........................................................................ 148
A new phase: respect for the right to autonomy .............. 150
More recent attacks: agreements between Brazilian authorities ............................................................ 152
Lands for the indigenous in isolation ................................ 153
Coordination with Peru ....................................................... 154

Chapter 9
Proposals and prospects for the protection of isolated indigenous peoples in the current political climate ..................................................... 158
Territory first ........................................................................ 161
Territorial supervision .......................................................... 163
Indigenous peoples in isolation in PNAs ............................... 164
Prevention ............................................................................ 165
Contingency plans ............................................................... 166
Emergency health plans: controlling illness ....................... 166
From isolation to sustained contact ..................................... 168
The great challenge for the government .............................. 170
Final thoughts ....................................................................... 172

Chapter 10
Conclusions and recommendations ........................................ 176

Annexes ................................................................................ 181

Bibliography ......................................................................... 236
It sounds like a fairy tale. Today, at the dawn of the third millennium, in the height of the information age, when nearly all the world’s nations and economies are connected by intercontinental transportation and instantaneous electronic communications, as artificial satellites encircle the Earth and concrete plans exist to send human beings to Mars, there still remain, in the remote Amazon rainforest, small nomadic groups who reject contact with the rest of society and remain isolated from so-called ‘civilization’.

Variously called isolated indigenous peoples, uncontacted Indians, nomads, groups in voluntary or forced isolation, free or excluded peoples, as well as ‘naked Indians’, ‘wild Indians,’ savages, Mashcos and Chunchos, very little is known about these peoples, their history, territories, languages, knowledge and ways of life, nor about their perceptions of the strangers who surround them and who increasingly encroach upon their lands. We can assume with some certainty that they are of various different ethnic groups; that they are not as few as some loggers, journalists, scholars and missionaries would have us believe; that they migrate through vast areas between the different basins of Madre de Dios and other remote regions of the Amazon, hunting, fishing and gathering the resources they find scattered in the cruel, exuberant forest; that some of them have abandoned agriculture, perhaps fleeing from atrocities committed during the “Rubber Fever” a century ago; that they know not of money or the things that money can buy, nor of slavery or debt peonage; that they have no immunity to common illnesses such as colds and flu; that they are not embarrassed by their own nudity because by wearing their body paints and other adornments, they are not in fact naked, at least, not until someone else arrives to inform them otherwise.

There are many assumptions, many theories, much controversy. The only thing we know for certain is that, on multiple occasions, and through different actions, gestures and forms of expression, these human groups have emphatically and repeatedly told us that they do not yet want contact with outside society. Not with neighbouring groups of indigenous people, nor with loggers, missionaries, indigenous Evangelical “brothers”, anthropologists, film crews, tourists, explorers, not with anyone. We do not know exactly why. Perhaps through distant memories of the bloody “Rubber Rever,” or perhaps because of more recent conflicts with different invaders, perhaps through fear of introduced diseases, or simply because they believe...
themselves to be the only true human beings, while the rest of us or nothing more than barbarians. They probably have their reasons. Is it really so difficult to respect and honor their decision?

Who are these mysterious peoples, these renegades fleeing “civilization”? For the logging companies, at least officially, they do not exist; they are but an invention of anthropologists, ecologists and radical indigenous activists. For the loggers themselves, perhaps not in their press releases and official statements, but in the forest, where they are undertaking predatory and illegal logging of tropical hardwoods, these non-existent beings become mortal enemies, bravely and mercilessly defending their territory with bows and arrows against shotguns, rifles and explosives. For the transnational oil companies, they are an additional factor to be considered in their analysis of risks and benefits, in some cases warranting the hiring of anthropologists, the production of contingency plans and investment in PR. For some missionaries, they are souls to be conquered for the Kingdom of God, whatever the cost in lives, suffering, disruption and humiliation for the poor heathens thus saved. For some scientists, they are Paleolithic curiosities whose scientific value diminishes once they abandon nomadic hunting and gathering for settled agriculture. For film crews and adventure tourism companies, they are an attraction, an exotic, romantic spectacle that increases the value of their productions and tour offerings. For the Peruvian government they are common, everyday citizens, with no special protection or consideration in the current laws concerning native peoples.

In this important book, Beatriz Huertas offers us an objective yet humane vision of the current situation of isolated indigenous groups in southeast Peru. Drawing on extensive fieldwork and interviews with people living in areas adjacent to these isolated populations, she presents solid evidence of their existence, their territorial extension, their cultural and linguistic diversity, and their considerable population. She also provides a thorough review of various bibliographic sources, compiling in a single book many relevant observations and facts that had been previously scattered throughout numerous historic documents, scientific publications as well as obscure or unpublished works such as field reports, personal observations by various specialists and internal documents of FUNAI, the National Indian Foundation of Brazil, an organization working with similar issues on the other side of an international boundary that these indigenous groups do not recognize or obey.

This book offers us historic and anthropological perspectives from which to understand the fragility of isolated indigenous groups in the face of contact with outside society. It helps us appreciate the importance, in terms of cultural and biological diversity, of safe-
guarding their territories for both their future and that of the human race. Drawing on scientific and legal principles, international agreements, and primarily from the perspective of human rights, Beatriz presents solid arguments concerning the urgent need for national and international efforts to defend the territories, cultural integrity and life ways of isolated indigenous populations. She proposes strategic alliances between local communities, indigenous federations, the Peruvian government and international players in order to put a halt to the current “mahogany fever” in Madre de Dios that is destroying some of the last refuges of tropical hardwoods and the last strongholds of isolated indigenous peoples in Peru, and indeed the world.

What does the future hold for the isolated indigenous peoples? Unfortunately, we need no crystal ball to predict the future for these unknown peoples. A look back over the last decades, the last fifty years, the last century is quite enough. War, colonization, brutality, predatory exploitation of indigenous people and their natural resources, the decimation of the native population through epidemics, territorial dislocation and, finally, for the lucky ones — the survivors — assimilation, humiliation and marginalization below the very bottom rung of national society. To give but one example among many: the Yora (or “Nahua”), feared inhabitants of the Alto Manu, repelled the logging and oil companies, missionaries and even Peru’s naval forces until 1985, when they were forcibly contacted as a final result of these cumulative waves of invaders. More than half the population died in those first few years of contact. Now, the Yora live at the mercy of loggers working illegally in their territory, which is a State Reserve for Isolated Peoples that the State has never defended. These days, the Yora affectionately and nostalgically call one other wero yōshi or “visible ghost”, since they are the ghostly survivors of a forgotten human tragedy in the Peruvian rainforest. This is the future awaiting the isolated indigenous peoples of Peru. This is a future that is already taking place in the wild and remote frontier forests of Madre de Dios, a future that is looming ever closer. This will be the tragic and definitive future, which is to say, no future at all, for the isolated indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios, if the Peruvian government does not radically and urgently change its policies towards this region and these people.

Glenn H. Shepard Jr.
Manaus 1 October 2004
There are currently a number of different indigenous peoples living in the most remote areas of the Peruvian Amazon who refuse to establish sustained contact with national society. Although little is known of them, information provided by indigenous people who previously lived in such conditions and who are now, for one reason or another, interacting more closely with the surrounding population suggests that this rejection is due to previous tragic experiences of contact that scarred their lives, leading them to opt for isolation as a defence mechanism that enables their continued existence. And yet, despite their attitude and their increasingly remote locations, these people are failing in their objective because of various external agents who are invading their territories for different reasons and threatening their physical, cultural and territorial integrity.

In fact, the granting of exploitation and use rights within these territories to gas/oil and timber companies, the proliferation of illegal activities such as the felling of high value tree species and drugs trafficking, among other things, are all forcing these peoples into the furthest corners of their territories, depriving them of their right to territory and, with this, the right to enjoy the land area necessary for their subsistence purposes. In addition, despite the tragic consequences of forced contact, such as the rapid spread of fatal epidemics, there are still some groups of Protestant and Catholic missionaries who pay no heed to these peoples’ repeated and overwhelming rejection of direct contact with outsiders and who, via traditional contact methods, are seeking them out in order to “pacify” them, “civilize” them, “convert” them and translate the Bible into their respective languages.

The Madre de Dios region, which is the focus of this book, is in the south-east of the Peruvian Amazon and is home to at least four indigenous peoples in isolation. The active and violent expansion of the extraction frontier, primarily logging, is precisely the reason behind the increased reports of encounters and clashes between these peoples and the loggers, with the tragic result of deaths, injuries and disappearances on both sides, territorial dislocations and the likelihood that an illness could decimate a population, even destroy it completely, at any moment. As this book goes to press, FENAMAD, the Native Federation of the Madre de Dios River and its Tributaries, is continuing to denounce these incidents to the police,
the National Institute for Natural Resources INRENA and the Ministry of Agriculture. And yet the replies it receives show no real concern or desire to address this problem.

Although we do not have precise figures on the number of peoples living in these conditions we know that there are isolated peoples facing similar threats in the least accessible areas of the regions of Loreto, Ucayali, Huánuco and Cusco. Indeed, reports from indigenous organisations (AIDESEP, 2003) and the Ombudsman, amongst others, serve to highlight the massive invasion of illegal loggers onto all the reserves created for the indigenous peoples in isolation without exception. The establishment of settlements, farms and paths by missionary groups in areas close to the territory of these peoples, as a way of establishing sustained contact, has also been observed. Alongside this, tourist companies and explorers enter these territories to find and film what they consider to be “exotic Indians”. They do so with the backing of the state institutions whose representatives, having been sufficiently informed of the dangers of such actions by indigenous leaders, should know better. Such is the case, for example, of the Manu National Park. Another area of concern for those defending the rights of these peoples is the superimposition of proposed Protected Natural Areas with these reserves. The criteria for these Protected Areas are overwhelmingly conservationist and fail to recognise the indigenous right to territory, consequently ignoring the need to treat the areas as such, and failing to show the peoples in isolation the care their vulnerable situation requires.

Since the end of the 1980s, regional indigenous organisations of the Peruvian Amazon such as FENAMAD, the Matsigenka Council of the Urubamba River, COMARU, the Regional Indigenous Organisation of Atalaya, OIRA and the national level Inter-ethnic Association for Development of the Peruvian Forest, AIDESEP have, through concrete political, technical, legal and administrative actions, been defending the fundamental rights of the indigenous peoples in isolation in the Peruvian Amazon.

These actions have resulted in significant progress in terms of obtaining official recognition of part of the territories where Indigenous Peoples in isolation are known to live. Nonetheless, the absence of any state policy respecting the rights of these people along with notorious legal loopholes with regard to institutional responsibilities and mechanisms for protecting their territories from outside intrusion have been major obstacles for these indigenous organisations in achieving their objectives for the well-being of those they call their “indigenous brothers in isolation”. Worse still, the Peruvian state has actually been promoting investment projects within these territo-
ries, primarily extraction activities, despite an awareness of these peoples’ existence, their crucial dependence upon the natural resources and, in many cases, their lack of immunity to outside illness.

The need to join forces and act in a coordinated and systematic way in the defence of the rights of indigenous peoples in isolation led AIDESEP’s National Assembly to create a National Programme for Indigenous Peoples in Isolation and Initial Contact during its 19th Congress in December 2002. The plan’s objective is to continue to put pressure on the state to establish Territorial Reserves for these peoples while at the same time providing the technical studies for their territorial demarcation. The organisation has, in fact, been doing similar work since 1994 through its Territorial Programme, which has received constant support from the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, IWGIA, throughout. AIDESEP’s other actions have included drafting national and international level regulatory proposals with which to implement supervisory mechanisms for the Territorial Reserves so that the isolated peoples’ right to territory, along with their right to self-determination, can be guaranteed. In addition, it has been raising awareness of these peoples’ problems and submitting complaints with regard to the impact of both mega-projects such as Camisea Gas and illegal logging on their physical, territorial and cultural integrity. Alongside this, and given the gradually increasing proximity of some isolated groups to wider society, the indigenous organisations are seeking a commitment from various state sectors and civil society to produce and apply contingency plans counteracting the possible tragic consequences of untimely contact and also to offer essential post-contact care.

Indigenous peoples in isolation are not just a Peruvian phenomenon but can also be found in other parts of the world. On the Latin American continent, for example, indigenous peoples in isolation can also be found in Brazil. Here the well-documented and tragic experiences of the central government’s previous policy of forced contact have now led to a change in direction, the government having recently opted to respect these peoples’ right to self-determination.

Ecuador is another example. In May 2003, news of fatal clashes between indigenous clans in isolation along the border with Peru caught the attention of many of the country’s media, human rights networks and indigenous experts such as the Spanish capuchin missionary Miguel Ángel Cabodevilla who, after much reflection, concluded that they were facing a case that called for the adequate protection of “invaluable human groups” (2003).

In Paraguay, too, there are Totobiegosode families who have chosen to remain in isolation.
Crossing continental borders now, we can also mention the Sentinelese and Jarawa peoples who live on the Andaman Islands, a group of islands in the Bay of Bengal that forms part of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Union Territory of India. The Sentinelese, who live on North Sentinel island and are one of the most reluctant to establish contact with the outside world, are being threatened by poachers and invasions from the Andaman authorities, who are using the island as a tourist attraction.

The book

This text is an updated version of the Spanish edition of “Los pueblos indígenas en aislamiento: su lucha por la sobrevivencia y la libertad” first published in Peru in May 2002. The indigenous organisations in Peru, along with IWGIA, wish to raise awareness of the delicate problems facing the indigenous peoples in isolation in the Peruvian Amazon, particularly in Madre de Dios, where FENAMAD has been carrying out intensive work and constant defence of their rights. It is also hoped that this book will attract the attention of the Peruvian government and international community, encouraging them to contribute to effective actions aimed at protecting these peoples, based particularly on the principle of respect for their right to life, health, territory and self-determination.

In addition to this, based on an analysis of the historic processes of indigenous peoples, it seeks to construct a logic that will enable their current condition of isolation to be understood. As Heinrich Helberg notes, “Our way of tackling the problem is to create a logical model by which to understand their possible motives and dynamic, and some minimum concepts to begin to understand the indigenous peoples in isolation, but this does not constitute a theory” (Helberg, 2001).

The ethnographic section of this text has been based on the “Study on Territorial Demarcation” produced by FENAMAD’s technical team for the isolated indigenous peoples living around the middle and upper reaches of the Los Amigos, Las Piedras, Tahuamanu, Acre and Yaco rivers in the north of Madre de Dios. Aware of their extreme vulnerability to illness and their explicit rejection of direct contact with agents external to their culture, the indigenous organisations have adopted a principle of ‘no contact’, and it is this principle that has guided the study’s methodology. For this reason, research has been carried out by gathering information on these peoples from all the population centres based near their areas of movement, both in Peru and Brazil, as well as by means of inter-
views, primarily with loggers and oil workers who, on entering their territories, have witnessed their presence. For this reason, the information provided is referential. A vast array of secondary information has also been reviewed, comprising documentary sources from the missionaries, rubber barons, scientific and military expeditions that visited the area at different times in its history.

In order to give the reader some orientation from the start, the first chapter offers a general explanation of the definition and origin of the indigenous peoples in question. A geographic and socioeconomic description of the Madre de Dios department follows in the second chapter. The third provides information on the cultural characteristics of the indigenous peoples in isolation in terms of their ethnic belonging, areas of movement, subsistence practices and recent evidence of their presence in the area. The fourth chapter analyses their problems, focusing on the kinds of external agents that are approaching them, and their different reasons. The risks involved in the advance of such external agents onto indigenous territory and the establishment of contact are discussed in the fifth chapter. The current situation of the territorial reserves that have been created is considered in the sixth chapter. The seventh is aimed at highlighting the role FENAMAD has played in defending the indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios, its policy and management. The eighth chapter considers the indigenous peoples in isolation along the Peru/Brazil border, their problems, Brazil’s experience and policy in this regard and the coordination FENAMAD has achieved with this country’s federal and state bodies with the aim of making proposals for their protection. The ninth chapter presents the actions and guidelines that are being adopted or proposed in order to protect these peoples. An analysis is made of their prospects for protection in the current political climate, the current government’s progress in this regard and a general assessment of the situation. The tenth and final chapter offers some conclusions and recommendations.

Finally, it is important to note that some irresponsible people and companies, particularly journalists and tourist agencies, are spreading inappropriate information on the indigenous peoples in isolation, making them seem more exotic and thus trivialising the difficult situation they are going through. For our part, we would like to emphasise that one of the most important objectives of this book is to promote attitudes of responsibility and good ethics among the general public when considering this issue, particularly given the need and obligation we have to respect these peoples’ way of life, preventing them from being exposed to forced contact. The vast majority of contact to date has led to mass deaths among these
populations. Only when people are aware of the tragedies of the past will we be able to present their future defence as an historic need.

Acknowledgements

I would particularly like to thank the indigenous leaders Antonio Iviche Quique and Jorge Payaba Cachique, presidents of AIDESEP and FENAMAD respectively, for the support and trust they have shown me by allowing me to address the issue of the indigenous peoples in isolation in the Peruvian Amazon.

As with the Spanish edition, I would particularly like to thank IWGIA for having promoted and supported this English publication. Thanks also to Diana Vinding and Jens Dahl of IWGIA for all the time they have devoted to revising the text and for their valuable suggestions, which have contributed to enhancing it. To Alejandro Parellada for his constant support, trust and also for the time devoted to revising and publishing the book. To Elaine Bolton for her excellent translation and to Jorge Monras for his care and artistic talent in the design. To Luis Payaba, technician at AIDESEP’s Centre for Territorial Information and Planning, who offered me his professional support. To Alfredo Rodríguez for his important suggestions. To Flika Barclay, Klaus Rummenhoeller, Anders Krogh, Filip Rogalski, Marek Wolodzko for their comments and for the photographic material. Also to Abraham Cardozo, who gave of his time to revise the texts translated from Portuguese and who shared with me my enthusiasm for this English publication. To my parents, Lorenzo Huertas and Maria Luz Castillo for their love and support, for always showing an interest in what I do and for encouraging me to continue; to my daughter, Cristina, for her understanding and patience during the research and writing of this book, for her solidarity and her smile.
Who are they?

In recent years, local, national and international publicity around the problems of indigenous peoples in so-called “isolation” in the Peruvian Amazon has given rise to a series of names and various hypotheses as to why these people should have chosen to lead this particular way of life. Protestant and Catholic missionaries, anthropologists, local settlers – both indigenous and non-indigenous – and even State officials have been involved in these discussions.

They have been variously called “calatos” (‘naked ones’), “indios bravos” (‘Indian braves’), “salvajes” (‘savages’), “nómades” (‘nomads’), “no contactados” (‘uncontacted’), “aislados” (‘isolated’), “pueblos libres” (‘free peoples’), “autoaislados” (‘self-isolated’), and so on. Some deny their existence on the basis that no-one can escape modernisation; others expound an ethnocentric attitude that promotes their accelerated integration into national society in order to put an end to their “nomadism”, believed to be a “primitive” and inappropriate way of life. Somewhere between these two extremes are those who view these people with a curiosity fed by exoticism, looking upon them as peoples caught in a ‘time warp’.

It should firstly be noted that none of the above names truly reflects their reality as peoples with their own organisational, social, economic and symbolic systems. Indeed, these terms serve only to define one aspect of their behaviour: their refusal to live with or near other peoples, regardless of their reasons for this. But given that we have to call them something, we feel that the term “indigenous peoples in isolation” is a relatively appropriate one and we will therefore call them this until such time as they themselves decide to approach the wider society and tell us what they call themselves.

In answer to the sceptics, we would say that indigenous peoples in isolation do exist, and that they are not caught in a ‘time warp’. No society, however remote and isolated, can live in the past, nor live excluded from regional socio-economic processes.

The indigenous peoples in isolation are, as their name suggests, peoples - or sub-groups thereof - who, according to available historical references, have chosen to distance themselves from national society because of previous traumatic experiences of con-
tact. Isolation should not be seen, then, as a situation of having had “no contact” with society but a decision on the part of peoples to refuse to establish permanent relations with other social players as a way of ensuring their physical and cultural survival.

The battles, massacres, persecution, slavery and epidemics caused by the rubber boom of 1880 to 1920 severely impacted on these peoples, creating a great mistrust that has been passed down through the generations and can be seen in their current attitude to outsiders and external society. This attitude was further consolidated with the establishment of large estates based on cheap labour and, further still, with the violent invasion of logging and fossil fuel companies onto their territories.

These external factors have all contributed to their rejection of “others” but, in addition, we must also consider the ensuing internal factors. For example, we know that illness – seen in many cases as acts of witchcraft by rival groups –, depopulation, the consequent breakdown of the family and contraction of their land areas, among other things, have increased ethnic conflict and tensions within various groups, such as in the case of the Yora or Yaminahua who, as a result, dispersed over a wide area. There were also Harakmbut sub-groups in the Madre de Dios region who, in order to ensure their own survival, abandoned their territories and instead exerted pressure on the lands of neighbouring groups, thereby causing internal conflict (Wahl, 1987). Similarly, in the mid-1980s, the Yora from the north-western borders of the region were displaced towards the Manu National Park by advancing loggers and Shell oil sub-contractors. There they began to attack the Matsigenka of the Tayacome and Yomibato native communities (Ibid).

This loss of community members, abandonment of fertile lands, high mobility and isolation, along with all their ensuing consequences, has led to the cultural decline of some of these peoples, and has been reflected in, among other things, an erosion of their technology. Such was the case of the Mashco Piro who, according to historic documents and anthropological studies (Shepard, 1999), were forced to abandon farming in order to allow for a greater mobility that would enable them to keep their distance from outsiders.

In order to illustrate this issue further, some of the concepts surrounding the indigenous peoples in isolation are given below.

For Ribeiro (1970), peoples in isolation are groups that fled following contact with Western culture. They survive through their own labour and maintain complete cultural independence. In a report for the International Labour Organisation, ILO, Moore (1996) points out that the isolation of these indigenous peoples has to be understood as a completely voluntary process. All of Peru’s indig-
igenous peoples can give examples of the aggression they have suffered against their lives, their health and their physical and cultural integrity, and it is for this reason that some have chosen to live outside of national society and the national economy.

Zarzar presents the position of the missionary and anthropologist, Álvarez, and the researchers Carneiro and Lathrap, for whom the indigenous in isolation are often not isolated through lack of contact but, paradoxically, precisely because they have had previous contact and have been forced to choose isolation to safeguard—albeit under the worst conditions—their lives, threatened by illness, slavery and violent encounters with representatives of regional society and indigenous groups other than their own. These indigenous thus “have to choose, not isolated through the exercise of their own free will, as some would have it, nor absolutely forced given that, in the final analysis, the process leading to isolation is preceded by a choice, an act of will” (1999:4).

For his part, Glenn Shepard questions the appropriateness of the term “uncontacted indigenous”, as he argues that the term “‘uncontacted’ conjures up romantic images of hunter/gatherer groups whose way of life has remained unchanged for thousands of years, people living in the “Stone Age”, unaware of the existence of the outside world, of White people” (1996:3).

There are currently different indigenous peoples living in isolation in the most remote forests of the Loreto, Ucayali, Huánuco, Apurimac, Cusco and Madre de Dios regions, primarily along the border areas or in the hill forests where the sources of the rivers they travel for their subsistence practices can be found. Despite the fact that some of them have still not been identified, we know that the majority belong to the Pano and Arawak linguistic families.

Note

1 For Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán (1967), all the indigenous territories of Latin America are “areas of refuge”.

22
CHAPTER 2

MADRE DE DIOS - A GENERAL OVERVIEW

Geo-environmental context

The department of Madre de Dios is situated in the eastern region of Peru. It covers an area of 85,182 km², representing 6.6% of the national territory and 15.3% of the forested area (GESUREMAD, 1998). It is bordered by Ucayali department and Brazil to the north, Puno and Cusco departments to the south, Bolivia to the east and Cusco and Ucayali departments to the west.

Madre de Dios comprises the provinces of Tambopata, Tahuamanu and Manu, which cover three different physiographical zones: Amazonian plain, ‘ceja de selva’ (‘the eyebrow of the jungle’ or high forest) and mountain. The Madre de Dios River is the main waterway and it crosses the whole department from its source in the westernmost point of the high forest to the eastern border. Its main tributaries are the Manu, Los Amigos and Las Piedras rivers on its left bank and the Karene (or Colorado), Inambari, Tambopata and Heath on its right. Other rivers of importance are the Tahuamanu, Acre, Yaco and Chandless, which all rise in the north-west of the department, the former flowing into Bolivia and the latter three into Brazil.

A lack of direct links with other Amazonian rivers ensured the department’s prolonged geographical isolation, and this says a great deal for the good conservation of parts of its biological potential. The department’s rugged geography offers a variety of ecosystems, rising to a height of 4,200 m above sea level at its south-western border and dropping to 200 m above sea level in the east. Each ecosystem has a unique climate, flora and fauna, with world records for bird, insect and mammal biodiversity. It is also home to thirteen species of endangered animal, including the giant otter, the harpy eagle, the jaguar, the black caiman, the white-winged guan and the yellow-tailed monkey.

This particularly high biodiversity has merited the creation of various protected areas, including notably the Manu National Park and the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve in Manu province, the Tambopata National Reserve and the Bahuaja Sonene National Park in Tambopata province, and the Alto Purús Reserve Zone in Tahua-
manu province which, as noted in the Supreme Decree establishing it, “is home to a high biological diversity, a variety of eco-systems and extraordinarily beautiful landscapes, enabling it to be identified as a Priority Zone for the Conservation of Peru’s Biological Diversity”.

However, Madre de Dios is not just a territory with resources in a good state of preservation. The presence, in particular, of areas rich in alluvial gold and tree species of high commercial value has given rise to intensive extractive practices, and these are causing serious environmental damage, including the contamination of important water sources and rivers, increasing deforestation, land erosion, wildlife predation, noise pollution, the destruction of forested areas, soil deterioration etc. In addition, social problems are intensifying as the extraction frontier expands without either adequate land organisation, more efficient regulation or sustainable and responsible economic activity being in place.

Historic context

A brief history of indigenous settlement in the region
The history of the settlement of Madre de Dios can be divided into two broad stages. The first corresponds to indigenous occupation and the second, which occurred late in relation to other Amazonian regions, to colonization and integration of the region into national society.

Indigenous occupation
Although there are few archaeological remains in the area, attempts to reconstruct a linguistic history suggest that the first human population to occupy the Madre de Dios basin were the Harakmbut (Noble 1965, quoted in Moore 1985), followed by migrations of Arawak, Takana and Pano. In particular, Aikman (1983) records ceramics and axes made by the Harakmbut in the Karene River, possibly corresponding to the later period of 1000 -1500 AD, while Gonzáles del Río (1973) notes the finding of archaeological evidence in Lago Sandoval, an area ancestrally occupied by the Ese Eja people. The Harakmbut were settled on the right bank of the Madre de Dios River, and the Ese Eja peoples in the eastern area between the Tambopata River and the Beni region of Bolivia. The Amahuaca lived in the watershed areas between the Madre de Dios and Purús basins, extending towards Brazilian territory, and the Ñaparí and Mashco Piro in the intermediate zones (Ibid).
In terms of a relationship between this region and that of the Andes prior to the Incas, Del Águila and Gonzales del Río (1982-1983) present archaeological findings to the south of Cusco, in the Argentinian north and on the Moxos plains that are Chavinoid in style, from which it can be deduced that the Madre de Dios basin and Beni could not have been excluded from this movement that linked Andean groups, particularly with the finding of the early cultural remains mentioned by Julio C. Tello (Tello, 1967) such as the remains of paths and/or housing of pre-Incan cultural groups linked to the area.

During the Inca Empire, coca plantations were established in the Q’osñipata and Callanga valleys and the Incas penetrated the headwaters of the Araza, Marcapata and Inambari rivers in search of gold. This did not, however, imply their domination of the native Matsigenka, Harakmbut and Ese Êja but the establishment of relationships that were more commercial in nature (barter). The objects desired by the Incas were feathers and skins, whilst the Wachipaeri hoped to obtain bronze axes (FENAMAD, 1992). Gade (1972) and Camino (1977) refer to the Piro (Yine) as traders who moved between Cusco and the central forests navigating the Urubamba, Manu and upper Madre de Dios rivers. Despite these contacts, “the lower forests of the Madre de Dios basin formed part of neither the Antisuyo nor the Kollasuyo” (Moore, 1985:9).

The conquest and first explorations of the region
 Shortly after the conquest of Peru had commenced, the Spaniards Pedro de Candia, Pedro Anzures de Campo Redondo and Álvarez Maldonado attempted to enter the region from the south-east, from Cusco and Puno, in eager search of Paititi. Their quest failed due to the inhospitable landscape and the constant attacks from the native indigenous. As Moore (1985) notes, a flexible boundary was maintained between the populations of the mountain and those of the Cusco and Puno high forest for the rest of the colonial period, moving backwards or forwards depending on the economic cycles of coca, gold and cascara.²

The missionaries also embarked on explorations but had to put a halt to these due to constant attacks from the indigenous:

“The noted isolation of the Madre de Dios basin enabled not only the conservation of the varied flora and fauna but also a much longer and greater independence on the part of the indigenous peoples here than in other parts of the Peruvian Amazon in relation to outside pressures for colonial and national expansion.” (Ibid : 7).
erstat denne side med kort i farver!!!
erstat denne side med kort i farver!!!
Cascarilla exploitation began around the 1850s, with a concomitant increase in sugar cane and cocoa plantations, logging and cattle farming in the Kosñipata Valley. During this decade, the British scientists Wedell and Markham entered by this route in search of cascarilla trees and Antonio Raimondi, a member of the Lima Geographic Society, commenced explorations of the zone. Meanwhile, unsuccessful attempts to enter via the lower basin of the Madre de Dios River continued, this time headed by the explorer Faustino Maldonado who disappeared along the Madeira River in 1861.

The rubber cycle, foreign migration and indigenous territorial dislocation
Rubber (Castilloa elástica) extraction began in the Amazon around the 1880s. This was for export to Europe and the United States, and thus began a period of intense migration. For thirty years, the Amazon became the most sought after location for foreign investors, businessmen and rubber companies, who devoted themselves to searching for this resource (Bonilla, 1975; Flores, 1987; Pennano, 1988). The rubber trade was dominated by the British government, which fixed the price and manipulated the economic dynamic in South America, while the United States and Germany became important purchasers and competitors to the British in the Amazon.

Activity began in Madre de Dios in 1894, following the discovery of large concentrations of high quality rubber in the area between the Manu, Los Amigos, Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers to the north of the department, and around the Tambopata river to the south. One of the architects of this process was Carlos Fermín Fitzcarrald, the biggest rubber baron, whose expedition entered by the isthmus that now bears his name. Other Peruvians entered by various land routes, while groups of Bolivians entered via the Madre de Dios and Tahuamanu rivers, reaching as far as the upper Inambari, upper Madre de Dios and Manu rivers, where they made incursions against the indigenous Arasaeri and Inapari from 1896 to 1900 (Rummenhoeller, pers. comm., 2001).

Thus began a period of intense migration that not only put an end to the region’s characteristic isolation but also, in a relatively short period of time, produced the most drastic social, political and cultural changes in the history of the indigenous peoples.

In fact, the rubber companies’ presence and the new economic system brought in their wake illness, war, the instigation of bloody ways of recruiting indigenous labour and sub-human working conditions. This led to a variety of reactions from the native population,
including rebellions, exodus and all the consequences of internal conflict that depopulation and territorial dislocation entail.

The states’ ambitions to gain ever larger rubber-rich areas caused conflict with Brazil (Peru losing a significant area of land in Acre) and with Bolivia in Tahuamanu between 1910 and 1913. Pressures later came from neighbouring countries to the north and south for the same reason.

In 1901, in the midst of the rubber boom, the Peruvian state created the River Network Board with the aim of initiating a hydrographic study of Madre de Dios and its passable routes. As a result, documents containing important cartographic and demographic information were produced. Finally, in 1910, the British colonies in Asia began to produce rubber and this led to a fall in the price and the decline of the Amazonian rubber economy. An economic depression immediately occurred, along with a depopulation of the area. Once more, the rubber economy developed in line with the international climate, determined by the needs of the numerous industries emerging within the capitalist countries (Flores Marín, 1987).

The crisis reached Madre de Dios in 1920, leading to the withdrawal of most of the rubber companies and their staff. The initial access routes overland via the Manu, Piedras or Purús were also left abandoned. The rubber cycle, as indicated by Wahl (1987), caused a demographic disaster for the indigenous peoples similar to that which took place in the Andes following the Spanish Conquest.

The indigenous populations that had been moved to Madre de Dios from other parts of the Amazon continued to work for the few remaining rubber companies, which chose to diversify their production in order to survive. The Shipibo continued on Máximo Rodríguez’s ‘Iberia’ estate until 1942, the Kichwa Santarosino on the Valdez’ estate in Alerta until around 1956, and the Amahuaca of Boca Pariamanu remained slaves of the Spaniard Emilio Toullier along the Las Piedras river until the end of the 1950s. In other words, in some isolated places, rubber extraction continued in combination with agricultural and livestock activities under the command of a master who prohibited the circulation of money, schooling, freedom of movement and freedom to leave the estate, maintaining in their place, unpaid labour, payment in kind, a duty to provide services to the master, etc. (Fernández, 1952; Soria, 1998; Rummenhoeller, pers. comm., 2001).

Missionary activity was undertaken alongside rubber extraction. Following repeated unsuccessful attempts to contact the native populations, in 1913, the Apostolic Prefecture of Santo Domingo became an Apostolic Vicariate, being formally allocated the department of Madre de Dios for evangelisation purposes. It also received the backing of President Nicolás de Piérola and some of the families
linked to the commercial companies of Arequipa, which financed the rubber companies and served as intermediaries for the recruitment of their bonded labour in the mountains. (Fernández, 1952; Moore, 1985).

The first Dominican mission, known as San Luis del Manu, was set up on the Manu river in 1908 and was aimed at converting the indigenous Matsigenka and Yine who were working for the rubber companies in the area (the mission was abandoned in 1917 due to an indigenous uprising). This was followed by the San Jacinto mission in Puerto Maldonado. Initially, the missionaries undertook their work of evangelisation on the rubber estates, with the support of the rubber barons who gave them land, housing and money. Although they did serve to protect the indigenous from incursions, they also encouraged their participation in the labour supply. Once the rubber boom had run its course and the population had dispersed, they embarked upon a search for new recruits among the local indigenous people. They organised expeditions, which they themselves called “apostolic incursions”, many of which were supported by the government, as it had an interest in carrying out hydrographic and demographic studies, pacifying and “civilising” the indigenous in order to encourage colonisation. Once they had located the peoples, they made contact, moved the missions and began evangelising.

By 1911, with the support of the rubber barons, the missionaries had managed to get closer to the indigenous Ese Eja people of the Tam-bopata river, the Yine and Matsigenka of the Manu river, and the Huitoto, Amahuaca, Asháninka, Shipibo and Manchineri of the Los Amigos, Curiaco, Piedras and Purús rivers respectively.

The most important explorations subsequently undertaken were those of Father Pío Aza along the Las Piedras and Purús rivers in 1911, Father José Álvarez along the Tahuamanu, Acre, Yaco and Purús rivers in 1921, along the Malinowski and Torre rivers in search of indigenous Ese Eja in 1923, along the river Colorado - together with the Wenner Gren expedition - in search of the Harakmbut, known as Mashco by the religious order, in 1940 and along the Nahuene river in 1950-51, in search of those known as the “Amarakaeri”.

Once in the missions, the Dominicans subjected the indigenous to new rules and a new way of life that failed to take account of their alliance and kinship systems, settlement patterns or inter-ethnic relationships. The negative results of this action were soon felt. Rival groups continued their enmities, causing many people to repeatedly flee the missions. Within a short time, contagious diseases had begun to spread, decimating the population. Even the missionaries’ reports comment on the high death rates in the missions, due both to malnutrition and contagious diseases such as measles. Accusations of witchcraft flourished,
as did murders, the flight of whole families, the abduction of women, attacks by rebel villages outside the mission, etc. All these factors made life in the missions very unstable. Finally, the indigenous population fled the missions and formed the current native communities.

Wahl (1987) analyses the situation of the Harakmbut within the San Miguel de Shintuya mission as follows:

“External pressures greatly exacerbated the internal conflicts between various Harakmbut sub-groups, and the Dominicans’ pacifying effect on this type of conflict was no more than superficial. The San Miguel de los Maschos mission, situated on the Palotoa and Shintuya rivers successively, brought populations who had previously avoided each other or only come into contact on negative terms - that is, in war raids - into close contact. Whilst raids no longer took place in their traditional form, the distance between these sub-groups had been maintained and these ‘traditional’ outsiders were repeatedly accused of all the wrongs that befell them, particularly through accusations of witchcraft” (72).

From the 1950s on, the “Wycliffe Bible Translators” group began to arrive in Peru as part of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), whose aim was to translate the Bible into all of the world’s languages. This desire led them to carry out a detailed linguistic study of most of the indigenous peoples of the Peruvian Amazon. Isolated indigenous peoples formed an important part of their universe and so, using a series of methods to attract them, they managed to establish contact with some, including various ethno-linguistic groups from the Pano linguistic family who were living along the borders with Brazil. In Madre de Dios, this search was directed at the Mashco Piro, Matsigenka and Yora, who were spread throughout the whole of the Manu River basin. Stoll (1982) notes that, on entering the forests of the Peruvian Amazon, members of the SIL found the system of exploitation imposed during the rubber boom still in force. Many indigenous people remained indebted to mestizo masters and thus tied to them, paying off never-ending debts – invented by the masters themselves - with their labour. If the indigenous people were not living under the control of a master, this was because they had been thrown out, had fled to inaccessible areas or were living under the missionary system.

Transport networks, a new wave of settlers and the expansion of the farming and extraction frontier
After two decades of silence, the Peruvian government once more began to promote the construction of highways and landing strips.
With this, migration to Madre de Dios began to increase once more. Not long after, Brazil nut extraction began and, in the 1960s, with the arrival of the Cusco highway, logging intensified. Throughout the 1970s, the growth in mining, the construction of the Cusco-Shintuya highway and the settlement policies promoted by the government led to large waves of migrants. During the 1970s and 80s, gold began to play a predominant role in the Madre de Dios economy, thus strengthening regional power groups. Alongside this, logging and Brazil nut harvesting activities were maintained (Moore and Pacuri, 1993). Improvements to bridges and highways in Tahuamanu province gave rise to increased logging activity during the second half of the 1980s. Serious socio-environmental impacts continued to be a feature of such extraction activities.

**Economic context**

The department’s economy is today characterised by diversity, both in terms of the economic activities undertaken and the level of people’s integration within the market. Three main forms of economic activity can be found: extraction, farming and conservation (IIAP, 2001). Extraction activities include gold mining, mahogany
and cedar wood logging and the harvesting of non-timber products such as Brazil nuts. Farming comprises both agricultural and livestock components. Conservation involves activities of eco-tourism. Of all these, logging is expanding the most aggressively.

**Gold mining**

This was, for many years, the department’s most dynamic economic activity. The mining zone is situated between the Karene river to the west and the outskirts of Puerto Maldonado to the east, covering the alluvial areas of the Madre de Dios river and its right-bank tributaries, as well as the Inambari river and its tributaries on both sides, and the Malinowski river. It covers approximately 500,000 hectares (Moore, 1985).

The activity provides significant profits for those players involved in the accompanying economic chain. It is estimated that production of alluvial gold amounts to between eight and ten tonnes a year and that the gross value of gold production totals approximately US$110 million (GESUREMAD, 1998 quoted in IIAP, 2001). The financial flows created by gold mining contribute between 15 and 30% of the department’s GDP (IIAP, 2001).

However, despite its economic significance, gold mining is undertaken with absolutely no planning; the production yields resulting from application of the technology used is not efficient, reinvestment is scarce and virtually no taxes are paid to the Treasury (Ibid). In addition, the legislation covering gold mining requires no compliance with minimum environmental standards, and this has led to this activity having a dreadful impact on an environment in which, moreover, various native communities are settled.

In social terms, mining has created intense and unplanned migratory flows the consequences of which are reflected in a large floating population - of primarily children and youths - who are employed in the activity generally under conditions of slavery. The colonial method of recruiting labour – “enganche” or “bonded labour” - is still used to this day (Rummenhoeller, pers. comm., 2001).

A further problem created by the uncontrolled influx of migrants has been a proliferation of mining settlements with extremely unsanitary conditions:

“Socially, the mining sector paints a complex picture that is the result of migratory processes, economic interests, inadequate mining legislation, the scarcity of State presence and lack of planning. Temporary migrations continue to be a socially important phenomenon, and include teenagers, youths and children.” (Arbex, 1997 quoted in IIAP, 2001:32).
The granting of mining rights and invasions of illegal miners onto native communities have only served to create increasingly acute social conflicts in recent years.

Logging
Initially intensively undertaken in Manu and Tambopata provinces where high value timber species have consequently been exhausted, logging now focuses on the north-west of the department, an area corresponding to the province of Tahuamanu and part of Tambopata.

This activity is primarily devoted to the selective extraction of fine woods such as mahogany (Swietenia macrophylla) and cedar (Cedrela odorata). Logging has increased throughout the whole region since 1992, when production was 8 million board feet, to reach an average of 25 million in recent years (GESUREMAD, 1998), representing approximately 7% of national timber production (IIAP 2001). Few logging companies are directly involved in selling on the country’s southern markets (Sicuani, Juliaca, Puno, Tacna, Arequipa and Cusco), the timber being largely sold in ports or at the foot of highways (Ibid).

The forests of Madre de Dios are now in a serious situation, largely because they have been logged in such a completely irrational manner:

“There is virtually no sustainability in the logging activity in Tambopata province at the moment. The vast majority of loggers are constantly seeking new forest areas that still offer species of high commercial value, such that when such timber runs out in their current place of operation they merely move on and continue their activity elsewhere” (Ibid:41).

Tahuamanu province is currently one of the few places in the Peruvian Amazon where mahogany can still be found, and this is why it is now suffering the greatest invasion of loggers in its history. The serious consequences of logging among the indigenous peoples in isolation will be considered later as this is closely linked to the theme of this book.

Brazil nut harvesting
The area of highest Brazil nut tree (Bertholletia excelsa) concentration is the lower Madre de Dios River and its tributaries, the Tambopata, Palma Real and Bajo Piedras, and the Puerto Maldonado-Alerta highway. An initial approximation based on expert consultation suggests the presence of Brazil nut trees over an area of 1,800,000
hectares of forest (Multisectoral Brazil Nut Commission - Comisión Multisectorial de la Castaña, 1999).

Brazil nut harvesting has recovered substantially since 1993, following a period of decline from 1990 to 1992 (GESUREMAD, 1998). The main export destinations are the United States, United Kingdom, Colombia, the Netherlands and Spain (Comisión Multisectorial de la Castaña, 1999).

It is generally accepted that Brazil nut harvesting is environmentally sustainable given that it does not involve felling the tree. However, this activity is facing a number of difficulties, including the fall in price, the few companies trading in Brazil nuts in Puerto Maldonado and the lack of competitiveness between them. This is detrimental to the producers, who only sell Brazil nuts shelled and unshelled, without adding significant value in the region.

There is a vast difference between this and other extractivist activities such as gold mining and logging, given that these latter generally involve an eventual exhaustion of the resource under current forms of exploitation (IIAP, 2001).

Agricultural and livestock activity
Farming is located primarily along the entry routes, both river and land, due - among other things - to the reduced transport costs this entails. The IIAP calculates that the total land area allocated to farming purposes could be as high as 550,000 has. This would represent 6% of the total area of the department (2001). The key problems facing the approx. 25% of the economically active population who are involved in farming are the low levels of productivity, the low prices for agricultural and livestock products and the high costs of transport (Ibid).

Tourism
This has increased enormously over the past 10 years. It is undertaken primarily through travel companies that take their clients to tourist lodges located essentially along the banks of the Tambopata and Manu rivers. According to the IIAP study (2001), the Tambopata river basin currently receives 80% of the department’s tourist flow, the number of visitors having increased from less than 500 in 1993 to more than 11,000 in 1997.
Cultural context: the indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios today

Madre de Dios currently has a population of approximately 90,000, of which almost 10% are indigenous. This low percentage is the result of the demographic collapse suffered by all indigenous peoples, largely during the rubber boom.

There are nine indigenous peoples, including the original peoples, of longstanding inhabitancy, and those coming from other parts of the Amazon.

The original peoples are the Harakmbut, Matsigenka and Ese Eja, along with some Yine, Amahuaca and Yaminahua or Yora and probably the Mashco Piro.

The Harakmbut comprise seven sub-groups: the Arakmbut, Arasaeri, Pukirieri, Sapiteri, Toyoeri, Huachipaeri and Kisambaeri. They can be found in the upper Madre de Dios, Karene, Pukiri and Inambari rivers. The Harakmbut are probably the most longstanding inhabitants of the region. Their language, which bears no linguistic relation to that of other populations, is the only one classified as being in the Harakmbut Hate linguistic family. They form part of the Shintuya, Boca Isiriwe, Barranco Chico, San José del Karene, Puerto Luz, Boca Inambari, Villa Santiago and Kotsimba native communities, whose population is estimated at between 1,500 and 2,000 people.

The Matsigenka, of the Arawak linguistic family, live in the extreme west of the department, in the zone corresponding to the Manu National Park and surrounding area. They form part of the Palotoa, Shipetiari, Tayacome, Yomibato, Diamante, Boca Isiriwe and El Pilar native communities. There are also groups living in isolation or in sporadic contact within the Manu National Park.

The Ese Eja belong to the Tacana linguistic family. They live on the lower Madre de Dios, Tambopata, Sonene and Beni rivers. They form part of the Sonene, Palma Real and Bawaaja Kuiñaji native communities.

The Yine (Piro) also belong to the Arawak linguistic family. They live in the Diamante and Isla de los Valles native communities on the upper Madre de Dios, and Monte Salvado on the Las Piedras river. The Manchineri, probably a sub-group of the Yine, live in the Béllica native community on the Acre river.

The Mashco Piro, of the Arawak linguistic family, are living in a situation of isolation. They live along various tributaries of the Manu, Los Amigos, Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers. Two women from this group are currently living in the Diamante and Shipetiari native communities.
The Amahuaca, of the Pano linguistic family, are found in the Boca Pariamanu native community, on the river of the same name, a tributary of the Las Piedras river. According to Rummenhoeller (pers. comm, 2001), there are probably other Amahuaca groups living in isolation.

The Yora, also of the Pano linguistic family, live in the Manu National Park. There are probably culturally similar groups living in isolation in the headwaters of the Las Piedras, Yaco and Chandless rivers.

Indigenous populations coming from other parts of the Amazon include the Shipibo, of the Pano linguistic family, originally from the Ucayali river, and the Kichwa Santarosinos, of the Quechua linguistic family, originally from the Napo river. Both populations were transferred to Madre de Dios by the rubber companies to satisfy the need for labour. They form part of the Tres Islas, El Pilar, Puerto Arturo and San Jacinto native communities.

There are also, in lesser numbers, members of other indigenous peoples such as the Huitoto, Cocama and Asháninka, who are integrated into mestizo settlements.

The distribution of the population among native communities came about through the new form of organisation imposed by the Peruvian state in 1974 in response to a policy of agrarian reform and intensive settlement of the Peruvian Amazon, proposed as a solution to the acute conflicts that were taking place in the Andean region due to land shortages there. Unlike in previous settlement campaigns, the government this time took the existence of indigenous Amazonian populations as a specific sector into account, with problems to be resolved and demands to be met. However, such a focus was not aimed at recognising their demands as indigenous peoples with ancestral territories. Quite the contrary, it came from a desire for territorial reorganisation aimed at facilitating colonization. The legal category of Native Community was thus established, breaking the peoples up into local units and consequently fragmenting their traditional territories, and turning the ‘freed up’ spaces into areas available to the State and, consequently, open to settlement and private investment projects.

There are 28 officially established communities in Madre de Dios, of which four are located within a protected natural area but, although they are recognised as such, they have no property titles. In addition to these, there is another recently established community with its request for recognition currently being processed.

The area of titled territories covers approximately 625,000 hectares, a tiny area the indigenous have managed to save out of their traditional territories. This fact, added to the scarcity of food resources due to the unplanned extraction activities undertaken by
outsiders throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, has led to proposals for territorial reorganisation from the indigenous sector via the establishment of communal reserves. One such is the “Amarakaeri”, which was proposed by the Harakmbut, Matsigenka and Yine peoples of the upper Madre de Dios at the start of the 1990s and which, in 2002, after more than 10 years of negotiations with - and pressure on - the relevant authorities, has finally been given official recognition.

**Indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LINGUISTIC FAMILY</th>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>PEOPLE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tacana</td>
<td>Ese Eja</td>
<td>Ese Eja</td>
<td>Native Communities: Sonene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palma Real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bawaa ja Kuñaji*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harakmbut</td>
<td>Harakmbut</td>
<td>Harakmbut</td>
<td>Native Communities: Queros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Santa Rosa de</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Huacaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shintuya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Puerto Azul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mberohue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boca Isiriwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>San José del Karene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Puerto Luz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Barranco Chico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boca Inambari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Villa Santiago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kotsimba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Masenahua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arawak</td>
<td>Matsigenka</td>
<td>Matsigenka</td>
<td>Native Communities: Tayacome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yomibato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shipetiari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palotoa Teparo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shiringayoc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the case of the Matsigenka, in 1992, FENAMAD and the 24th Departmental Agrarian Unit drew up a proposal for the establishment of a Matsigenka Communal Reserve on the territory historically occupied by this people in the upper Madre de Dios. However, to date, nothing concrete has come of this.

Part of the Ese Eja territory includes the Tambopata National Reserve and the Bahuaja Sonene National Park.

Diversity can also be seen in relation to the extent of the people’s integration into society and the national economy. Most of those who are organised into native communities are linked to the market economy via the extraction of gold, wood, Brazil nuts, the sale of agricultural products etc. This does not, however, mean they have given up their traditional practices of hunting, fishing, gathering and farming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Communities/Reserves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yine</td>
<td>Yineru Tokanu</td>
<td>Settlements between the Manu and Urubamba river basins Native Communities: Diamante Isla de los Valles Béllica Monte Salvado Groups in the Manu, Los Amigos and Las Piedras river basins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashco Piro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pano</td>
<td>Yora</td>
<td>Groups in the upper Piedras and, probably, Tahuamanu and Yaco rivers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amahuaca</td>
<td>Amahuaca</td>
<td>Boca Pariamanu Native Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipibo-conibo</td>
<td>Shipibo-conibo</td>
<td>Native Communities: Tres Islas El Pilar San Jacinto Shiringayoc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kichwa Runa</td>
<td>Kichwa/Inka</td>
<td>Puerto Arturo Indigenous Community Alerta village</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In the process of restructuring. Previously the Infierno Native Community.
Another section of the indigenous population, made up of Yora and Matsigenka living in the Manu National Park and surrounding area, is in sporadic contact with national society.

Finally, there are indigenous peoples or parts thereof who are living in a situation of isolation, with no direct contact with national society. These are the people this book deals with.

Notes

1 Supreme Decree 030-2000-AG, of 7 July 2000.
2 Using the ‘mitmaes’ system (by which workers were forcibly brought in from elsewhere -trans. note).
3 The mythical citadel of the Incas – trans. note
4 Cascarilla - bark of the cinchona tree, from which quinine is extracted, a medicinal substance used in treating malaria – trans. note
5 The Fitzcarrald isthmus connects the Mishagua and Cashpajali rivers, thus linking the Urubamba and Madre de Dios river basins.
6 An Asturian rubber baron (1873-1943). He owned many rubber posts along the Manuripe, Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers; it was on this last river that he established the well-known ‘Iberia’ estate.
7 The El Pilar mission, established in 1949, tried to move to Lago Valencia but failed partly due to the fact that the Ese Eja largely remained in the lower Madre de Dios. The mission was closed in 1975. The San Miguel de Shintuya mission (1958) gathered the Huachipaeri and the Arakmbut together. The Arakmbut of the Kareneri sub-group arrived in 1964 and withdrew the following year towards the Karene. Those of the Huakitaneri sub-group arrived in 1960 and escaped in 1969 to establish the San José del Karene community, whilst the Arakmbut that currently make up the Boca del Inambari native community left the mission between 1971 and 1972. Between 1970 and 1980, the mission became a centre for modernisation through the establishment of a sawmill, the delivery of a chain saw, the implementation of livestock farming, television, etc. It is still operational to this day.
8 See Gray, 1997.
Areas of transit: geographical and biophysical features

These indigenous peoples in isolation live over a wide area covering the middle and upper courses of the Manu, Los Amigos, Las Piedras, Tahuamanu, Acre, Yaco and Chandless rivers, in the north-western part of Madre de Dios department. It extends over parts of the three provinces of the department and covers an area of more than 2 million hectares.

The vegetation is characterised by high forest, lush, dense and extremely species-diverse. The region is made up of various ecosystems: alluvial flood forests, dry primary forest, riparian forest, stream forest and stream-source forest. These forests have a complex structure and floral composition unique to flood forests in the process of vegetal succession and dry primary forest unaltered by man’s actions, and are home to a wealth of wild flora and fauna. (FENAMAD, 2001).

The zone is also home to species of flora and fauna in the process of extinction in other regions, such as some species of orchid, the river otter, black caiman, harpy eagle, various species of parrot, spider and red howler monkeys, along with yellow-spotted Amazon river turtles. All these features have given rise to the creation of three natural protected areas in one part: the Manu National Park and the Manu Reserved Zone in the Manu River basin and the Alto Purús Reserved Zone, which includes the sources of the Yaco, Tahuamanu, Las Piedras and Los Amigos rivers. Prestigious scientists are agreed that there is a close relationship between the high biodiversity of the region and the presence of indigenous peoples in isolation, insofar as the one is dependent upon the other1.

Whilst the region is internationally renowned for its high biological diversity, it also forms an ecologically fragile area, given that it is home to the sources of all these rivers. Appropriate control of each basin thus depends on good management of the region.
Experiences of direct contact with peoples in isolation.
A chronology

Testimonies of sightings, and the finding of evidence, of indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios date back to the 1930s and form part of the oral history of the settlements surrounding the area in which the populations in isolation move. One such sighting took place in 1936, on the Tahuamanu River. A group of indigenous Yaminahua from Brazil had arrived at the ‘Iberia’ settlement. After a year, they refused to continue working for the rubber baron, Máximo Rodríguez, and fled to the Upper Tahuamanu taking tools and Shipibo women with them. Rodríguez ordered their pursuit and they clashed on the Canales River, with a number of Shipibo and Yaminahua losing their lives (Rummenhoeller, 1988; Jipa, Maymu, pers. comm., 2000). The Yaminahua fled deep into the forest. At the same time, estates on the Upper Tahuamanu became the object of frequent indigenous raids from the upper reaches, with the aim of stealing tools. The fear created by the presence of these indigenous groups was one of the reasons why the Alianza estate moved to Iñapari.

News of the presence of indigenous peoples in isolation living around the source of the Las Piedras River was spread by the Dominican Mission of Sepahua towards the end of the 1940s (Zarzar, 1987).

During the 1960s, the International Petroleum Company and a sub-contractor, GSI, arrived in the basins of the Manu and Los Amigos rivers to carry out seismic prospecting. At that time, the companies’ employees witnessed the presence of indigenous populations, whom they called “Indian braves”. They also frequently came across their fields and dwellings. Oscar Nube Panayfo, who worked for one of these companies, recalls:

“The company considered the Los Amigos River to be one of the most dangerous areas at that time due to the presence of uncontacted indigenous peoples, the signs of whose fields and dwellings were quite obvious. The workers were afraid, there was talk of the terrible inhabitants of the area and people went around in groups. One day, they found two crossed sticks. The indigenous workers recommended to the supervisor that the team should proceed no further with the opening of paths because the sign was a warning from the “uncontacted” not to continue entering their territory”. (quoted by La Torre 1998:90).

Other workers recount the tactics employed by the company to frighten off these indigenous people, detonating large amounts of
nitrogen explosives in the places where they were seen, then returning to their bases with triumphant trophies of indigenous tools and arrows. At the end of the decade, fishermen from the Iberia settlement witnessed the presence of indigenous peoples in isolation on the Tahuamanu River, two days’ journey from Iberia. In the early 1980s, three women (a mother and two daughters) who had been abandoned by those known as the ‘Mashco Piro’ appeared near the Pakitza observation post of Manu National Park. Their presence was noted by the park guards (Helberg, 1986). They settled opposite the observation post on a small plot, scouing the area for palm fruits and eggs, and eating the meat of tortoises or other small animals they managed to capture (Ibid). The park guards planted some cassava and banana fields for them, and this also came to form part of their diet. After some years, they were moved to the indigenous communities of Diamante and Shipetiari. The mother died but the daughters remain there to this day, each with young Matsigenka partners, originally from the Sotileja River and also recently contacted.

At the same time, on the Brazilian side of the Upper Yaco River, very close to the border with Peru, the newly-established decentralized office of the National Indian Foundation of Brazil (FUNAI), responsible for indigenous affairs and wishing to contact isolated indigenous groups who were travelling around the border area, noted clashes between ‘Masko’ groups in isolation and indigenous Manchineri and Yaminahua from nearby settlements. Not long after, a group of indigenous Mashco attacked the FUNAI staff as they were trying to make contact with them. The tragic death toll among the indigenous in isolation led to a change in FUNAI’s attitude, and the Foundation decided to stop looking for them.

Along the Upper Tahuamanu local fishermen continued to come across abandoned encampments, fires and, every so often, indigenous people themselves in the places known as “Dos quebradas”, the “Huacamayo”, “Bogotá”, “Quebrada grande”, “Cuatro Amigos” and “Canales” streams, only two and a half days’ journey along the Tahuamanu River from the Iberia settlement. Warning signs that “outsiders” should advance no further were also found. The inhabitants of Iberia, particularly the fishermen, all had such experiences. Numerous human footprints were found along with almost imperceptible paths leading towards the Las Piedras and Acre rivers.

In the early 1990s, members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics flew over the upper Las Piedras in an attempt to locate the indigenous peoples in isolation and convert them. As a result, arrows were found placed along the shores as a warning along with a hut similar to those built by Pano groups.
Throughout the decade, loggers from Puerto Maldonado found indigenous footprints and encampments on the shores and in the forests along the Los Amigos River. In 1997, a family of loggers was attacked on the Amiguillo River, with one child being wounded by an arrow.

Around 1994, indigenous Yine from Miaria, Urubamba, settled on the Upper Piedras River and frequently witnessed the presence of populations in isolation. In 1996, the Mobil oil exploration and production company was granted a concession of 1,500,000 hectares for seismic prospecting in the headwaters of the Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers. On entering the area, the company made a series of sightings of indigenous people in isolation, and these were published in the document “Social prevention and risk assessment in the upper basin of the Piedras River” (Dávila G. and V. Montoya, 1999). Sightings simultaneously took place on the Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers and their tributaries. The attitude of the ‘Mashco Piro’ has been to flee, constantly changing location in order to prevent their being found.

Since the founding of the Monte Salvado indigenous settlement, its inhabitants - members of an evangelical church whose main ambition is to contact and convert isolated indigenous populations - have been using classic methods to “attract the indigenous”. They tend to leave machetes, knives, pots and ropes along indigenous routes so that a dependency upon these objects is created, forcing the people to return for more. Linguistic understanding has also been a factor in encouraging a rapprochement between the two groups. This is why, over the past few years, the isolated indigenous that navigate the Curiaco, Lidia and San Francisco rivers have been coming into increasing contact with the Monte Salvado settlement.

Towards the end of the decade, the illegal entry of logging companies via the Tahuamanu and Las Piedras rivers gave rise to a series of incidents with indigenous groups in isolation that were widely publicised within the department and even at national level. In 1998, a group of “materos” or scouts from the “Industrial Maderera Tahuamanu” company witnessed a series of events that was to prove the presence of isolated indigenous around the headwaters of the Lucila and Pacahuara rivers. At the end of 1999, when loggers were flooding into the Tahuamanu area, the Brazilian government wrote to the Peruvian Foreign Office requesting an investigation into the violent incursion by isolated indigenous groups into indigenous settlements on the Brazilian side of the border. Members of the National Indian Foundation interpreted the action as a consequence of pressure from external agents on
Indigenous spears, a warning sign prohibiting entry onto their territory, 2003. Photo: Marek Woldzko

The appearance of isolated indigenous along the Las Piedras River, 2000. Photo: Romel Ponciano


the territories of the indigenous in isolation. In September 2000, a young fisherman from the Iberia settlement was hit in the back of the neck by an arrow shot by one of a group of seven isolated indigenous in the Upper Tahuamanu. In February 2001, an illegal logger came across thirteen to sixteen temporary camps along the Tahuamanu River.

On the Las Piedras River, the most significant encounter in recent years took place in July 2000 when most of the inhabitants of the Monte Salvado native community were away at an event in Puerto Maldonado. Days earlier, FENAMAD’s technical team, which was in the community to carry out part of this investigation, had been told that nine dwellings of indigenous groups in isolation had been found in the surrounding area and, a week earlier, two young people from one group had been seen in a nearby field.

A group of 16 indigenous ‘Mashco Piro’ approached the community and, pointing their arrows at the inhabitants aggressively, struck up brief conversations with community members, who offered them “gifts” to pacify them. They then went to the fields of one inhabitant and pulled up banana and cassava. Four days later, they returned to the community. After standing immobile with their arrows for some hours, they left. The same happened the next day.

One week later, a group of children and youths from the community were fishing near the mouth of the San Francisco River when they saw around 150 people, including women and children, emerge, cross over the river and move towards the Monte Salvado native community. The community leaders came out to meet them, bringing objects similar to those previously offered to encourage them to leave the community. A conversation took place at this time. The language of these indigenous people in isolation was partly understood by the community’s president, an indigenous Yine. Two days later, a group of approximately 100 people (we do not know if this was the same group or not), entered the Mil Novecientos settlement, killed all the domestic animals they could find with arrows (chickens, dogs, guans, parrots and macaws) and carried off pots, knives and the cable securing the satellite dish.

In recent years, loggers have been the main people to encounter the indigenous in isolation. In February 2001, a logger lost his way along the Curiaico River. His workmates later found a blood-stained arrow in the place where he had been working. This is now in the hands of the police, who have filed the appropriate report. In April of that same year, a loggers’ encampment on the Chanchamayo River, a tributary of the Upper Piedras, was at-
tacked by a group of isolated indigenous. At the end of that same month, an indigenous Yine who was going to Monte Salvado came across three groups of isolated indigenous at various points along the upper reaches of the Las Piedras River.

In June, a commission made up of specialists from the National Institute for Natural Resources and the World Wide Fund for Nature - WWF also witnessed the presence of temporary camps abandoned by groups of isolated indigenous as they flew over the Alto Purús Reserve Zone, more specifically in the upper reaches of the Las Piedras River. Towards the end of the year, Wilson Miranda – a logger - reported seeing temporary camps at Siete Islas on the Las Piedras River, whilst inhabitants of the Puerto Azul native community reported an encounter between isolated indigenous and loggers along the Los Amigos River. In 2002, groups of isolated indigenous made appearances in indigenous Matsigenka fields along the Upper Manu River. They were probably being squeezed out by loggers who had invaded their territories along the Las Piedras and Los Amigos rivers.

Throughout 2003, reports were received of encounters between isolated indigenous and loggers along the Los Amigos and Las Piedras rivers (Miranda, pers. comm, 2003). As for 2004, incidents of this kind have so far occurred in three basins: Manu, Las Piedras and Los Amigos. In fact, in mid-June, a group of indigenous - apparently Mashco Piro - appeared in the vicinity of the Tayacome indigenous community, in the Manu National Park (Challco, 2004), once again creating fear among the Matsigenka inhabitants of the community. Two months later, a clash took place between isolated indigenous and illegal loggers on the Alto Piedras River, resulting in the death of one logger (FENAMAD, 2004). It is not known whether there were injuries or deaths among the people in isolation. Finally, the appearance of isolated indigenous along the Los Amigos River has been reported, putting the nearby population on the alert (Rummenhoeller, pers. comm., 2004).

Details of the circumstances and probable reasons for some of these more recent encounters will be considered in later chapters.

**Possible causes of their isolation**

Initial information on the retreat of local groups of indigenous peoples into the inaccessible areas of their territories dates back to the time of the rubber boom, and can be found in reports from missionaries, explorers and even some rubber barons who wrote
their memoirs. These reports explain this indigenous movement as a consequence of the aggression they were subjected to at varying times throughout that period: during initial explorations made by the rubber companies into the zone to find rubber stands, as the indigenous found themselves subjected to their control in rubber camps, and at the end of the period when the rubber barons returned home and the indigenous were left in peace.

In fact, once important rubber and shiringa (*Hevea brasiliensis*) stands had been discovered in the area and the region had been integrated into the commercial circuit for the product, the rubber barons moved *en masse* to the area, coming across numerous indigenous hamlets in their path that were simultaneously noted by scientists and travelers: Mashco Piro and Mashco³ along the Manu, Los Amigos and Las Piedras rivers (Cipriani, 1902; Larrabure and Correa, 1907), plus Inapari, Amahuaca and Manchineri along the Tahuamanu and Acre rivers (Larraburre and Correa, 1907). To shorten the distances, the rubber companies opened paths or tracks through the forest from one river to another, intensifying the invasion of indigenous territories between the Mishagua and Manu rivers, the Manu and Los Amigos rivers, from the Manuripe River to what was then the Puerto Rimac rubber outpost on the Madre de Dios River, the Tahuamanu and Acre rivers, the Las Piedras and Manuripe rivers, the Purús and Las Piedras rivers, etc. These paths were used primarily for the movement of balls of rubber and goods towards navigable points along the rivers.

The rubber barons established camps in all the basins, from the river sources down to their mouths and tributaries. In the Manu River region in particular, Fitzcarrald established them on the Panahua, Sotileja, Cumérjali and Cashpajali tributaries. Along the Las Piedras River, Carlos Scharff established his on the Ceticayo, Chanchamayo, Lidia, Curuca, Pariamanu, Esperanza and Huáscar tributaries (Fernández Moro, 1952). Bernardino Perdiz established his along the lower courses of the same river. In the eastern part, bordering on Brazil, it is known that the Acre River, fairly heavily populated on the Peruvian side, became a commercially significant site, receiving Brazilian and Bolivian motorboats navigating as far as the border settlement at Inapari, and connecting these places with towns such as Manaos.

It is obvious, therefore, that the area’s indigenous peoples were witness to the presence of the rubber barons on their territories but they were, more particularly, the victims of their consequences, the magnitude of which is assumed to have caused some of them to retreat into isolation. In fact, numerous historic references note cases of groups of indigenous who fled towards inaccessible areas of their
territories in rejection of the massacres, raids and slavery imposed on them by the rubber barons.

The first reactions of this kind took place shortly after the arrival of the rubber barons, as a consequence of the massacres organised against groups of indigenous people who proved hostile. The most notorious and widely recalled cases to date are the repeated killings, organised by Carlos Fermín Fitzcarrald, of the Mashco and Mashco Piro he found along the Manu River, following the famous discovery of the isthmus that now bears his name. Valdez y Lozano (1944), Fitzcarrald’s right-hand man, notes the retreat of those known as the Mashco Piro into “their primitive lands” in the headwaters of the Pinquén, Panahua, Cumerjali and Sotileja rivers:

“A month had not passed when people from the Cumerjali stream, a tributary of the Manu, arrived with the news that the Mashco savages had attacked the rubber outposts and murdered the men and women working there... When they heard of our presence, the Mashco of Sutileja tried to come down to warn those in the village but the guards posted along both banks of the Manu would not let them pass. There was half an hour’s fierce combat and we inflicted numerous losses on the savages, who had to retreat in the face of our valiant fighters.” (Valdez Lozano 1944:17).

For his part, the Dominican missionary P. José Alvarez (1951, cited in P. Alvarez Lobo, 1996) reports:

“During Fitzcarrald’s first trip to the Manu, where he was sowing terror in his path, he had to face the Piro Mashco from Sepahua and Mishagua, who put up a brave fight in a battle they lost due to the invader’s superior arms power... The Mashco (Piro Mashco)... alarmed at the multitude of men from Ucayali who were invading their lands, sent a grandiose and select mission of their most ugly and ferocious captains to request that the Wiracocha... go no further... along the Manu River because they would frighten away the monkeys they hunted and bring with them cold infections. After a beating of drums, Fitzcarrald replied, via an interpreter, that if the Mashco opposed him he would give them a good thrashing, right down to the tiniest baby... the Indians retreated... they tied objects (gifts brought by the rubber barons) to their arrowheads and, drawing their bows, fired them at the encampment... All the tribes rose up to stop Fitzcarrald who, to put an end to the Mashco, prepared a raid with his captains Maldonado, Galdós and Sanchez... In the Cumerjali stream they took many prisoners; they executed, after a brief trial, 30 Mashco and destroyed 46 canoes... Another day, the Mashco killed more than 100
people and so the rubber barons attacked them, by river and by land, with such violence that the Manu was covered in corpses... you couldn’t draw water from the river for all the bodies of Mashco and rubber workers, because it was a war to the death. This took place in 1894”. (Alvarez, 1996: 237. The emphasis is mine).

According to Valdez (1944), the slaughter was so intense that the rubber barons managed to evict the Mashco from the Manu River but they nonetheless continued their raids, forcing the rubber barons to bring their activities to a halt and move to other more peaceful areas.

Shortly after their arrival, the rubber barons began their incursions, a bloody method of obtaining indigenous labour by which, with the support of already-conquered indigenous groups, they would make armed forays into nearby hamlets. They would capture women and youths in particular, who formed precious trading objects, whilst adult men were eliminated as they would never form as malleable a workforce as the children, who were more easily and fully assimilated (Hassel, 1907). In these circumstances, the high death rate and family disintegration caused panic among the mainly native populations, some of whom chose to flee. The River Network Board (1902) notes the emigration of settlers from the Huáscar River, a left-bank tributary of the Las Piedras River, in different directions to escape the continual incursions of foreign traders. The River Network Board also refers to the area in the following manner:

“This river is no longer inhabited by savages, as it was until recently, and there are now only abandoned fields, or purmas. They have moved around a mile away from where new plantations have been established” (1902:73).

With respect to the Manu, Farabee notes the following:

“I made a long trip to visit the (Mashco) tribe but, on arriving at their river, I found they had gone, nobody knew where. After waiting three weeks for them to return, I had to leave without seeing them.” (1922:77-78).

In some cases, the retreats took place following indigenous rebellions against the rubber barons. The indigenous fled not only to free themselves from sub-human forms of labour, but also for fear of the reprisals that might be taken against them. The Yine, Amahuaca and Mashco were most active in these incidents. Teodoro Sebastián, an
indigenous Yine living on the Las Piedras River, told us the story of his predecessors’ rebellion against Carlos Scharff, one of the most powerful rubber barons of the time.

“Our grandfathers came to work with the masters of this area. Around 500 families came with Carlos Scharff. Manchineri, Cushitineri, Etene, Kudpanerii and Nachineri came. They lived around Las Piedras. The master grouped them together at Curiyacu. They lived some distance from each other in groups. They mixed with other natives who were brought by the master and later they were put to work on the rubber. They continued arriving. The master sent people to the different tributaries of the Las Piedras River to harvest rubber and if they didn’t bring back enough they were punished. Each stream bears the name given it by the paymasters (Lidia was one of them, Pingachari, Chanchamayo, Bolognesi, Chiclayo). The Piro became tired of the abuse they were receiving, tired of their women being abused by their masters. The chief, Elías Sebastián, a Cushitineri, organised everyone to kill the master. They agreed to attack in the evening, when he was resting, one moonlit night. As he had provided them with firearms, they had carbines, shotguns, so they surrounded the place at dinnertime, and killed everyone, including the master. Carlos Scharff’s wife escaped, along with one employee. This was in August 1918. Then the chief said, now we must spread out along the streams in order to hide. Some went to the source of the Las Piedras River, and others to different areas of Ucayali. Others went to the Madre de Dios River, to Bolivia, and the Acre River”. (Teodoro Sebastián, pers. comm., 1999; cf. Flores Marín, 1987, pp. 158, 159).

The presence of the rubber barons along the Peru/Brazil border also caused territorial dislocations by pushing indigenous Pano and Arawak populations towards the upper basins of the Yaco and Acre rivers. While the Arawak were becoming ‘ensnared’ in the system, sections of the Yaminahua and Amahuaca peoples went into isolation. The Yaminahua José Correia Yaminawa remembers the impact of the raids at that time:

“Our people had long been living in the headwaters of the Yaco and Chandless rivers, tributaries of the Purús River. In the forests of those rivers we suffered many raids, massacring many of our family members. These raids were organised by the Peruvian rubber barons and loggers. Because of this violence, we moved to the Yaco River and, there, we were persecuted by the Manchineri Indians who were under the command of the shiringa barons, primarily Alfredo Vieira from Guanabara” (Silva, 1998, quoted in Pereira, 1996: 31.).
The impact of the rubber boom on the indigenous peoples was reflected not only in the isolation some groups opted for but also in the increased tensions, political upheaval and instability that occurred among them for different reasons. Según Townsley (1994) One reason was the proximity the Yora, a people of frequent inter-ethnic conflict, were obliged to maintain in these areas of refuge, which led to a worsening of the clashes inherent to inter-group and inter-ethnic relations. Many hamlets and local groups were reduced to a fraction of their original size and fell below the minimum population necessary for their demographic reproduction. As a result, fragments of communities and local groups that had previously been autonomous were forced to merge, forming compound communities. It was also for this reason that the mechanism of recruiting women from other groups became more prevalent among the Pano and, with this, attacks between local groups.

Following regroupment, once the external pressures exerted by the rubber barons had disappeared, the Yora split up once more and a general migration took place (Townsley, 1994).

“This migration appears to have occurred in a very short space of time, and it is this that really accounts for the current situation of dispersal of the Nahua or Pano of the Purús, who are scattered over a very wide area from the Yurúa, in the north, to the highest headwaters of the Purús and Madre de Dios rivers in the west, and as far as the Beni River in Bolivia to the south, and the middle stretches of the Brazilian Purús to the east” (263).

Whatever the causes of this dispersal, it is likely that there then followed a period of relative calm for the Yaminahua and other Pano groups from the Purús. Local groups became extensively dispersed. There was no longer any pressure on their lands from outside people and contact was scarce (Townsley, 1994).

Various Pano groups, particularly from the Yurúa and Purús river basins, remained in isolation following their flight from the rubber barons. But when their iron axes and machetes began to wear out, they once more came down to the main rivers in search of tools, leaving only four groups remaining in isolation, including the Morunahua (sic) and Yaminahua (Wise, 1983).

The strong impact of the rubber barons’ presence on the behaviour of indigenous peoples is recognised by important figures of the time such as Father José Alvarez, who explains the isolation of some Harakmbut groups as a rejection of the territorial invasions, the abductions of their women, the conditions of slavery under which they were forced to work and the contagious illnesses that decimated them.
The rubber boom not only helps us understand why some indigenous populations went into isolation but, above all, how the demographic and ethnic outlook of the region was disrupted. To satisfy the demands for labour, family groups from at least a dozen different indigenous peoples were brought to the region, entire peoples were virtually annihilated, and all indigenous peoples that remained saw their populations seriously affected. The rubber barons also caused territorial dislocations by moving local groups of indigenous people to areas where rubber or shiringa stands could be found in sufficient density.

The rubber barons left following a decline in the price of rubber. However, it was not long before parts of the indigenous territories they had occupied were once more invaded, by skin traders, hunters, tortoise egg gatherers, loggers, oil companies and, more recently, drugs traffickers. They have all witnessed the existence of indigenous peoples in isolation, and yet despite this they have used bloody methods such as the detonation of explosives and the use of firearms to frighten them off because, by instilling fear in their workers, they have become an obstacle to their interests. New external agents have also contributed, through their aggression, to keeping these people in their isolation.

Demographic and physical features

The situation of isolation in which these peoples live makes it difficult to be precise about their physical, cultural and demographic characteristics. Despite this, we can offer some approximate figures on the basis of information provided by specialists and the inhabitants of nearby settlements.

It is estimated that there are a minimum of 600 Mashco Piro. This figure tallies with that given by Rummenhoeller (1997). For his part, Shepard (1996) suggests the presence of various autonomous groups, putting the population at a minimum of 300 individuals. Indigenous Yine from a nearby community, who tend to come across them during their fishing trips, consider that the total population could be as high as 1,000. In terms of the Yora from the headwaters of the Las Piedras River, demographic data varies between 350-400 (Rummenhoeller, 1997) and 600 (CEDIA, 1996). Finally, in line with the most recent findings of Masko encampments in the Envira Contact Zone, the National Indian Foundation in Brazil (FUNAI) gives a minimum figure of 600 isolated indigenous in the Yaco-Tahuamanu area (Meirelles, 1999, Pereira; 2000).

The Mashco Piro are described as tall people with coppery skin. Both men and women have straight black hair down to their shoulders although men have occasionally been seen with hair down to
their waists. Men and women of adult age cover their private parts with small pieces of cloth made from bush papaya (Cecropia sciadophylla) fibre, pieces of llanchama (Poulzenia spp.) bark or Brazil nut shell. Some paint their bodies with annatto. They also carry ropes made of bush papaya fibre, tied around their arms and legs. It is said that these contain substances to scare away vipers.

In terms of the isolated peoples of the Yaco-Tahuamanu rivers, although their identity is not clear, some specialists - on the basis of the region’s historical background and information on the physical and cultural features of the group - believe them to be a Pano people. This is supported by the descriptions given by some Yaminahua inhabitants of the Mamoadeate Indigenous Reserve, on the Yaco River, Acre (Brazil): the men have a circular hair cut, like a crown, and they walk around naked with their sexual organ held in place by a belt known by specialists as a ‘penis belt’, made from envira bark. Women use just a small piece of envira to cover the front of their crotch.

Although we have no detailed information on the physical characteristics of the isolated peoples of the headwaters of the Las Piedras River, they are probably similar to the Yora or Nahua of the Mishagua River, who have been quite well-known since the mid-1980s.

Finally, it is important to note that there are a number of references relating to the presence of isolated indigenous groups in the eastern part of the Manu River basin, with physical and cultural features similar to the Harakmbut such as, for example, physical similarities and the use of genipap (Genipa americana) for body painting.

**Cultural features**

**The Mashco Piro**
The integration of two ‘Mashco Piro’ women into two native communities, Yine and Matsigenka respectively, and their sustained contact with members of the wider society, has enabled us to find out a little more about their linguistic affiliation and other cultural aspects. This, along with repeated conversations between indigenous Yine from the Las Piedras River and isolated indigenous groups in the region, leads us to believe that this group speaks a language of the Pre-Andean Arawak linguistic family, with vocabulary very similar to that of the Yine language but with a specific identity.

There are various hypotheses as to the origins of the Mashco Piro. Some Dominican missionaries such as Álvarez (1996) state that they are the descendants of indigenous Yine from the Urubamba River. The Yine of the Monte Salvado native community, with whom they
Yora woman captured near the Acre River in approx. 1960 by loggers, 2000. Photo: Beatriz Huertas

Tojojo, Mashco Piro woman coming from the Manu River basin, 2000. Photo: Beatriz Huertas
have had brief conversations, confirm this belief, maintaining that they are the descendants of their forefathers who were brought to the area from the Urubamba as slaves by the rubber baron Carlos Scharff in the early 20th century, as mentioned above. After killing him in 1918, these people chose to seek refuge in remote areas for fear of reprisals.

There are a series of historic references that suggest they are an ethnic mix resulting from the intermarriage of ethnic Yine and Harakmbut (Mashco) who were living in the west of the department prior to the arrival of the rubber barons. Valdez Lozano (1944), who accompanied Carlos Fermín Fitzcarrald on his travels along the Manu River, mentions having encountered so-called Mashco Piro populations on various tributaries of the Manu who, according to him, were a combination of the Mashco and Piro peoples (sic). For his part, Farabee (1922) published a Mashco vocabulary that comprised second source words and which, according to Lyon (1975), contained words similar to a dialect of the Haté (Harakmbut) and others of Piro origin (sic). Long before this, Cipriani, a member of the River Networks Board, had provided information on the assimilation of the Mashco and Piro (sic) living on the Urubamba, Apurimac, Purús and Manu, from whom “the race known as the Mashco Pira must have been born” (1902: 81).

Finally, Zarzar (1999) notes references to relations between this group and the Iñapari. These latter are considered to be a subdivision of the Maneteneri (also Arawak), who live in the area between the Las Piedras River and the Acre River in Brazil (Carneiro, 1962 cited by Zarzar, 1999). Moreover, Hurtado et. al. (1987) observed that some words in the Iñapari language, published by Cipriani at the start of the century, were very similar to words used by the three Mashco Piro women encountered some years previously by park guards of Manu National Park (Ibid).

The presence of the Yine (Piro) ethnic component mentioned by the authors is a common denominator in all the references given to explain the existence of so-called Mashco Piro populations. Their probable mix, either with Harakmbut groups (known commonly as Mashco) or others, would not be strange given the notable decline in population during the rubber boom, which forced some populations to join with other culturally different ones in order to survive.

However, given that the term Mashco-Piro is not applied with any precision to a single group or language, it is advisable to use it carefully, making the necessary clarifications or, otherwise, to avoid it altogether.
Isolated indigenous groups along the Tahuamanu-Yaco rivers

Their presence was noted more than four decades ago but, as previously mentioned, it is not clear to what people they belong. Although there are a number of physical descriptions of them that have led some specialists to deduce that they are a Pano group, neither the Manchineri nor the Yaminahua living in the Mamoadate Indigenous Reserve on the Yaco River, Acre State, Brazil, and who have been close witnesses to their presence for many years, have been able to identify the language they speak. What we do know is that they are called Masko.

“In the headwaters of the Yaco, Chandless, Purú and Tahuamanu rivers, according to the oldest Yaminahua Indians, there live groups of Indian braves and nomads, called ‘Masko’... I myself have come across encampments of these Indian braves at the headwaters of the Yaco, from the Abismo stream upwards...“ (Meirelles in Aquino e Iglesias, 1995).

However, it must be noted that the term Mashco offers no great insight into their linguistic affiliation but is used in relation to the way of life led by the group. Carlos Correia da Silva, a Yaminahua leader, offers an interesting explanation for this term:

“We call these Indian braves Masko because they have no fixed abode like their other relatives who cultivate fields and have huts” (In an interview with Txai Terri Valle de Aquino, undated).

The belief that they may be Pano is also supported by the presence of other more well-known Pano peoples in isolation, in areas very close to the north. However, I for one prefer to treat this with great caution.

Isolated indigenous around the source of the Las Piedras River

As indicated by García (1999), there is a broad consensus among specialists around the idea that these populations are Yora, of the Pano linguistic family. Their presence in the area is not strange given that, a number of years ago, reference was made to various Yora peoples in isolation throughout the whole region from the south of Ucayali department to the north of Madre de Dios. One of these peoples, living between the upper basin of the Manu River and other tributaries of the Urubamba, such as the Mishagua, was contacted in 1985 by loggers. This led to the deaths of half the population and their subsequent transfer to the current native
community of Santa Rosa on the Serjali River, a sub-tributary of the Urubamba River.

In the mid-1960s, the Yora territory began to be affected by large-scale projects such as seismic exploration on the part of the International Petroleum Company, and the construction of a canal in the Fitzcarrald Isthmus. Geologists from the oil company entered the Manu in 1967. Not long after, journalists reported that around twenty “Arawaks” from the Madre de Dios area had been murdered (Varese, 1967).

In 1982, an unknown number of isolated indigenous died in an attack on a naval vessel on the Manu (Wake 1987, quoted by Rummenhoeller, 1997; Moore, 1984).

Information on the isolated Yora peoples living around the source of the Las Piedras River was provided initially by Heinrich Helberg in the first ethnographical study of the Nahua group of the Manu (1986). Shepard and Rummenhoeller (2000) also indicate that, after being grouped together in the Serjali River by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the Yora provided information on the presence of other Yora populations still in isolation around the headwaters of the Las Piedras River and along the Condeja and Cashpajali rivers, in the Manu National Park. Two years later, on the basis of first and second-hand accounts from people participating in a workshop on indigenous groups in isolation in the lower Urubamba organised by the Shell oil company, Bernales and Zarzar (1998) noted the existence of a Nahua (Yora) corridor between the Cashpajali River, the Alto Manu River and the source of the Las Piedras River. According to studies carried out by AIDESEP (1997) and Shepard (1999), this corridor extends towards the headwaters of the Mapuya and Yurúa rivers where Pano-speaking indigenous, known as Chitonaua and Murunahua, also live in isolation.

The Pano linguistic family, to which the Yora belong, also includes the Shipibo, Matsé, Amahuaca, Cashinahua and Yaminahua. The Yaminahua speak a language that is very similar to that of the Yora. Their inhabitancy of watershed areas led D’ans to call them “the Pano of the south-east”. They are also known as Nahua although, in contrast with their own name of “Yora”, which means “real people”, this term means “stranger”, “people of other ethnic groups” (Shepard, 1999) and so it would not appear to be the most appropriate term to use in this case. According to Townsley (1994), the different Yora groups (Mastanahua, Yaminahua, Sharanahua, Parquenahua) should be considered as belonging to one single ethnic group that history separated by chance. They therefore all share the same kinship structure and terminology, their structural determinants of production and residence are the same and they
appear to have ideas on authority and shamanism, along with a world view, in common.

**Settlement and migration pattern**

The indigenous peoples in isolation demonstrate different degrees of mobility. Huts characteristic of the Yora people have been found around the source of the Las Piedras River. The Yora are semi-nomadic and combine extensive travelling with maize and cassava production. Throughout the rest of this river basin, and also that of the Manu, Los Amigos, Tahuamanu rivers and their tributaries, an area corresponding to the ‘Mashco Piro’, the type of housing found is of a temporary nature, which tallies with the belief that these peoples are nomadic. This way of life, based on seasonal migrations, would have been adopted by those known as the Mashco Piro in order to achieve greater mobility, thus avoiding contact with outsiders. This meant abandoning the agricultural practices they had most likely previously been accustomed to undertaking (Shepard, 1996; Álvarez, 1996).

In the case of the Mashco Piro and the inhabitants of the Yaco and Tahuamanu rivers, their movements take place according to season. During the dry season, or summer, when the rains stop, they travel along river and stream beds because the waters drop appreciably. They also travel across the large sandbanks that form in these rivers, and set up camp there for three or four nights. From there they enter the riparian forests, the lakes and streams and adjacent high primary jungle exploiting the resources of the zone, primarily different species of tortoise (teparo, yellow-spotted Amazon river turtle, jungle tortoise, arrau turtle), along with their eggs and young, of which there is an abundance at this time. Their predilection for tortoises can be seen in the number of roasted shells found around their camps. For this reason, “the most important season for migrations would seem to be the dry season from May to September, when there are high concentrations of fish and wide shores on which to camp and collect tortoise eggs” (Shepard, 1996:5-6).

The Manchineri and Yaminahua from the Yaco River put the presence in the area of isolated indigenous groups from the river source each summer down to the area’s significant quantity and variety of resources:

“*This stream (Abismo) and its surrounding area forms the great supermarket of the Yaminahua and Manchineri from the Mamoadate Indigenous Station, who frequently travel the Yaco River to obtain hunting and fishing supplies, abundant in the area around this stream*
right up to the western border of the Mamoada Reserve, adjacent to the Brazil/Peru border” (Meirelles in Aquino e Iglesias, 1995).

The resources used during this season also include tortoise eggs for consumption and reed flowers for making arrows:

“These Masco live from river to river. They travel more in the summer, in search of river turtle eggs to eat. They also appear when the reeds are in flower. They extract the izana from the flower to make their arrows. We can thus conclude that they live in the headwaters of the streams or upland non-flooded forest (‘terra firme’) because in those places there are no reeds. This forces them to come in search of them in the headwaters of the rivers, mainly the Yaco River”. (Correia, interviewed by Aquino, no source).

The importance of summer movements for these people can be seen in their unerring presence along the shores of the main rivers. These groups travel such areas despite knowing that they may encounter outsiders and that clashes may occur, involving a risk to their lives. It is precisely during this time that the greatest number of sightings of indigenous or the finding of temporary dwellings along the shores of the main rivers occurs.

Through our observations along the Las Piedras River, we know that the summer season is also a time when various groups from the tributaries, on reaching the main river, join up to continue their onward journey together. The last such sighting was reported to FENAMAD on 17 July 2000 by Romel Ponciano, a member of the Monte Salvado Native Community, who stated that groups coming from the Lidia and San Francisco rivers had joined up and were living on the shores of the Las Piedras River, close to the community and its annexe Mil Novecientos.

During the rainy season (November-March) they move to the hill forests and to the sources of the rivers and streams. They take advantage of the flora and fauna specific to these ecosystems and the concentration of wild animals that take refuge there, thus finding food while the lower areas flood. This is when the trees are in fruit, enabling them to make the most of a variety of abundant foods.

The array of foods found in such a diversity of ecosystems ensures a balanced diet. On this point, Tomoklo, the ‘Mashco Piro’ woman who now lives in the Shipetiari native community indicated that when she lived with her family on the Panahua River, they used to eat river turtle eggs, the meat of various monkeys, white-lipped peccary and tapir, always accompanied by the hearts of “all kinds of palm” (pers. comm., 2000).
River and forest products are also used to make houses, arrows, animal traps, clothing, and for use as firewood, medicines, etc. However, we also know that they use the remains of rubbish, such as plastic and glass, found along the shores of the larger rivers, as well as tools from nearby villagers they meet on their travels.

**Land occupation**

The so-called Mashco Piro’s patterns of land occupation, and their particular way of using nature, makes segmentation, permanent division, necessary. The areas occupied by each segment are considered to be their own and they generally respect these areas between themselves. The visible parts of their territories are the so-called corridors, paths they open up by breaking branches along the way at thigh height with which to mark their areas of transit. Some indigenous women belonging to isolated groups bear witness to the nearby presence of corridors travelled by other groups in isolation, whom they avoid for fear of conflict. These corridors, have been found by oil companies, hunters and loggers in each of the basins: the Tahuamanu River in the direction of the Acre River, the Tahuamanu towards the Las Piedras River, the Lidia River towards the Curiacu River and so on.

On occasions when fishermen have come close to the encampments of indigenous groups in isolation, particularly along the shores of the Tahuamanu River, these groups have used signs to indicate the boundaries of their territories. These signs tend to be reed posts planted in the sand or across the river, along with sticks stuck in the sand with dead parrots set on top of them. On the Las Piedras River, a group of Protestant missionaries found a broken bow in the sand. However, the most frequent sign of their presence noted by outsiders passing along their corridors is their whistling, imitating the sounds of various animals but particularly of those that would not be around when they are heard, which alarms the outsiders. It is possible that these whistles are used by the indigenous to communicate with each other in case of danger. They have an intimidating effect on those entering their territories, however.

The traditional use of whistles by the indigenous, for both hunting and for war, is described by Farabee as follows:

“All the indigenous of the region are very adept at imitating the cries of animals and birds. They are thus able to attract them within range of their arrows or get very close to them. ...They hold their position or even advance, imitating the cry of a bird” (1922:4).
The rationale behind resource exploitation

Historical and anthropological sources lead us to believe that some peoples in isolation, such as those known as the Mashco Piro, have abandoned their original territories in alluvial lands, leaving behind activities such as agriculture and adapting to a new physical space far from the populated centres\textsuperscript{11}. They have thus been forced to develop a highly nomadic and segmented lifestyle that keeps them isolated from wider society which, historically, has caused their serious demographic decline.

Hunting, fishing, gathering and incipient market gardening have become their only methods of obtaining the food resources which, due to the biophysical nature of the environment in which they live, are spread over the different ecosystems they move within, endeavouring to ensure that the seasonal and productive cycles of each resource coincide. Consequently, the system of temporal occupation and resource use over wide areas, governed by ancestral norms of controlled harvesting, has the advantage of offering great availability of resources, the regeneration of which is characterised as being very slow.

Their care in managing species conservation is reflected, for example, in the fact that our informants tend to find almost full tortoise nests in places where there is evidence of the recent presence of indigenous groups in isolation. The bone remains from larger animals such as mammals that are usually found in indigenous camps are also small in quantity, possibly due to the fact that the high volume of meat on each animal is sufficient to feed all the group’s families (FENAMAD, 2001).

Implementing subsistence practices requires an in-depth knowledge of seasonal migration routes, potential sites of forest resource exploitation, the seasonal availability of each species, opportunities for harvesting resources in different ecosystems, relationships between flora and fauna, the fragility of resources and the dangers of over-harvesting, territorial boundaries, corridors and inter-connecting streams between basins, religious aspects, the use of each resource, etc. (Ibid). The fact that they use vast areas of forest is also in line with the need to avoid exhausting the resources existing within one area, thus ensuring their supplies, principally of protein. The fact that this rationale is passed on from generation to generation is reflected in the high population and biodiversity of wildlife existing in the area, capable of sustaining numerous family groups of indigenous in isolation with regular migration practices. This social system and resource exploitation has led to a recognition that they are the most efficient inhabitants and conservationists of the forest,
as they consume more protein than any town inhabitant without altering the natural forest cycles. Among the majority of these groups, there is a belief that the territory is also owned by other species of animals and plants, with whom humankind shares a vital and limited energy, creating a balance of energy between the species that must be appropriately managed if they are to continue to maintain the generous natural resources. Hence their constant nomadism through the forest (Jaramillo, pers. comm. 1999).

Notes

1 See FENAMAD, 2001
2 The estate belonged to Bernardo Cardozo, a Portuguese migrant who arrived in the area during the rubber boom
3 The name Mashco was largely used by the Dominican missionaries during the last century to refer to the Harakmbut.
4 Right-hand man of the rubber baron Carlos F. Fitzcarrald, who recorded the most important events that took place during this latter’s explorations in search of rubber stands.
5 News of the existence of indigenous peoples in isolation has taken many people by surprise, even anthropologists. This is probably because, following promulgation of the Law on Native Communities (20653) in 1974, much of the attention of specialists and officials focused around grouping previously dispersed populations together, whilst information referring to peoples in scarce contact virtually disappeared from the horizon, as if these people had physically disappeared. All that had happened, however, was that they had disappeared from people’s minds.
6 As we shall see later on, the contact posts were a mechanism established by the FUNAI by which to make contact with the peoples in isolation.
7 One of these is Jose Correia, in an interview with the anthropologist Txai Terri Vall de Aquino on a clash between members of the FUNAI and isolated indigenous from the upper Yaco, in the early 1980s.
8 Envira is a kind of rope made from some trees
9 Also known as Manchineri
10 Possibly Yora
11 Another example of the changes that took place in important cultural practices in order to adapt to the new circumstances imposed by external factors was the abandonment of the drum signals that the Isconahua were in the habit of using “because they attracted attention towards the location of their villages” (Momsen, 1964, quoted in Erickson, 1994:17).
The problems facing the indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios, and indeed throughout the whole of the Amazon, are the result of political, legal, administrative, economic, religious, epidemiological, demographic, cultural, academic and educational factors. These factors involve the State, the Church, extraction companies, NGOs, indigenous organisations and civil society in general. In this section, we will consider the economic and religious activities threatening them, the very same activities that have historically been the direct cause of enforced contact, leading to outbreaks of illness of epidemic proportions, depopulation and the organisational breakdown of these peoples.

Logging

Although timber species of high commercial value, such as mahogany and cedar, are now in short supply throughout a large part of the Madre de Dios region due to the intensive logging that has taken place since the 1970s, the remote area inhabited by the indigenous peoples in isolation is still home to an enormous abundance of these species, and this has generated a mass movement of logging companies and private extractors to the area, particularly since the end of the 1990s. In this short period, illegal logging in the area has experienced a number of trends: the boom of the first few years, which was shrouded in international scandal due to the high volumes of timber felled and the corruption network involved; uncertainty around the application of radical State measures to put a halt to this; a short period of closed seasons and seizures and, now, a period of adjustment to implementation of the new forestry and wildlife law that is “legalising” illegal logging via irregular use of the new documentation required by the relevant State authority.

The boom

During the mid-1990s, central government adopted a series of measures that once more encouraged logging in the Peruvian Amazon.
These included authorising the regional agrarian agencies to award forestry contracts of up to 1,000 hectares with limited management requirements.

In 1997, the Organic Law on the Sustainable Use Of Natural Resources was issued establishing a requirement for ecological/economic zoning in order to organise and exploit resources. The National Institute for Natural Resources, INRENA, hired consultants from the La Molina National Agrarian University to carry out a study into the “Mapping of areas most appropriate to logging concessions”. This study highlighted a large part of the districts of Tahuamanu, Iberia and Iñapari as potential areas for forestry development in Madre de Dios. This, added to the rise in the world price of mahogany, led to the logging companies – some of them recent arrivals in Madre de Dios – pressurising the local authorities to obtain greater areas for extraction purposes. Some of these authorities were not only persuaded by this but even spearheaded the pressure on central government to gain an extension of the zones authorised for granting forestry contracts including, in addition to Tambopata province, that of Tahuamanu2. Then – with the argument that additional areas for extraction would soon be opened up throughout Tahuamanu province, along with the creation of Forests for Permanent Forestry Production the authorities encouraged hundreds of small-scale loggers to submit requests for the award of 1,000-hectare forestry contracts, and then indiscriminately awarded them, even in unauthorised zones. Completion of the El Triunfo-Iñapari stretch of highway and construction of the bridge over the Tahuamanu River enormously facilitated the entry of loggers into the area’s forests, including those inhabited by the indigenous peoples in isolation.

In October 1999, the Peruvian Timber Corporation (Corporación Peruana de la Madera) denounced the logging company “Industrial Tahuamanu” for illegally felling mahogany in Tahuamanu province, thus unleashing one of the greatest scandals in the history of the department’s logging activity. This led to the disclosure of a whole history of illegality, both in terms of players, conflicts and organisational processes.

In May 1999, the North American Newman Lumber Co., one of the biggest purchaser of redwoods and mahogany from South America, had entered Peru with the aim of investing in logging activity. Through a joint venture contract, it joined up with “Industrial Tahuamanu”, the company of Christian Stapelfeld, a businessman from Pucallpa involved in the lumber trade. According to the agreement, both companies would be responsible for exploring, extracting, processing, sawing and exporting mahogany and other tropical woods from Madre de Dios.
In addition, the Bozovich-Schipper business partnership also had a presence in Madre de Dios, Bozovich being the largest mahogany trader in Peru, the Schippers a timber family also from the central forests and who have been working in the area for no more than a few years.

With the backing of the local department of the Ministry of Agriculture, both timber partnerships joined with the few local investors there were to promote commercial and large-scale mahogany logging. This activity focused on the forests along the Tahuamanu and its tributaries, through the habilitación of many small local and outside logging companies, converting them into holders of forestry contracts. They later extended their sphere of influence to the basins of the Las Piedras and Los Amigos rivers and their tributaries.

The Newman-Stapelfeld group managed to engage the support of important local authorities such as the President of the Transitory Council for Regional Administration (CTAR) and the Regional Agricultural Director at that time, who both facilitated the awarding of numerous forestry contracts to Newman-Stapelfeld’s “habilitados” in Tahuamanu province. With the aim of gaining a greater number of “habilitados”, the company soon more than doubled payments per board foot, thus creating a trade war with the Bozovich-Schipper group and a new boom in mahogany.

A small extractor who could avoid all the dangers related to moving the timber down river could obtain a profit of 20,000 sols (approximately US$ 5,797 at US$ 1=s/. 3.45) per thousand board feet in one month. So all the farmers, haulage contractors, taxi drivers and so on quickly became loggers: they flooded to the “patrons” to obtain the necessary tools, machinery and supplies in order to request forestry contracts, going into the forests for three months and felling the mahogany agreed with their “patrons”.

The loss of “habilitados” in the face of the attractive financial offer made by the Newman-Stapelfeld group caused outrage within the Bozovich-Schipper partnership, which - with the support of its professional association, the Peruvian Timber Corporation – quickly denounced Newman-Stapelfeld to INRENA for felling approximately 1,000 mahogany trees outside of its contracted areas. This felling allegedly related to 3,500,000 board feet with an export value of US$ 7,500,000. The complaint also referred to the granting of irregular logging contracts in an unauthorized area where the selective felling of mahogany had been taking place. After offering their support, they asked INRENA to conduct an urgent investigation, immobilise the timber and cancel the contracts.

In Tambopata province, on the Las Piedras River and its tributaries in particular, illegal felling was also taking place along very
similar lines to that in Tahuamanu, that is, using “forest waybills” obtained via their own contracts or through the favours of corrupt authorities to authorise the transportation and marketing of timber which, in actual fact, had been felled outside the area of these contracts. This form of “legalising” illegally extracted mahogany is known in the area as “mahogany laundering”.

Towards the end of the 1990s, hundreds of mahogany and cedar trunks coming from forests inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation were being daily transported towards Puerto Maldonado. In the summer, 2 to 3 logging vessels a day were noted entering the Tahuamanu, Las Piedras and Los Amigos rivers, a figure that doubled in the winter. The quantity of wood transported by each raft would vary from 4,000 to 5,000 feet of timber.

The temporary halting of activities

There was immediate State intervention via the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of the Interior and even the army itself. The presence of an illegal road with all its branches penetrating more than 180kms towards the upper Tahuamanu, substantial heavy machinery and high-capacity sawmills in areas without legal contracts were noted, all belonging to the Newman-Stapelfeld consortium. But mahogany worth millions of dollars was also found, in either sawn or round timber form, along with the presence of numerous illegal loggers, many of them linked to the group that had made the complaint in the first place. Central government soon began to issue regulations penalising illegal actions. These included transferring the power to award logging contracts from the local agrarian agencies to INRENA in Lima, immobilising timber and machinery in the districts of Iberia and Iñapari, and declaring a State of Emergency throughout the whole of Tahuamanu province. According to INRENA, the loggers had illegally felled 25 million board feet of mahogany and cedar over an area of more than 200,000 hectares, some of which covered areas travelled by indigenous peoples in isolation, who were thus also affected.

Another three “industrial” logging companies forming part of the Madre de Dios Association of Industrial Loggers (Asociación de Industriales Madereros de Madre de Dios) were also found to be involved. They went on to become the driving force behind a series of actions aimed at continuing the system of illegal felling, and they remain so to this day.

From February 2000 on, central government once more authorised the granting of logging contracts in the area. Alongside this, and
faced with intense pressure from the logging companies, it issued regulations authorising the marketing of the previously immobilised (up to March 2003) timber, and the return of monies collected from small loggers’ associations in the areas of Iberia and Ñapari.

Despite the shameful background of illegality, which involved certain local and national State officials, this new phase of forest extraction was not free from the failings and irregularities of the past. In fact, many loggers actually used the regulations issued to justify the intensive felling of mahogany when in actual fact the regulations only authorised the mobilisation of timber that had been extracted years previously and which had been immobilised while activity was at a standstill. Irregularities also occurred when this timber was returned to the companies, some being favoured over others. The manifest complicity of some INRENA officials ended in an institutional crisis that fuelled yet further the illegal loggers’ hopes of continuing to fell mahogany during the ensuing anarchy. The volume of sawn timber produced during 1990 and 1999 grew from 9,713,239 board feet to 26,784,679 board feet respectively. In terms of round timber, production reached a high of 16 million m³, a substantial figure compared with previous years when the department’s total was no more than 2 million m³. This represented around 7% of national timber production in 2001 (IIAP, 2001). However, given that it was undertaken illegally, it resulted in no significant economic benefits for the region.

The new context: implementation of the new forestry law

In March 2002, a new forestry law began to be implemented in Madre de Dios, through a call for the first public tender for logging concessions. This new system of forest exploitation consists of dividing areas into minimum 5,000-hectare plots and providing contracts for up to 40 years, along with a public process for forest access and an absolute requirement for management plans, among other things. As we shall see further on, this process was supported and encouraged by the alliance of grassroots organisations, led by FENAMAD, which had been established earlier with the aim of achieving unity in the struggle to prevent illegal felling by making the activity more organised and pressurising the government to establish a Territorial Reserve for the indigenous peoples in isolation. More than 300 loggers, until recently employed as the work force and “habilitados” of the timber merchants who had been encouraging the illegality, chose to regularise their situation and become timber entrepreneurs focused on the sustainable management of the forest. This process
was accompanied by the adoption of a number of measures implemented by INRENA and the Ministry of the Interior to dissuade illegal workers. Although the social base previously employed by the most powerful sector of loggers to put pressure on the government to continue the illegal felling had been dismantled, their efforts to maintain the system continued, issuing a promise to obtain the cancellation of the reserve recently created in favour of the indigenous peoples in isolation along the Las Piedras, Los Amigos and Tahuamanu rivers and the opening up of the area to logging as far as the regional boundary with Ucayali. This demand, openly promoted by the Regional President of Madre de Dios, led to an increase in illegal felling in the Reserve. In this new context, illegal timber is legalised via the use of volume sheets and “forest waybills” bought from the owners of forestry concessions in adjoining areas.

To illustrate the situation this area is now in, the following are the results of a study carried out by Schulte-Herbrüggen (2003) between May and September 2002, in which it was estimated that 196 encampments existed, of which 127 were in the Alto Purús Reserved Zone and 69 in the State Reserve for indigenous peoples in isolation and the Purús Reserved Zone. In another article, the same author estimates the presence of 1,110 workers in the 127 encampments in the Reserved Zone (cited in García, 2003).

As García (Ibid) notes, the presence of indigenous groups in isolation and their interaction with illegal loggers was also documented in the field work of Shulte-Herbruggen and Rossiter. 17.3% of workers in the logging camps had had some personal experience of sighting indigenous people in isolation. Eighteen encounters were noted, primarily along the tributaries of the Las Piedras River (Chanchapayo, San Francisco, Curiyacu, Pingachari, Ceticayo and Ronsoco rivers). Sightings also occurred in other places such as Siete Islas and near the indigenous settlements of Monte Salvado and Milnovecientos. The majority of reports of encounters and sightings took place between January and May 2002, reflecting an increase of 600% in terms of similar reports for 2001 (Schulte-Herbrüggen and Rossiter 2003).

Hunters, fishermen and tortoise egg gatherers

For the indigenous and non-indigenous population living in the settlements adjacent to the territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios, hunting, fishing and gathering constitute important practices both for subsistence and market purposes. The high concentration of wild animals, fish and tortoises in the upper
stretches of the rivers during the summer season cause these people to visit these areas, coinciding with the appearance of groups of indigenous in isolation in this part of their territories, also intent on exploiting these same resources. It is consequently not uncommon to come across indigenous populations in isolation or their abandoned camps.

In addition to the local people, who carry out these activities primarily for subsistence purposes, a large number of loggers and traders from Puerto Maldonado do so for commercial reasons. As a result of an inspection visit carried out by the Technical Secretariat of Indigenous Affairs (Secretaria Técnica de Asuntos Indígenas) along the upper Tahuamanu River, information was obtained on the predatory hunting, fishing and tortoise egg gathering being undertaken by those who are also illegally logging in the area (Suárez, pers. comm, 2000).

According to Groenendijk’s assessments (1996), during July and August, between 15 and 20 boatloads of charaperos (tortoise egg gatherers) navigate the Las Piedras River as far as Siete Islas. Each boat gathers an approximate 1,000 to 1,500 dozen eggs in a 10 to 15-day journey. The charaperos visit all the main river beaches, which may hold between 40 and 60 Amazonian river turtle nests. The eggs are stored in cylinders with sand or saline solution and sold on the local markets for 4.00 Sols a dozen or 25.00 Sols a kilo (FENAMAD, 2001). The activity is prohibited, and so is undertaken clandestinely. This is a form of predatory exploitation that may not only cause the disappearance of the species but has also already created clashes with indigenous groups in isolation who roam the shores each summer in search of this very product to complement their diet.

According to the inhabitants of the Las Piedras River, the number of fishermen and hunters along the river has increased considerably over the last 5 years. The consequent scarcity of fish and wild meat is a serious concern for community members. The use of dynamite and biocides by commercial fishermen and hunters has led to a considerable decrease in the number of fish, primarily along the Tahuamanu and Las Piedras rivers (Ibid).

The tourism sector

Knowledge of the existence of indigenous peoples in isolation has led to a proliferation of travel companies interested in establishing lodges, primarily along the Las Piedras River, which is more easily accessible than other of the region’s rivers.

In previous years, organised tours to this river took place only occasionally but, since the year 2000, they have begun to increase.
We know that, with the millennium celebrations, there were companies who publicised the existence of “exotic and savage indigenous populations at the dawn of the 21st century” in order to attract tourists. During their travels, when they have to pass through the Yine native community of Monte Salvado, representatives of these companies have tried to get members to become involved in their plans. Jeremías Sebastián, one of the community’s leaders, gave the following opinion on this issue:

“Various companies are currently entering our territory. At the moment there is a group of Mexicans filming in the area. They have helicopters and outboard motorboats. There are also timber companies such as Espinoza, which have huge tractors. This company comes from Puerto Maldonado and has three sawmills in the town. The State takes our territory and then gives it to the companies, the small loggers and travel companies. These businesses come to our territory to look for places to build their lodges. The owners of these lodges want to contact our brothers and sisters in voluntary isolation to give their lodges more “appeal”. The same is taking place with the Mexicans, who want to use the “uncontacted” to sell their films. What happens is that the loggers enter the area inhabited by these groups, they see them and then provide information to other groups such as the travel companies, who then come and try and contact them. These companies bring presents such as clothing, machetes, knives, but as our brothers do not come out to get them, the companies end up burning them because they don’t want to take them back with them” (pers. comm, 1999).

The “Mexicans” mentioned by Jeremías Sebastián used to visit the area every summer to film the location and the indigenous groups in isolation. In 1997, these people were in visual contact with a group of isolated indigenous on the shores of the Las Piedras River. Taken by surprise, the indigenous reacted violently, firing arrows at the outsiders. In an interview with a radio broadcaster in Puerto Maldonado, the group’s guide indicated that he had received instructions from his employer to give the indigenous presents whenever the opportunity arose with the aim of contacting them, and this was what he had tried to do on this occasion.

Another area inhabited by indigenous populations in isolation or initial contact and visited by travel companies is the Manu National Park. We know that, throughout the 1990s, various groups of tourists suffered successive attacks from indigenous groups in isolation when travelling by boat along the Manu River. In addition, the fact that every time such visits take place some kind of illness emerges among the indigenous population in initial contact has become a reason for
serious concern among the neighbouring indigenous communities, who are approached for assistance whenever the indigenous in isolation fall ill. The following are some similar recent events recorded by Tello (2004):

- In January 2002, a local tourist guide took a group of tourists to visit the indigenous in initial contact living around the middle basin of the Piñi Piñi River. The visitors gave them improvised gifts of various articles and second-hand clothing that they had with them at that moment. Shortly afterwards there was an outbreak of respiratory illness among the indigenous.

- In July 2002, an expedition entered the upper basin of the Piñi Piñi River in search of Paititi, the mythical citadel of the Incas, striking up relations with the indigenous in initial contact living in that area. A few weeks later, news was received that a large number of indigenous in the area had fallen ill, suffering from respiratory infections.

For 2004, Tello has warned of two expeditions planned to the same area in search, once more, of the famous “Paititi”. Both expeditions are being publicised via the web sites of the relevant organisations. Aware of such events, FENAMAD has for some years been undertaking a series of actions to encourage INRENA, the body responsible for controlling access to the Manu National Park, to prohibit this type of activity. These efforts have borne no fruit, however. We therefore have to ask ourselves to what extent natural protected areas, however strict they may be in terms of their access restrictions, can form a guarantee protecting the physical and cultural integrity of the indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact who live there.

**Colonization**

**The Israelites of the New Universal Pact**

Since 1993, entire families of the evangelical Israelite Mission of the New Universal Pact have been arriving in Tahuamanu province from the departments of Huancavelica, Ayacucho, Cusco and Puno. The migrants indicate they are obeying religious precepts that lead them to seek out new places in which to live, advancing ever closer to the “Promised Land” and fleeing the towns, considered to be dens of
iniquity. However, it is likely that these population movements are also due to the growing poverty in the Andean region caused by the acute lack of land.

The importance of these migrations is reflected in the fact that, to date, two hundred families have moved to the area while the arrival of another five thousand people is expected in the near future. They indicate that, “the Lord says his people will be as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sands on the seashore”.

The Israelites are living in four settlements also known as camps or Sinai: Pacahuara, Chiclayo, Nueva Alianza and Playa Alta Nuevo Amanecer. Their devotion to agriculture has led them to request areas of up to 50,000 has. from the Regional Agrarian Department. Given the inadequate soil conditions and slow nutrient regeneration, agriculture is an inappropriate activity in this area.

They sell agricultural products such as cassava, banana and maize on the market but are not exempt from the crisis producers are experiencing due to the very poor prices they are paid for their products and which condemns them to poverty. All this, linked with rapid population growth, strong pressure on food resources and the lack of basic health services, is creating an upsurge in illnesses such as malnutrition, tuberculosis, skin infections and so on.

The leaders of the congregation are working to find new lands on which to establish settlements that will be inhabited, according to their leaders, by the thousands of congregation members who will be arriving in the future. In so doing, they are coming dangerously close to the areas frequented by indigenous populations in isolation, and this may lead not only to clashes but also to outbreaks of the illnesses that are already drastically affecting the Israeli population itself.

**The missionaries**

“The main aim of these missions is clear to all: to convert the children of the jungle into men useful to the missionaries, to their fellow countrymen, to God and the motherland, by means of an integrated education that delivers them from their ancestral customs and removes them from their complete degradation and damaging isolation for good” (Fernández Moro, 1952: 558)

Religious orders, both Catholic and Protestant, have played a prominent role in the process of contacting the indigenous peoples of the Amazon. Unfortunately, these processes have had tragic effects on the indigenous population, primarily due to the imposition of new settlement and cohabitation patterns that accelerated the spread of epidemics.
Catholic missions: The Dominicans

A first stage of contact was initiated by the Dominican missionaries, who arrived in Madre de Dios in the early 20th century and went out in search of Ese Eja, Arasaeri, Huachipaeri and Matsigenka populations, managing – after repeated attempts - to conquer the Arakmbut of the Karene River in the mid-1950s. Initial contact was followed by a concentration of the population around a missionary post. Here they did not differentiate between subsistence patterns or kinship structures, nor did they consider the ease with which illnesses that were to later decimate the indigenous population could be caught. In spite of this, the Dominican mission continued its work and a product of this is the missionary post in Shintuya native community, which is still in operation to this day.

Members of the Dominican order, whose headquarters are in Shintuya, now tend to make incursions up the Fierro stream, which is often frequented by indigenous Matsigenka in isolation. However, they have thus far had no success in their evangelical aspirations.

Protestant missions

In the early 1980s, encouraged by news of the presence of indigenous Mashco Piro populations close to the mouth of the Manu River, missionaries from the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) undertook numerous incursions in search of them with the support of some indigenous Yine from the nearby communities. However, these attempts proved fruitless given that the Mashco Piro remained unwilling to enter into contact. Shortly afterwards, along with loggers and oil workers, this institution was involved in contacting the Yora of the Mishagua River. One consequence of this was that the Yora lost half their population through the rapid spread of diseases that could not be controlled in time. The Ministry of Education once more endorsed the institute’s presence through an official letter authorizing a research and promotion programme to be carried out among the Yora group.

During the 1990s, on hearing of the presence of indigenous groups in isolation around the Las Piedras River, the SIL scoured the area by air and river. However, they found only warning signs from isolated groups urging them to withdraw. According to local people, in 1996 representatives of SIL offered to support the Mobil oil company in making contact but the company rejected their offer.
The Pioneers of the South American Mission

“Our vision is to see the Church of Jesus Christ established so that thousands of local, witnessing communities of believers are maturing in their own knowledge and faith, while working to ensure that everyone in South America has multiple opportunities to hear a clear, meaningful and persuasive presentation of the gospel from within their own ethnic or social group” (www.southamericanmission.org 2001).

 Shortly after the arrival of SIL in Peru, a new North American evangelical mission appeared. It was known as the South American Mission, and it established its base in Pucallpa from where it began its work of translating the Bible into all the indigenous languages. Incursions in search of indigenous populations in isolation were included on its agenda and so it set up base close to the territory of indigenous Isconahua, Murunahua and other unidentified groups along the border with Brazil.

Currently, through the Pioneers Association, the SAM has established a number of what could be called ‘outreach posts’ along the Upper Purús and Curanja rivers, very close to the area around which the indigenous groups in isolation move.

The Pioneers group, made up of four North American families and ten indigenous Yine (Piro) families from the Urubamba River, have been in the Upper Purús since October 1999. According to information provided to the police by missionary Scott James Welsh in March 2001 following a violent raid by isolated indigenous on a nearby indigenous community, the aim of his group is to carry out evangelising work with the Piro natives in their settlement, whilst at the same time providing them with economic support. However, the presence of the group in the area of movement of indigenous groups in isolation, as well as the discovery by an INRENA scientific team of small transparent “bags” with shiny objects along paths opened up by the missionaries suggests that they also intend to attempt to make contact with isolated populations, because these “conspicuous objects” have for centuries been used by missionaries and rubber barons to attract or pacify “hostile” indigenous populations. The similarity between the language of the Yine and that of one of the indigenous groups in isolation in the area is probably the reason why this missionary group has focused on these indigenous families.

In April 2001 members of the Monte Salvado native community informed FENAMAD that the representative of the Pioneers Association had contacted them via radio to inquire about access in the area, along with the dates and places of appearance of isolated indigenous groups and, finally, to ask for the community’s assistance
in undertaking actions of evangelisation among the isolated indigenous groups (Teodoro Sebastián, pers. comm., 2000).

Another evangelical group with similar aims that has had a presence in the area is the so-called “Life Path”, which was disowned by FENAMAD who wrote a warning letter in which it was made clear that if it continued its plans to contact populations in isolation then legal action would be taken against it. Members of the nearby Yine native community of Monte Salvado, who also follow the evangelical faith, have likewise been carrying out actions aimed at contacting those in isolation by planting fields in various places, and providing gifts of machetes, pots and other utensils. When they found out about these efforts, FENAMAD leaders warned the community representatives of the danger of their actions and that FENAMAD would be forced to bring legal charges against them if they continued.

The proselytising actions of religious groups not only constitute a threat to the lives of indigenous peoples in isolation but also violate their right to preserve their ethnic and cultural identity insofar as they have voluntarily decided to avoid direct contact with the outside world.

Oil

Between 1996 and 1997, the Mobil, Exxon - ELF Aquitaine oil consortium carried out seismic prospecting on plot 77 comprising the upper courses of the Los Amigos, Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers. Aware of the high risk its presence implied for the indigenous in isolation, FENAMAD launched a campaign to pressurise the authorities into demanding its withdrawal.

Two years prior to obtaining the concession, the company had undertaken a programme to acquire geological information on the Las Piedras River, as a result of which it provided information on a visit to the area of “primitive and nomadic” indigenous groups (Mondína, 1994). Indigenous peoples in isolation constituted a new social component in the company’s work and this was incorporated into the Environmental Impact Study under the section “Description and evaluation of impacts IV-6.4.2.3.B, On the Native Uncontacted Population”.

In July 1996, the company began seismic prospecting. This stage is considered the most dangerous for isolated populations due to the intense movements of teams of workers along the seismic lines that cross a large part of the territory inhabited by indigenous populations in isolation.
Houses built near Pto. Paz (Curanja River) in 2003 by missionaries of the Pioneer Mission to accommodate potential visitors from peoples in isolation. Photo: Klaus Rummenhoeller

Matsigenka family from the Urubamba affected by illness following their recent contact. Photo: Beatriz Huertas
“During the six or seven months of seismic work, and using 350 workers, according to its activity plan the company felled trees to make six paths covering an estimated total of 715 kilometres with a width of 1.5 metres, it established 20 or sub-bases for fuel storage, covering an area of 30 by 80 metres, 200 heliports of 1,575 square metres, located at a distance of 4 kilometres from each other, and areas of 100 square metres every 300 metres along the paths. In addition, 14 tonnes of explosive for detonation were distributed every 50 metres in groups of 3 to 5 holes, each one 4 metres deep”. (La Torre, 1998:98).

Shortly after these operations began, workers and team leaders found evidence of indigenous groups in isolation. The sightings of isolated indigenous groups, temporary dwellings, abandoned fires, animal remains, paths and so on occurred around the Las Piedras, Tahuamanu and Yaco rivers and some tributaries. Shortly after their withdrawal (1997), the company published a document in which it recorded all these events (Dávila, 1999).

According to information provided by Daniel Ponciano, a former company employee, work in the Yaco river basin was brought to a halt due to the finding of numerous indigenous dwellings along seismic line 105, which ran from a tributary of the Las Piedras River, the San Francisco River, north-westwards, crossing the Tahuamanu and Yaco rivers.

The company adopted a policy of avoiding contact and applied preventive measures such as identifying areas of high epidemiological risk due to the presence of indigenous, establishing contingency plans, undertaking medical reviews of its workers, establishing a team of consultant specialists on the issue etc. The company’s documents form an important source of information verifying the presence of indigenous groups in isolation (Dávila, 1999). However, following the company’s departure, members of the Yine native community, Monte Salvado, came across empty tins and bottles left by the oil workers. This was despite an intense campaign on the part of FENAMAD warning of the dangers the oil company’s abandoned waste represented as it could transmit illnesses affecting the indigenous population in isolation.

In 2002, the State signed an agreement with Hunt Oil to undertake a technical evaluation of fossil fuel potential in the northern part of the reserve proposed by FENAMAD for the indigenous peoples in isolation.
Notes

1 The extreme north-west of Madre de Dios is one of the last regions of the Peruvian Amazon in which mahogany can still be found.
2 Ministerial resolutions 266-98-AG and 301-98-AG
3 This was a form of debt bondage in which “habilitados” worked for one of several “patrons” or masters. These patrons provided the ‘habilitados’ with the funds and resources necessary for the logging process in exchange for the promise of wood – trans. note.
4 “guías de transporte forestal” – official documents similar to a waybill or bill of lading certifying the legal origin of timber and authorizing its transportation – trans. note.
5 Ibídem.
6 INADE, 1999
The proximity of external agents to indigenous populations living in isolation, regardless of their origin or motivation, produces situations that affect the lives of these peoples to varying degrees. Depending on the type and level of relationship established, anything ranging from visual contact to sightings to direct physical contact may take place. This latter has triggered illnesses of epidemic proportions among indigenous populations, along with all the ensuing consequences.

**Sightings**

As we have seen in previous chapters, this is the most frequent form of contact. The recent boom in illegal felling in the territories inhabited by these peoples means that loggers are now the most likely people to witness the presence of indigenous peoples living in isolation. Second comes the nearby population and, in some specific areas, oil workers. Sightings generally cause the indigenous groups living in isolation to flee although, in more recent years, there have been reports of clashes of varying dimensions.

**Clashes**

Violent reactions against outsiders on the part of populations in isolation may take place for different reasons: anger at the occupation of their territorial spaces and the overharvesting of forest, river and shore products, which are of particular importance to their subsistence practices; aggression on the part of those outsiders, a desire for vengeance, the need to acquire manufactured goods, etc. For example, the pursuit and attack of a group of fishermen from the Iberia settlement on the part of seven indigenous people living in isolation in September 2000 in the area around the Canales stream, a tributary of the Tahuamanu River, took place two days after another group of fishermen had passed through the area with no trouble at all.

That summer, the influx of fishermen was greater than in previous years because logging activity had just been halted and so a
number of loggers had chosen to turn their hand to commercial fishing. The increased presence of fishermen and the strong pressure they exert on the fishery and wildlife resources of areas known to be regularly visited by indigenous groups in isolation during the summer months most probably incited anger among the indigenous and created this aggressive attitude.

The Curiaco River is an area of permanent inhabitation for some indigenous groups in isolation and so it is common for illegal loggers working in the surrounding area to catch sight of them. However, the loggers themselves admit that the attitude of these groups is generally one of avoidance rather than confrontation.

A more usual case is that the loggers find indigenous people in their camps, looking at their machinery and tools. We know that tools and objects such as knives, machetes, pots and ropes are rather attractive to the indigenous because of their usefulness in their subsistence practices. It was under such circumstances that indigenous raids took place on the Monte Salvado and Mil Novecientos settlements in July 2000, and continue to take place constantly on the loggers’ camps. In April 2001, a group of loggers surprised various isolated indigenous looking at their equipment in the camp. The indigenous group immediately reacted by firing arrows at the loggers as they retreated.

Between April and September, indigenous attacks against logging barges and other boats are also noted as they pass the beaches where the indigenous set up temporary camp. During these months, it is their custom to go down to the river shores to fish and collect turtle eggs. Although they generally take flight if surprised, they have occasionally assumed a threatening attitude to get the outsiders to leave. For example, in April 2000, a group of loggers who were towing trunks along the Las Piedras River came across more than one hundred indigenous people in isolation on the beaches. On sighting them, the indigenous approached and began firing their arrows. The loggers had to throw their cargo overboard in order to lighten the vessel and make a quicker escape. That same month, a group of indigenous from the Monte Salvado native community was chased by indigenous people in isolation while they were walking to the community’s forests to collect wood.

The new raids

Beyond the Madre de Dios borders, in the basins of the Purús, Yurúa, Mapuya and Inuya rivers, in Ucayali department, news has also been received that, rather than mere surprise clashes, there have
also been organised attacks on the part of the loggers to prevent the indigenous groups in isolation from taking their tools, and to calm the workers, frightened at the thought of these people living nearby. One such attack took place in 1995 against a group of isolated indigenous known as the Chitonahua from the Inuya River, a Pano-speaking population. As Shepard (1999) notes, after being attacked by loggers on Brazilian territory, a place they had reached on their travels, they returned to Peru where they were once more also attacked by loggers who had entered their territories to fell trees with tractors. Five years later, indigenous organisations from Atalaia province in Ucayali and AIDESEP denounced the killing of five members of an indigenous family, also Chitonahua, on the Alto Mapuya River, at the hands of indigenous Yaminahua who were working for powerful loggers in the area. According to information provided by AIDESEP representatives (Tuesta, pers. comm. 2000), the Chitonahua had become an obstacle to the loggers because of the frequent raids they were making into their camps to take tools. The loggers were within the territory occupied by the Chitonahua.

**Territorial dislocations and inter-ethnic problems**

The advance of the extraction frontier towards the territories of the indigenous peoples in isolation has gradually reduced the area available to them, causing territorial movements or relocations that have triggered clashes between groups of isolated peoples or between isolated peoples and the permanent settlements adjoining them.

These territorial dislocations, or changes in the routes they travel, must be seen in the light of a search for new living spaces due to the disruption that the presence of extractors, or any external agent, can cause to the territory and the resources required by the indigenous groups in isolation. These disruptions may range from the blocking of corridors used by the indigenous to the predation of food resources on the part of loggers hunting for food to the felling of various tree species leading to the disappearance of fruits that are essential to the diet of the area’s wildlife. This causes the animals to seek new food sources, and thus forces the indigenous to follow them.

The problems can be listed in the following order:

- Blockage and fragmentation of subsistence sources
- Changes to migration routes
- Search for other sources of food
- Clashes with other indigenous groups in isolation or with sedentary neighbours – Danger of group extinction
When they seek new spaces in which to obtain subsistence resources, the indigenous invade culturally different areas, creating clashes.

The case of the indigenous in isolation in Madre de Dios and the south of Ucayali department is now well-documented. They changed their migration routes towards settlements on the Brazilian side, which they then violently raided. These raids have increased in recent years, even culminating in deaths, and so FUNAI, the Indian National Foundation, in coordination with other Brazilian state institutions, has adopted control measures in the affected areas.

The incursion of groups of isolated indigenous known as the “Masko of the Peruvian Yaco” into Brazilian settlements along the Envira River, which was denounced to the highest authorities of the Brazilian government by FUNAI, in October 1999, was interpreted by members of that institution as being an unusual event that could be explained in one of two ways: either they were trying to make contact or their territories were suffering changes. It was precisely at that time that the logging company, Industrial Maderera Tahuamanu, built an illegal 180-km road penetrating into the territory of isolated populations, whom the workers had met on more than one occasion.

During the 1980s, Matsigenka groups in sporadic contact roaming the Manu National Park also suffered the effects of oil and logging pressure on the territory of their neighbours, the Yora (Nahua) of the upper Manu River. Seeking new spaces safe from the outsiders who were invading their territory, the Yora of the upper Mishagua in turn invaded Matsigenka territory. This took place in 1981 in the upper Cumerjali (Manu) and upper Camisea (Urubamba) and in 1984 in the Herinapango-Yomibato (Rummenhoeeller et al. 1997, García 1999).

“During the 1980s, oil and gas exploration in the area of the Camisea River caused the displacement of a hitherto uncontacted group of Nahua (or Yora) towards Matsigenka territory within the Manu National Park. In 1981, there were clashes on the upper Cumerjali and upper Camisea and in 1984 on the Herinapango – Yomibato. Matsigenka groups from the upper Cumerjali, upper Sotileja and upper Yomibato sought refuge in the Yomibato Native Community, causing an increase in population”. (Rummenhoeeller, 1997:58).

According to Shepard (2000), incidents have been occurring since 1996 that prove the presence of unknown indigenous groups along the left bank of the upper Manu River. More recently (2000),
some Matsigenka from the Tayacome native community have come across signs (footprints, paths, huts) of indigenous groups in isolation in the hinterland of the same bank, from as far up as the mouth of the Cumerjali to the Kusomeyo (Capellejo) stream. Even Shepard himself was witness to one of these events when, whilst drawing up a plant inventory, he came across a path frequented by the Matsigenka. His group was concerned at the strange sounds they could hear in the forest, whistles and grunts. The Matsigenka guides realized that the whistles were of human origin and, on recovering from the fright, decided to leave the area immediately. Three days later, part of the group returned to retrieve the tools they had dropped in their retreat and found small bushes cut, apparently, with a non-metallic implement such as an animal’s tooth. They also found something like a path leading into the woodland. A few days later, a number of Matsigenka were once more witness to similar events, and even reported sightings of two unknown indigenous individuals.

Incursions have continued into the 21st century, with one of the most violent taking place in mid-2002 in the Maizal sector of the Tayacome indigenous community. This involved the indigenous in isolation setting light to part of the home of a Matsigenka family from the community (Challco, 2002).

In terms of the 1996 events, Shepard notes that the “strangers” were possibly isolated indigenous from the Los Amigos or Las Piedras rivers who had been frightened or displaced by the seismic explorations being carried out on plot 77 by Mobil. However, the latest sightings appear to be more linked to the presence of large numbers of loggers around the sources of the Las Piedras and Los Amigos rivers. The violent raid by isolated indigenous on the territory of the Tayacome community, in particular, which took place in 2002, occurred at a time when FENAMAD (2002) was denouncing clashes between groups of isolated indigenous and loggers along the Las Piedras River, and attempting successfully to get the police involved. Shepard notes in this regard:

“Bearing in mind the vast territory such migratory groups require and the presence of other human settlements in the Manu basin (indigenous and mestizo settlements, tourists, national and international scientists), any permanent presence along the Las Piedras River, be it on the part of an oil company or groups of loggers, represents a threat to the survival of the Mashco Piro. It may also threaten the well-being of inhabitants and visitors from the River Manu, who may be attacked by the Mashco Piro in search of new territories.” (1996:6).
In recent years, some Matsigenka from the Segakiato and Montetoni communities in the upper Camisea, in a situation of initial contact, have arrived at the Tayacome community on the Manu. According to the inhabitants of Segakiato, these migrations are being caused by an insecurity and fear of illness created by the activities of the Camisea Project.

Pressure from the extraction sectors - whether logging or fossil fuel - and the missionaries in the areas adjacent to the Manu National Park thus appears to be creating these displacements. For their part, the Matsigenka of Tayacome and Yomibato are concerned at the dangers of these mass migrations of Matsigenka from the upper Sotileja, Timpia, Camisea, or of “strangers” from the east, towards their communities, due to the increased pressure this will place on their resources and the ensuing social conflict.

The effect of tools - the Alto Purú case

Another cause of territorial dislocation is the presence of missionaries who offer objects useful to the indigenous in isolation, such as machetes, knives and pots in order to attract them, creating dependency and an uncontrollable desire to obtain them.

In January 2001, a group of indigenous in isolation on the Alto Purús River violently raided “Santa Clara”, a nearby indigenous Amahuaca community. The uncustomary presence of the isolated indigenous groups created an atmosphere of tension among the inhabitants, who took up arms to defend themselves. An initial report from members of the affected community, provided via radio to the Monte Salvado native community of the Las Piedras River in Madre de Dios, noted the deaths of eight isolated indigenous at the hands of the “Arawaks” (Sebastián, pers. comm., 2000). According to eye witness accounts, the indigenous ran off with sharp machetes, pots and other tools.

When the case was investigated, it became obvious that the presence of loggers from Sepahua was causing pressure on the territory of the indigenous in isolation. It was also clear that the “Pioneers” group of the South American Mission were attempting to initiate contact. The head of the Human Rights office for the area noted that the raid was probably due to the presence of a light aircraft that had been flying low over the area for days. And yet, rather than attracting them, this type of action generally scares off groups in isolation. The activities of loggers and missionaries would seem to be more relevant: the loggers because of
their advances into the territories of the indigenous and the
mission because of the dependency it could be creating among the
indigenous for objects that “civilized people” leave as “presents”
along the routes walked by the indigenous.

In the context of the action being undertaken by the National
Indian Foundation of Brazil to put a stop to the raids on Brazilian
settlements on the part of isolated indigenous groups from the
Peruvian side, information was provided stating that in June 1999 a
group of Peruvian indigenous Yaminahua, recently contacted by
North American missionaries, had invaded Brazilian territory via
the Envira River, firing arrows at Asháninka dwellings and setting
fire to four houses in the hamlet of Karijo in the Kampa and Isolated
Indigenous Land.

Prior to initial contact

Vulnerability to illness

“There outside in the light are the illnesses, here in the forest, in the
dark, there are none”. (Tomoklo, pers. comm., 2000)

Outbreaks of illness has been one of the major reasons behind the
demographic collapse of the Amerindian peoples. It has quite re-
cently been confirmed that the main reason for the downfall of the
Incas was the spread of diseases caught from the Spaniards. Cook
(1998) considers these epidemics to have been the most important
ally of the Europeans in their conquest of America. The impact of
illnesses such as measles, smallpox and typhus on the native inhab-
itants was not only immediate but triggered a whole series of socio-
cultural problems such as dispersion, depopulation, social collapse,
abandonment of agriculture, misery, social conflict due to witchcraft
accusations and so on.

The case of the Amazon has been less studied. However, there
are reports from chroniclers and missionaries that refer to the health
situation of the indigenous peoples since initial contact. In order to
illustrate the significance of epidemics for the Amazonian indigenous
peoples between the 16th and 18th centuries, we have extracted the
following table from the report “Peoples in a situation of extreme
vulnerability: the case of the Nanti of the Kugapakori Nahua Terri-
torial Reserve”, published by the Ministry of Health’s General Office
of Epidemiology (2003).
## Indigenous Peoples of the Peruvian Amazon and Epidemics 1589 – 1794

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Epidemic</th>
<th>Impact and Loss of Life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1589</td>
<td>Smallpox and measles epidemics</td>
<td>10% of the Jívaro of Yahuarzongo and Bracamoros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1602</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Asháninka and Matsigenka from Apurímac and Mantaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1642</td>
<td>Initial smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>20% of the Maina living in <em>encomendas</em>¹ and the Maina Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1644 – 1652</td>
<td>Successive epidemics of smallpox and colds</td>
<td>50% of the Cocama then existing along the banks of the Bajo Ucayali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1645-1661</td>
<td>Successive epidemics of smallpox and measles</td>
<td>51% of the Payanzo (7,000) from the Payanzo and Panatahuas (Huánuco) Mission. All infants under 12 months died and virtually all children under the age of 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1645</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Indigenous populations from the middle Huallaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1646-1647</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic (5 months)</td>
<td>30% of the Omagua from various mission settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1654-1660</td>
<td>Epidemics of smallpox and dysentery</td>
<td>85% of the Roamaina from the lower Pastaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1655</td>
<td>Unidentified epidemic</td>
<td>Mayoruna from the lower Huallaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1656</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>83% of the Cocamilla from the lower Huallaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1660-1661</td>
<td>Epidemic of measles and &quot;<em>valley sickness</em>&quot;¹</td>
<td>50% of the Jeberos from three annexes of Purísima Concepción</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1667-1670</td>
<td>Successive smallpox epidemics</td>
<td>Decimated the Panatahuia and Payanzo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1670</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>85% of the Cocama in the Mainas missions; decimated the Shetebo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Epidemic Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1662</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic (6 months)</td>
<td>1,000 to 2000 Maina, including nearly all Maina children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1669</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Extended from Quito to the east (Napo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1674</td>
<td>Unidentified epidemic (45 days)</td>
<td>Three Asháninka adults every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680-1681</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Shipibo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680-1681</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>50% of the Cocamilla from Santa María de Huallaga. Word has it there were 60,000 deaths in the whole of Mainas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1680-1681</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic (7 months)</td>
<td>34% of the indigenous from Mainas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1689</td>
<td>Unidentified epidemic</td>
<td>Shipibo and Manabobo from the upper Ucayali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1691</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Panatahua from the Huánuco Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1691-1695</td>
<td>Sporadic unidentified epidemics</td>
<td>Missions of the Mainas Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1695</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Cocama and Cocamilla from Lagunas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1709</td>
<td>Successive smallpox epidemics</td>
<td>Yánesha children from the Tarma Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1710-1732</td>
<td>Successive epidemics of smallpox and others</td>
<td>High child mortality in the Franciscan missions (11,000 Asháninka and Yánesha)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1711</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Yánesha children from the Tarma Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1721-1724</td>
<td>Epidemics of smallpox and colds/flu</td>
<td>44% of the Yánesha from the Tarma Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1727</td>
<td>Unidentified epidemic (2 months)</td>
<td>Decimated the indigenous Payagua (Secoya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733</td>
<td>Epidemic of colds and dysentery</td>
<td>Yameo women and children from the lower Ucayali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Epidemic Type</td>
<td>Location and Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736</td>
<td>Epidemic of flu virus with oral haemorrhaging</td>
<td>Yánesha from the Tarma Mission and Asháninka from the Jauja Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1741</td>
<td>Epidemic of measles and “bronchial congestion”</td>
<td>Encabellados (Secoya) from Napo and Aguarico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1746-1750</td>
<td>Sporadic epidemics</td>
<td>Encabellados (Secoya) from Napo and Aguarico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1749</td>
<td>Mumps epidemic</td>
<td>Indigenous in missions around the lower Huallaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1749</td>
<td>Smallpox and measles epidemics</td>
<td>All the Napo in Archidona, the two outbreaks coinciding and affecting the whole lower mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>Measles and dysentery epidemics</td>
<td>Encabellados (Secoya) from Napo and Aguarico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1751-1752</td>
<td>Cold and dysentery epidemics</td>
<td>Encabellados (Secoya) from the Napo and Coca rivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>In the already heavily depopulated missions of Jaén and Mainas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>General smallpox epidemics</td>
<td>Indigenous in Mainas: 200 in Borja, 400 in Lagunas, 50% of the Jebero and Yurimagua population in mission settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757-1758</td>
<td>Epidemic of colds and fever</td>
<td>1,400 indigenous in Mainas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1759</td>
<td>Cold epidemic</td>
<td>100 indigenous from the Nanay River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761</td>
<td>Smallpox and measles epidemics</td>
<td>Decimated the Shetebo reducciones (mission settlements) of the Manoa Mission of the lower Ucayali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761-1762</td>
<td>General epidemics of smallpox and measles</td>
<td>200 Cocamilla and Pano from Lagunas, 50% of the Chayahuitas from Nuestra Señora de Nieves, 76% of the Cocama, Chamicuros in mission towns. Devastated Laguna de los Jeveros. Affected Pevas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the case of Madre de Dios, a region that was belatedly explored, there are reports that show how, even before the rubber barons established direct contact with indigenous populations, some of them had already been decimated by outside illnesses. Such was the case of the indigenous Arasaeri and Pukirieri, inhabitants of the department’s access zones at that time.

“What’s more, when Fitzcarrald arrived in Madre de Dios, not only had Bolivian and Brazilian rubber tappers already been working along the Madre de Dios River and many of its tributaries for some time but various indigenous groups of the area had already been wiped out” (Wahl, 1995).

Epidemics were noted along the Manu between 1889 and 1892, the date when the first rubber barons arrived, and then in 1896 (Ibid). Later, when these populations were settled in rubber camps and mission settlements, the epidemics broke out once more and affected an already suffering population. For example, the Huachipaeri still remember the measles epidemic that decimated the population in the Palotoa mission in the 1920s. In 1946, the North American Baptist Mission once more gathered them together, triggering a smallpox epidemic two years later that once more reduced the population to between 70 and 200 people (SERI, 1992, quoted in Rummenhoeller 1997). Today, the Huachipaeri number no more than 100. The Arakambut, known as Mashco by the missionaries, also succumbed to illnesses from the very start of their intrusion. The Toyeri lost the majority of their population in 1935, after being taken to the Lago Valencia mission where they caught measles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Epidemic Type</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1765</td>
<td>Cold epidemic</td>
<td>100 Iquito from two missions in upper Nanay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Decimated the Chamicuro of the Samiria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
<td>Indigenous Lamas and <em>reducciones</em> of the lower Huallaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Unidentified epidemic</td>
<td>Indigenous from Manoa (middle Ucayali)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>Unidentified epidemic</td>
<td>Piro of Sarayacu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An elderly Yora, survivor of the tragic contact with national society in 1985.
Photo: Olaf Reibedanz
“Scarcely a week had passed, writes Fr. Álvarez (1936), when they were seized, particularly the elderly, by such a persistent and evil fever that however hard we tried to overcome it, we were unable to avoid the appalling position of being on the point of losing them all. The savages were reluctant to take medicines and continued with their mistaken customary remedy of bathing in cold water with the burning fever, despite being placed under constant supervision, thus rendering our efforts and care useless... they began to die rapidly, sometimes so unexpectedly that the loss of life was uncontrollable. The poor Toyeri, one moment as satisfied and well as a ray of hope and the next moment gone forever—...!” (Dominican Missions Review XVIII, 1936: 93).

And yet stories of entire populations being decimated through outbreaks of illness are not a thing of the past. The indigenous populations currently living in isolation share this unfortunate characteristic, and in no half measures.

The most notorious case occurred among the Nahua population of the Manu River when, between 1983 and 1985, having entered into direct contact with loggers and been taken to Sepahua, a group of four indigenous individuals returned to their villages with influenza and whooping cough, infecting the other members of their settlements. In August 1984, approximately 200 cases of pneumonia, malaria and whooping cough were noted in the upper Mishagua. As a result, around 300 people, that is, between 50 and 60% of the population, died. The elderly and children were most affected. (Helberg, 1986).

In this regard, a report of the SIL states that:

“During this eight-week period, approximately 200 people appeared. Of those, 130 were very ill indeed and needed intensive care. The SIL team was on the alert 24 hours a day, and made 3 visits a day of 2 to 3 hours each to administer injections and other medication and to see how their patients were. During this time, they were faced by many crises. No sooner had they finished treating one case than more seriously ill people would arrive from remote areas. (SIL) should mention that it was a very tense situation that demanded much effort. The SIL sent its planes at least 10 times on emergency trips to drop medicines... In spite of all these efforts, some died, but there is no precise information as to how many lost their lives through this epidemic, given that, according to information received from some group members, people were dying on the road before even reaching the SIL team and its aid.”(SIL, 1984: unnumbered).

Today, almost 20 years since this initial contact, the population has scarcely recovered. They are all the more isolated, and all the more
vulnerable to illnesses, given that their bodies have not developed the necessary defence systems to combat them (Helberg, pers. comm., 2001). Even indigenous communities that are integrated into national society but remote, such as Tayacome and Yomibato, inside the Manu National Park, are not spared. It is common for a flu epidemic to break out following a visit by scientists or the Park authorities.

The ease with which illnesses spread among the indigenous populations in isolation is also reflected in the current situation of indigenous populations in sporadic contact who, in various cases, have had to change their location or approach other communities in search of help. Such is the case of the Matsigenka families who live along the Sotileja, Palotoa and Piñi Piñi streams, for whom a number of vaccination campaigns were carried out by the Manu National Park administration with the support of the Pilcopata Health Centre. In 1995, during one of these trips, it was noted that the recent emergence of epidemics was the main reason behind movements towards the Yomibato, in search of aid (Rummenhoeller, 1997, García 2000). On this point, Rummenhoeller indicates:

“...In the headwaters of the Cumerjali, Sotileja and Yomibato rivers there are small dispersed settlements of Matsigenka in a situation of voluntary isolation. Some of them maintain infrequent contact with the Yomibato native community. In September 1995, the teacher from the Yomibato native community, Benito Chinchiquiti, together with Mateo Italiano from the Shipetiari native community, travelled along the headwaters of these rivers and found a total of 35 families or approximately 164 Matsigenka. They informed the Manu National Park authorities of a health emergency among the Matsigenka, for which reason a support expedition was organised in October 1995, headed by the doctor from the Pilcopata Health Centre. It was noted that the Matsigenka had a few metal tools, obtained through exchanges with members of the Yomibato native community. It was also noted that the recent emergence of epidemics was the main cause of their displacement”. (Rummenhoeller, 1997:58).

As an example, the health situation of the Matsigenka of the Upper Sotileja was examined in 1995 by a commission led by Dr. Neptali Cueva of the Pilcopata Health Centre with the participation of the anthropologist Glenn Shepard. Its assessment was as follows:

- High vulnerability of populations in voluntary isolation or scarce contact to any Western illness, through lack of antibodies.
- Outbreaks of illnesses causing high mortality rates among them. The first outbreak of flu took place approximately 15 years ago (1980), causing many deaths, for which reason they are extremely afraid of this illness. In addition, the symptoms of jaundice, fever, bruising, blood-stained vomit, blood-stained stools and nose bleeds were described, causing two or three deaths among children and adults.
- Cueva confirms the diagnosis of yellow fever or hepatitis B. Other symptoms that appeared 3 to 5 years ago are similar to the symptoms of measles. Some people have scars indicative of shingles. This is clear proof that chicken pox is present.
- High infant mortality through acute diarrhoea.
- High rate of ARIs, in addition to child malnutrition, anaemia and enteroparasitosis.

In the case of the indigenous peoples in isolation in the Manu National Park, the Manu Reserved Zone and along the Los Amigos and Las Piedras rivers, Rummenhoeller (1997) makes the following assessments and recommendations:

- The uncontacted populations are highly susceptible to viral infections such as tuberculosis, malaria etc., which cause high morbimortality.
- There are occasionally unauthorized entries into the area around which these groups travel within the Manu National Park and Manu Reserved Zone.
- There are incursions on the part of staff from oil companies, loggers and others into areas adjacent to the Manu National Park and Reserved Zone, where these groups travel.
- Evangelical missions and organisations promote contact with these groups using indigenous intermediaries, without considering any preventive measures with regard to the impact and consequences of these activities.
- There is a need to establish State reserves in favour of nomadic indigenous groups in areas adjacent to the northern and north-eastern boundaries of the Manu National Park (upper Las Piedras and upper Los Amigos rivers)
- There is a lack of efficient control of logging activities in the reserve to the benefit of the nomadic Kugapakori (Nanti)-Nahua on the north-eastern border of the Manu National Park.
- The Park has no contingency plan to be able to act appropriately in cases of post-contact emergency.
- There is no economic support with which to carry out activities in cases of post-contact emergency. (1997:98).³
The most recent case of deaths from illness among the indigenous in isolation following forced contact is that of the Chitonahua of the Inuya River. In 1996, following a series of loggers’ attacks and consequent territorial dislocations towards Brazil, a group from this indigenous people was in sustained contact with loggers who had invaded their territories, triggering a series of contagious respiratory infections that took the lives of a number of elderly people and children and affected most of the population. Towards the end of the same year, two families returned to the headwaters of the Inuya River, the rest doing so in 1997, possibly carrying contagious respiratory infections back to the territory of members of this group who were still in isolation (Shepard, 1999).

The care provided in these cases has been insufficient. Despite the fact that, during the Yora tragedy, both the Ministry of Health and the Manu National Park administration, the SIL and the Dominican Mission deployed their staff and teams to care for the sick, their effectiveness was no more than partial: “We don’t know if this was because the sick continued to refuse contact or because the vaccines lost their effectiveness in the climatic conditions of the jungle” (Helberg and Reynoso, 1986).

However, it is important to consider that this loss of life was due not only to their contracting illnesses but also to the fact that, massively and seriously ill, the indigenous were faced with the impossibility of being able to feed themselves, or satiate their desperate thirst, characteristic of the illnesses from which they were suffering. The solution to this crisis consequently ended up far more complicated than expected as it not only required the availability of medicines and vaccines but a whole nutritional care plan, individual by individual.

Post-contact problems

The psycho-social impact

What social impact may the spread of such illnesses have? How does this relate to the notion of illness these peoples have? How does the disappearance of most of their numbers affect a people? These are the questions that must be asked following an epidemiological crisis among an isolated people.

As Cueva (1990: unnumbered) states, it is precisely the different notions of illness that inspire the deepest aspects of a culture and from the very first contact, therefore, a clash of cultures takes place. A particular fear of illness can still be seen among a considerable number of the Harakmbut population, contacted fifty years ago. This
attitude is much more evident among the Yora who are currently living along the Serjali. At the first sign of any illness, instead of taking therapeutic action, they fall into despair (Shepard, 1996). Today, after 19 years of demographic collapse, José Dispupidiwa, the community leader, enthusiastically refers to the presence of many young people in the community “because this means there will again be many Yora, as many as before” (pers. comm., 2001).

During times of illness, those most affected were the elderly and children, which meant the disappearance of many of the people who headed each family group. In the case of José Dispupidiwa, he lost both his mother and his father, and was left to take care of his younger brothers and sisters. He was around 30 years old when this happened. This was the case within most family groups. The trauma they suffered because of the disaster and their ignorance of the outside world meant they placed all their trust in the missionaries and in the Yaminahua who were involved in the contact, becoming completely dependent upon them and exposing themselves to exploitation. As Shepard notes, now as in the past, intermediaries can become community leaders and hold a complete monopoly of power over their fellow men. Not only can they control the group’s production and economy but they can also dominate reproduction, choosing a “harem” of the youngest and most beautiful women. They can also control the supernatural world, with their feared powers as shaman or warlocks. The indigenous intermediary knows the material world of the Whites and also knows the illnesses and witchcraft of the Whites and uses these supposed powers to terrorize the group (1996:13). Referring to the Matis, Erickson (1994) describes the trauma caused by post-contact illnesses:

“It is easy to imagine the subsequent demoralisation of the Matis, as a result of which most of the rituals and even the very desire to reproduce were sidelined during several years of mourning” (97).

Another important issue to mention is the impact the mass deaths of the Yora population had on the occupation of their traditional territories. The Yora traditionally buried their dead adults under their houses and then moved to other settlements some distance away to avoid contact with the spirits. But the number of deaths was so great at the end of the 1980s that many corpses were simply abandoned in the forest or thrown into rivers, to be devoured as carrion. They now believe the area to be intensively inhabited by spirits and so have abandoned the area around the sources of the Manu-Mishagua basin (Shepard, 1999:37).
Loss of territory: from nomadism to a sedentary life

The way in which contact has been made has changed the social composition of previously isolated populations, their interrelations within and outside their groups and their patterns of settlement, pushing them towards a sedentary lifestyle.

Given that these populations practise hunting and gathering, which requires the use of wide areas of forest for their subsistence, their concentration in limited spaces considerably affects the practice of these subsistence activities and, consequently, their diet, creating malnutrition and a whole series of illnesses.

“From 1983 to 1987, the Shell company, with more than 2,000 workers and many more followers, invaded the lands of the communities for colonization, trade, logging, construction work, prostitution and so on, putting pressure on the forest resources and creating a scarcity in the traditional foods of the indigenous population. This changed the population’s healthy lifestyle, and nutritional illnesses such as anaemia and malnutrition appeared, particularly among the most vulnerable people, the women and children. With the drop in their immunological defence, infectious diseases increased among the indigenous population, such as malaria and venereal disease...” (Helberg, 1986: unnumbered).

This new settlement pattern is no guarantee that their territory will be protected. The Nahua are a case in point as they have still not fully recovered from the depopulation caused by contact in 1985 and they are now settled in the Santa Rosa de Serjali community at the mouth of the Serjali River, a tributary of the Mishagua, in Ucayali department, very close to Madre de Dios. There they have continued to sow cassava and maize. But the loggers who, a few years ago, were working in the lower course of the Mishagua River have now reached the community and are indiscriminately felling trees there.

The community members’ concern at the rapid decline in wildlife gave rise to a one-month journey to Puerto Maldonado on the part of their leaders, with the aim of requesting FENAMAD’s help.

Creating new needs, dependency and begging

The scarcity of food resources and their new dependence upon money to obtain them has forced the indigenous to place themselves on the labour market. Unused to totally new systems of work, and unable to adjust to them, they often end up begging. This situation
has been observed among the Yora populations of the Mishagua River, who were contacted in 1984 and who now roam Boca Manu asking for food and shelter while, in other cases, it has been observed that some Nahua are being enslaved by owners of the tourist lodges.

“In the ensuing years, sick Nahua roamed the settlements of the basins of the upper Madre de Dios and Urubamba seeking aid and objects of value to them, hated and feared in the Native Communities, unscrupulously exploited by mestizo loggers”. (Wahl, 1990, quoted in Rummenhoeller, 1997: 64).

Following contact, as Gallois (1998) observes, a disillusionment set in and it was on this basis that the populations in isolation went from freedom to dependency, from self-sufficiency to poverty.

**Notes**

1. The *encomienda* system was a labour system whereby the *conquistador* gained control over the native populations by requiring them to pay tribute from their lands, which were “granted” to deserving subjects of the Spanish crown – trans. note.
2. Now thought to have been cutaneous leishmaniasis – trans. note.
3. Awareness of the high vulnerability has led oil companies such as Mobil to warn, in their Environmental Impact Studies, of the possibility of outbreaks of illness for which the indigenous in isolation would have no defence mechanisms (Mobil, 1996).
CHAPTER 6

THE TERRITORIAL RESERVES FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ISOLATION AND INITIAL CONTACT

Current legislation

The Law on Native Communities and Promotion of Farming in the Forest and High Forest Regions (Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Promoción Agropecuaria de las Regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva - DL 20653), promulgated in 1974, and the Law on Native Communities and Agricultural Development of the Forest and High Forest Regions (Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Desarrollo Agrario de las Regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva - DL 22175) that replaced it four years later, were the legal instruments that organised the indigenous peoples into local units and legally recognised them as “native communities”. As part of this process, the indigenous peoples were split up and regrouped on fragments of their territories, which were subsequently titled. As García (1995) states, the law thus ignored indigenous territoriality as it is now understood, dividing the territory into sections and causing its disintegration. The area remaining after this process was placed under State control as freely available areas. These laws did, however, recognise the legal existence of the native communities, granting them legal capacity, guaranteeing the communal lands as inalienable, non-seizable, imprescriptible and collective in nature. They introduced certain systems for autonomy, jurisdiction and positive discrimination in favour of the indigenous people and set wider criteria by which to determine their territories, including multiple forest uses.

The titling of approximately 10,000,000 hectares of land has been achieved in the Peruvian Amazon for the indigenous communities. But what of the indigenous populations who are not organised into native communities and who are reluctant to establish sustained contact with national society?

Although they are not explicitly mentioned, Peruvian legislation designates indigenous populations in isolation as peoples “with sporadic contact” or in “initial contact”. In fact, in the Second Transitory Provision of the Law on Native Communities, requirements are established with regard to the demarcation of their territories:
“When demarcating the territory of native communities in a situation of initial and sporadic contact with other members of national society, a provisional geographic area will be established in accordance with their traditional methods of natural resource use, until such time as one of the situations referred to in paragraphs a) and b) of article 10 of this Law has been established, that is, until they have become settled in nature or are undertaking seasonal migrations”.

In other words, the territories occupied by isolated populations would be temporarily demarcated in accordance with their traditional methods of resource use until these peoples had opted for a particular form of settlement. They would then be recognised as a native community and granted title.

As representatives of the indigenous peoples in isolation, AI-DESEP and its regional organisations in Ucayali, Cusco, Madre de Dios and Loreto have used this legal provision, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Agrarian Departments, to obtain legal status for their territories.

The indigenous organisations have also appealed to ILO Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, ratified by the Peruvian government in 1993 by means of Legislative Resolution 26253 and effective in Peru since 1995. Article 14 of this particularly important regulation establishes that signatory governments must pay special attention to the situation of nomadic peoples and itinerant farmers, recognising their right of property and ownership of the lands they traditionally occupy, safeguarding their right to use lands that are not exclusively occupied by them but to which they have historically had access for their traditional and subsistence activities.

Although members of peoples in isolation are not recognised as citizens with full rights and duties, given their separation from society and the nation (Zarzar, 1999), the indigenous organisations have been taking up their defence from a perspective of indigenous solidarity, supported by international customary law (Urteaga, pers. comm., 2001). As FENAMAD puts it:

“This representation is based on the following principles: a common indigenous identity and regional history that makes us supportive of the indigenous peoples in isolation; international recognition of our representation of these peoples; everyday humanitarian practice aimed at defending and supporting the indigenous peoples in isolation; and the foundations of international customary law, which recognises indigenous participation and representation in international fora in defence of other indigenous peoples of the world” (FENAMAD, 2001).
AIDESEP at national level, along with its regional organisations FENAMAD, AIDESEP-Ucayali, the Regional Association of Indigenous Peoples of the Central Forest ARPI-SC and, now, AIDESEP-Iquitos, have been the most active indigenous organisations in this representation since the 1990s.

Officially established reserves

Under the premise that territory is a fundamental condition for the existence of Amazonian indigenous peoples, and based on current legislation, the above mentioned indigenous organisations have negotiated official recognition of the territories inhabited by the indigenous peoples in isolation. As a result of these efforts, they have - by means of Regional Departmental Resolutions and Ministerial Resolutions - achieved the creation of five Territorial Reserves.

Although the existence of these reserves constitutes an important step forward in recognising the fundamental rights of the indigenous peoples in isolation, it would seem that - yet again - it will be these indigenous organisations (with the support of national and international society) that will have to ensure that control mechanisms are established for these reserves, given the State’s apathy with regard to the massive and dangerous outside invasions currently occurring and the legal vacuum existing with regard to measures for protecting and guaranteeing the legal security of these peoples’ territories, and their right to self-determination.

Nahua Kugapakori State Reserve

This was negotiated by the Matsigenka Council of the Urubamba River, COMARU, with the support of the Centre for the Development of the Amazonian Indigenous Peoples, CEDIA, and established by the State in 1990 by means of Ministerial Resolution Nº 00046-90-AG/DGRAAR. It covers an area of 443,887 has. and covers part of Echarate and Sepahua districts, Convención and Atalaya provinces, Cusco and Ucayali departments. As its name suggests, it is home to indigenous Yora and Nanti populations in isolation or initial contact, but also to other indigenous populations, also Arawak and Pano speakers in a similar situation, such as the Matsigenka and those known as the “Chitonahua”.

It was established in the midst of the scandal that led to the genocide of the Yora – the details of which have been considered in various chapters of this book – and when the State was under
pressure from indigenous organisations to protect the survivors of this tragedy, along with other peoples in the area. The ministerial resolution via which its establishment was formalised thus noted among its ‘whereas’ clauses, “the need to ensure the continuation of these ethnic groups in their environment, establishing a land reserve on their behalf”. Nonetheless, not long after, the State itself exposed them once more to high-risk situations by promoting fossil fuel and timber extraction activities. Not even the fact that the Yora had lost half their population through the transmission of illnesses carried by loggers, oil workers and Protestant missionaries could put a stop to these extraction experiments.

**The Camisea Project**

In fact, and paradoxically, at the same time as the reserve was created, the Peruvian State was once more negotiating the exploitation rights for plots 88 – A and 88 – B with the Shell-Mobil consortium, plots situated in the Camisea river basin and in the very heart of the reserve. In 1996, following a period of negotiations, the government signed the long-awaited contract, considered at the time to be “the contract of the century”, for the exploitation of “the largest reserve of fossil fuels to be found in Peru”.

At that time, the company identified 12 “groups”, of which seven were described as in a situation of no contact (sic) or sporadic contact, and high or very high vulnerability. Given the possibility that contact - and hence epidemics - might once more take place with these populations, Shell produced its “Guidelines for Response in the Case of Contact with the Isolated Nahua, Kugapakori or Matsigenka indigenous population”. The aim was to prepare its workers for the possibility of an appearance by an indigenous Nahua or Kugapakori (sic) (La Torre, 1998). This plan did not respect the decision of these groups to remain in isolation but took it as a foregone conclusion that the company would enter their territories to carry out its operations, adopting mechanisms to attract or frighten away the isolated indigenous groups, depending on the circumstances. They thus violated, first and foremost, their right to maintain their traditional way of life, to physical and mental health, to life, to territory and to a clean environment, to name but a few of their rights. After a brief stay in the area, the consortium announced that it would not continue with the second phase of the contract, apparently through lack of agreement with the government regarding the royalties to be paid.

In 1999, the government at that time issued an Emergency Decree (022-99) requiring implementation of the Camisea project in the
national interest. The Camisea Project Special Committee (CECAM) thus organised an international public tender to award the licence for fossil fuel exploitation in Camisea, along with concessions for the transportation of liquids and natural gas to the coast.

In February 2000, by means of an international public tender, the Peruvian government awarded a forty-year licence for fossil fuel exploitation in plot 88 to a consortium led by the Pluspetrol Peru Corporation. This covered an area of 143,500 has, of which approximately overlapped with the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve, given that it primarily covered the Camisea river basin up to the sources of the Pakiria and Serjali rivers to the north and the Cashiriari river basin to the south. It thus affects various settlements and migration zones of indigenous Matsigenka and other unidentified indigenous groups. The area of plot 88 is not only characterized by its high social vulnerability but has been internationally recognised as a centre of high biodiversity, with many endemic species and species in danger of extinction. This was reflected in the recent creation of the Vilcabamba and Otishi National Parks nearby.

The Camisea project consists of seismic exploration. This took place during 2002, and involved the opening of 15,158 seismic wells, equivalent to 2,022 kms of seismic lines and 66 heliports; the exploitation of 4 deposits, 3 of which are within the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve and one in the adjacent community of Segakiato; the construction of a gas processing plant and two pipelines, one for natural gas and a poliduct for natural gas liquids over 700 kilometres, and the respective opening of a 25-metre-wide right of way. It also involves the establishment of numerous camps, pumping and pressure stations, and a gas pipeline network between the platforms and the processing plant within plot 88.

Irregularities in the Camisea Project and its socio-environmental impacts

When the consortium first began operations, the indigenous organisations protested at its presence in the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve and in the territories of the indigenous communities, arguing and warning of the following:

1. The government has failed in its duty and commitment to consult the indigenous communities and their organisations before taking decisions that affect them.

2. The entry of third parties onto the territories of indigenous peoples in isolation is in violation of their right to self-determina-
Territorial Reserves and Proposed Territorial Reserves for Indigenous Peoples Living in Isolation

- Territorial reserve Iscohanhua
- Territorial reserve Murunahua
- Territorial reserve Alto Purus
- Territorial reserve Kugapakori
- Territorial reserve Madre de Dios
- Proposed territorial reserve for indigenous Curaray-Tigre living in isolation
- Proposed territorial reserve for indigenous Yavari Merin living in isolation
- Proposed territorial reserve for indigenous Yavari Tapiche living in isolation
- Proposed territorial reserve for indigenous Cashibo Catataibo living in isolation
tion, understood in this case as being their freedom to remain in isolation from wider society.

3. In addition, the granting of rights to third parties in the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve constitutes a serious threat to the integrity of the indigenous peoples that live there, due primarily to their high vulnerability to illnesses that may be transmitted via contact with the outsiders who enter their territories.

4. The Environmental Impact Study for operations on plot 88 does not appropriately consider a highly important and delicate aspect for the local populations, and one that could be the most affected: health.

5. The effects on the area’s ecosystems constitute a serious risk to the lives of the indigenous peoples living in the reserve.

The realism and relevance of these concerns can now be seen in the main impacts that gas exploitation operations in Camisea have had on the indigenous peoples and the natural environment.

Despite the important role played by some local and national-level indigenous organisations in defence of the indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact of the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve, particularly following the Yora tragedy in the 1980s, they were not consulted by the government prior to establishing plot 88, as required by national and international legislation. Nor were the indigenous communities themselves consulted. The consultation process of the Environmental Impact Study was also plagued by irregularities, such as the delay with which it was provided to the indigenous organisations and the short time given them to review it. This was very similar to the experience of the consultations that were supposedly carried out by the consortium before entering the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve and commencing operations there. To illustrate the way in which the consortium’s staff handled public opinion in this regard, such deceptive statements can be quoted as that of a Hunt Oil Peru employee, who indicated that, “there is no problem with uncontacted peoples either in the upper Purús or in Camisea because they fully understand the benefits of gas production” or of Pluspetrol community relation coordinators who indicated that, “we have reached an agreement with the Nanti of Camisea for implementation of operations”. Quite clearly, the indigenous peoples in isolation could not have been consulted by anyone precisely because they are in isolation, and far less could they “fully understand” the benefits of a project so completely alien to their reality and concepts. And just what sort of agreement could the company have reached with a population in initial contact such as the Nanti?

Furthermore, despite the position of “no contact with the indigenous peoples in isolation”, made public by Pluspetrol in its Environ-
mental Impact Study (2001), there is extensive evidence in the form of statements from the consortium’s workers and officials themselves that confirms that forced contact was established with members of the peoples in isolation in the Reserve. Depending on the context, this could be taken as a way of “informing” them of the reasons for the companies’ presence in the area, pressurizing them to abandon their territories so that operations could be implemented or establishing contact with them in order to speed up their sedentarization, thus avoiding the problems that their situation of isolation and high mobility meant for the consortium. Such forced contact has taken place primarily during seismic explorations, along the Serjali and Camisea rivers and their tributaries. According to information provided by members of the Nueva Luz indigenous community, which is adjacent to the territory of the isolated Matsigenka of the Paquirí River, community relation coordinators from the Veritas sub-contractor entered the Shiateni settlement, in the area near the upper Paquirí, with the aim of explaining to the indigenous people in isolation in that area that the seismic line would pass through their area. Following this, the indigenous families left the area. According to information provided by an anthropologist working in the area, during this conversation the indigenous were forced to leave the area by the company’s staff.

Other indigenous Matsigenka, company workers, provided information on repeated sightings of “naked” isolated indigenous and evidence of footprints, arrows, annatto and other materials apparently abandoned by the indigenous on sensing the presence of outsiders. Information was also provided on the placing of machetes, knives, mattresses and second-hand clothing along the seismic lines in the hope that these objects would attract the isolated indigenous groups to “civilisation” without realising that, having been in contact with them, they became potential instruments for the transmission of illnesses to the indigenous peoples in isolation. The consortium has also supported actions of contact being undertaken by Dominican missionaries living in the Timpia indigenous community, providing them with the use of their helicopters. Following criticism from the indigenous organisations, the company has tried to minimise this forced contact. However, such contact has been confirmed by as important a State body as the Ombudsman. In his report, it is noted that encounters have occurred between groups of indigenous in isolation and Veritas workers (Pluspetrol Corporation sub-contractor) in the area of plot 88, superimposed on the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve.

The consortium’s actions among the indigenous peoples in isolation or in initial contact, whether for purposes of forced contact or to remove them from their territories, are not only in contravention
of a series of fundamental rights such as the right to life and health but, given the cultural diversity of the area, also lay them open to inter-ethnic conflict in the search for living space on which to guarantee their physical and cultural continuity. Indeed, in his report on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people (2003), the UN Rapporteur, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, gave the forced transfer of indigenous people from Shiateni as an example of how indigenous peoples’ human rights can be violated by development projects, denying them their right to life and personal security, to non-interference in their private life, family and home and to the right to enjoy their own property in peace.

A recent study on the health situation of the Nanti people in the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve, carried out by the General Office of Epidemiology of the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with AIDESEP (Ministry of Health, 2003) shows the high vulnerability of these people in initial contact to gastrointestinal and respiratory illnesses, which form the main causes of death. Over the period 2002-June 2003, 95% of deaths were caused by epidemics. The exponential increase in illness caused by acute respiratory infections is reflected in the reports of the Ministry of Health, which indicate that medical attention increased from 336 cases in 2001 and 209 in 2002 to 664 up to August 2003 (Ibid). According to the same report, the scale of the Camisea Project operations could have a potentially significant impact on the environment, health and way of life of the people of the lower Urubamba and Camisea, primarily the indigenous peoples. For this reason, it discourages the commencement of Camisea Project activities in areas previously identified as potential areas of contact with people in initial contact in order to avoid, among other things, the establishment of new routes of transmission for contagious illnesses (Ibid). Some months later, the same institution noted the existence of a significant link between the factors conditioning the current health state of the Nanti and the rural population in general and operations associated with the Camisea Project.

In addition, according to information provided by the health worker and various members of Segakiato community, which is adjacent to the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve, the population has begun to suffer fevers, sickness, dizziness and fainting ever since the consortium began testing for gas in the field existing within the community. Concern for their current and future health status was so great that those affected were considering the possibility of abandoning Segakiato and moving to the Tayacome indigenous community on the Manu, where some of the settlers originally come from. If the Matsigenka of Segakiato, with several centuries of contact with national society, are showing such a high vulnerability to health
problems since gas tests began in the field within the community, what will be the fate of the indigenous peoples in isolation living in the area around the 3 deposits inside the reserve, given that they very probably have no immunological defence against outside illnesses? The same can be said for the gastrointestinal and acute respiratory illnesses that could be seriously afflicting them.

The main environmental impacts of the Camisea project have been a drastic decline in aquatic and land animals due to the permanent transit of vessels along the Urubamba River and its tributaries within the plot, plus the constant overflights of helicopters. The fish are thus dispersed and the wildlife flees at such noise, hindering the local population’s hunting and fishing subsistence practices. This clearly has a negative effect on their nutritional status. Another environmental impact of great concern are the landslides that contaminate the rivers and streams, caused by the opening of seismic lines and the gas pipeline right of way. The water sources frequented by local people have become unusable, meaning they have to move in search of new ones. In fact, Transportadora del Perú (TGP) SA, the company responsible for gas transportation from Camisea, was fined 1,100 UIT by the Energy Investment Watchdog (OSINERG) for environmental damage, including destabilisation of banks, thus compromising the watershed and leading to a high risk of erosion. This State body is now considering a similar procedure against the same company for damage caused to the land on which the pipeline has been constructed to carry fuel to Lima11.

The way in which gas operations are affecting the reserve can be seen in the following statement made by the head of the Malanksiari community to the Ombudsman (2002): “Previously, they (the Nanti) could move beyond the Kuvaria stream to hunt and fish but now they cannot as there are outsiders there that bother them. They only go as far as the Kuvatari, and the noise of the engines and helicopters disturbs them. They want to be left in peace, they have seen a lot of peque-peque, large vessels navigating the river and overturning their canoes, the noise of the helicopter frightens the huangana, the wild animals, there is nothing to hunt because of the noise”. Further on the community leader notes that, “the noise of the helicopters frightens the uncontacted or those in a situation of voluntary isolation”. The conclusions of the same report note that, although they are not within the direct area of influence of the Camisea project (plot 88), members of the Nanti Montetoni and Marankiato (Malanksiari) native communities are being affected by the constant overflights and noise caused by the engines because, being traditionally nomadic groups, they are constantly moving in search of food.

In 2003, given the complaints being made by indigenous organisations and other civil society institutions, the Inter-American Devel-
opment Bank (IADB) made a loan to the consortium for transportation, deposit expansion and gas distribution works conditional upon a series of requirements aimed at improving socio-environmental management within its sphere of influence. One of these requirements consisted of promoting the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve to the highest category of protection. Thus on 26 July 2003, the Peruvian government issued Supreme Decree 028-2003-AG, in which it raised the category of the resolution establishing the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve and established the concept of “guardianship” of the indigenous peoples in isolation, bestowing this responsibility on the National Commission for Andean, Amazonian and Afro-Peruvian Peoples (CONAPA). It consequently attributed this latter with the power to exercise legal representation of these peoples. AIDESEP believes this regulation to be illegal and has thus decided to bring a lawsuit against the State, for the following reasons: no system of provisional guardianship currently exists within the Peruvian legal code and this corrupts the civil institution of guardianship; its discriminatory nature suggests the presence of some kind of incapacity on the part of the indigenous in isolation or a condition of being minors; it overlooks the right to autonomy (self-government), participation and consultation but, above all, it confers the power of decision-making over these peoples on an institution that is highly questionable in terms of its open promotion of the Camisea Project to the detriment of the indigenous peoples of the Nahua Kugapakori Reserve.

**Illegal logging**

With regard to logging, in 2000, INRENA issued Ministerial Resolution N° 249-00 declaring the area comprising the right bank of the Camisea River and the left bank of the Mishagua River as Freely Available Forest for the allocation of forestry concessions. As a result, the northern part of the reserve, where the Yora Santa Rosa de Serjali settlement is located, was affected by a notable influx of loggers, workers from 14 logging companies (patrones-habilitadores) living in the Sepahua area. The community leaders’ protests at the impact of logging activities on their resources gave rise to death threats from some loggers. The indigenous leaders’ insistence has resulted in INRENA applying dissuasive measures against the loggers, and their notable decline in the area. The same cannot be said for the Paquiría River, where the high number of informal loggers is creating outbreaks of illness among the Matsigenka in isolation and initial contact who live in the upper reaches of this river. In addition,
Map showing the superimposition of Oil Plot 88 on the Kugapakori Indigenous Reserve
there are now problems of six forestry concessions being superimposed on the northern part of the reserve.

**Territorial Reserve for the Murunahua ethnic group**

This was proposed by AIDESEP and established by the State in 1997 by means of Regional Departmental Resolution N° 000189-97-CTARU/DRA. It covers an area of 481,560 has. in Yurúa and Antonio Raimondi districts, Atalaya province, Ucayali department. It is home to indigenous populations in isolation and initial contact known commonly as Murunahua or Chitonahua, from the Pano linguistic family.

In 1996, the Murunahua Reserve was affected by oil plot 82, awarded to Phillips Petroleum Peru Ltd., and covering virtually all of its area. According to the map of plots awarded for oil operations by the Ministry of Energy and Mines, the area has been under a technical evaluation agreement for fossil fuel purposes since 2002. With regard to logging, this reserve has suffered some of the greatest pressure both from legal and illegal loggers. The consequences of their presence is reflected in the high number of previously isolated indigenous who, having been captured by the loggers, are now found living in the area’s communities or, in the worst of cases, working as guides for them.

A report on the Native Communities Programme by the Ombudsman (2004) indicates that, as of December 1995, according to information provided by a religious leader from the area, 35 isolated indigenous had been captured by loggers, causing the displacement of indigenous groups towards the Yaminahua Raya community and creating problems of a social nature. In 1996, news was received of an organised raid by loggers the result of which was that a family of isolated indigenous was captured and put to work as cheap labour in timber extraction. Shortly after, the family was rescued by the head of the Raya indigenous community, where they now live (Tuesta, pers. comm., 2001). In that same year, the anthropologist Glenn Shepard (pers. comm., 1999) was in the Alto Inuya River area with a medical team to treat a group of Chitonahua who were in a dreadful state as a result of forced contact with illegal loggers in the area. Information was also provided on the rescue of a family of indigenous Chitonahua – who had been captured by the logger Mario Pezo – from a logging camp in 1998. These families were now settled in the Dorado indigenous community (Ombudsman, 2003).

For its part, on 24 September 1999, the Regional Agrarian Department of Ucayali issued Sectoral Departmental Resolution N° 000453-99-CTAR-Ucayali-DRSA, by means of which it amended article 2 of
Regional Departmental Resolution 000189-97-CTARU-DRA, thus recognising the area allocated to the Complejo Industrial Maderero Pezo Villacorta SAC (CIMPEVISAC) as covering 23,515 has (Ombudsman, 2003). In other words, the local office of the Ministry of Agriculture had stipulated and adopted the necessary administrative measures to protect the rights acquired by the Pezo Villacorta logging family over three forestry contracts they had been granted in the centre of the Murunahua territory, regardless of the extreme vulnerability of the peoples living there and its new legal status of officially recognised territorial reserve. On expiry of the Pezo’s contract in 2000, and enactment of the new forestry law, this family asked INRENA to adapt their contracts to the new system of forestry exploitation. Given the danger this represents for indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact in the Reserve, AIDESEP and the Ombudsman have asked INRENA to reject the request. However, not only has this not been considered, information is now available – through a complaint made by the local indigenous organisation, ACONADIYSH (2003) – stating that the loggers holding the contracts, together with others quite well-known in the area, are continuing to fell illegally within the Murunahua Reserve, benefiting from the concessions granted by the Ministry of Agriculture in the nearby Mapuya River area.

The presence of loggers in the area has also caused the deaths of isolated indigenous, as has been denounced by the Atalaya Regional Indigenous Organisation (OIRA, 2000):

“In the Murunahua Communal Reserve, inhabited by our brothers in voluntary isolation (uncontacted), known as the Chitonahua, loggers are assaulting their territories in an uncontrolled and illegal manner, under the protection and with the collusion of corrupt officials (...) One result of this territorial pressure on the uncontacted is the violence that took place on 19 November last, and which led to the death of five of our indigenous Chitonahua brothers”.

Moreover, following the creation of the Territorial Reserve, the Regional Organisation of Atalaya Province (OIRA) and a number of district authorities in Yurúa publicly denounced the extension of the Nueva Italia-Yurúa highway, under the responsibility of the President of the Transitory Council for Regional Administration (CTAR-Ucayali) and the Forestal Venao company. The leaders claimed that the highway extension works were being undertaken with no consultation and, in addition, that these works would encourage the entry of many illegal loggers and setters into the area. This fact gained international importance when the National Indian Founda-
tion of Brazil, FUNAI, complained that Brazilian territory was being invaded by Peruvian loggers, who were building a highway between Pucallpa and Tipishca. According to information from FUNAI staff (Antonio Pereira, pers. comm., 2000), this road was already affecting the lives of the Asháninka on the Brazilian side of the Amonyaya River and, should it continue, would also affect the lives of indigenous populations in isolation in Brazil and Peru around the sources of the Tarahuacá, d’Ouro, Envira, Xinane and Purús rivers. FUNAI has endlessly complained about the invasion of Peruvian loggers.

Moreover, in 1995, in line with the method used with the indigenous Yaminahua and Amahuaca before they settled in their current native communities, members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics established a camp around the sources of the Yurúa River with the aim of making contact with the isolated indigenous in the reserve. As part of their contact actions, they carried out regular overflights of the territory of the isolated groups, dropping objects attractive to the indigenous such as machetes, pots and mirrors. The many testimonies from inhabitants of the region regarding the immediate deaths of their own relatives, as well as that of some members of the then isolated Murunahua group due to the outbreaks of illness that occurred shortly after their capture, cast serious doubts over the missionaries’ strategy.

Territorial Reserve for the Mashco Piro ethnic group

This was proposed by AIDESEP and established by the State in 1997 by means of Regional Departmental Resolution 000190-97-CTARU/DRA. It covers an area of 768,848 hectares in Purús district, Purús province, Ucayali department. It is home to groups of indigenous in isolation commonly known as Mashco Piro and others, probably of Pano origin, known by the neighbouring population as “Cujareños”. Like other reserves, in 1996 it was affected by plot 77, awarded to the Mobil-EIm-Exxon consortium. Seismic operations were implemented right down to the southernmost part of the reserve, where the presence of indigenous groups in isolation had been verified (Mobil, 1999). At the start of 2000, the Hunt Oil company obtained the rights to carry out technical evaluations on the fossil fuel potential within a plot known as Area IV, superimposed on the reserve. As noted above, to the surprise of many, a company official stated that there was no problem with the “uncontacted peoples” (sic) of the area, as they fully understood the benefits of gas production16. The area currently forms part of the vast area classified by the
Ministry of Energy and Mines as available for fossil fuel contracts. Members of the Monte Salvado indigenous community have borne witness to the entry of numerous loggers into the area, coming from the west, across the Sepahua and Inuya rivers. In February 2001, members of the indigenous communities of the upper Purúś expressed their concern at the increased number of sightings of isolated indigenous near their communities. As noted, these changes in migration routes were due to the presence of loggers on their territories.

In the eastern part of the reserve, it was noted that the loggers around Puerto Esperanza, the provincial capital, were using indigenous people from the communities for logging by means of the system of *habilitación*. Although the wood was still being extracted from outside the reserve area, the intensive manner of extraction was bringing them dangerously close to it. The timber is taken by freight plane to Pucallpa, where it can be sold at four times the price, hence the importance of this resource. Information has been received that a group of settlers in the area wish to build a highway connecting Puerto Esperanza to the town of Iñapari, in Madre de Dios, for logging purposes (Cusurichi, pers. comm., 2002). The proposed route of the road would cut through the forests in which the Chandless and Yaco rivers rise, places of proven existence of indigenous peoples in isolation.

In addition, the presence of isolated indigenous in the area has, for several decades now, encouraged the arrival of the Evangelical churches, undertaking systematic actions of contact for evangelisation purposes. One of the first institutions of this kind to arrive in the area was the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), which organised an expedition in 1971, achieving initial contact with these populations (AIDESEP, 1995). According to the Cabeceras Aid Project (2003), Eugene Scott, the expedition leader, noted that this experience, along with the history of other people’s encounters with the Mashco in the ensuing years, indicated that they were not interested in making contact with the outside world at that time. He therefore chose not to insist on a strategy of aggressive contact with the Mashco. However, as indicated in previous chapters, a group from the South American Mission, known as the “Pioneers Mission”, is currently in the area and has established two settlements, which are serving as “contact posts”. One of them, known as “Monterrey”, is located in the upper Purúś and comprises indigenous Yine families from the Urubamba River. The presence of Yine responds to the evangelical group’s need to have people who can communicate with the isolated “Mashco Piro” people, whose language is probably related to that of the Yine. The second settlement is located on the
Alto Curanja River and has the support of outside indigenous Pano-speaking settlers, as this is the linguistic family to which the isolated indigenous groups in this area probably belong. Each settlement consists of a centre of population, fields located around the traveling routes of the isolated peoples, possibly so that they can help themselves to the crops grown, plus paths along which bags are placed containing coloured objects to attract the indigenous. In addition, the “Pioneers” have made expeditions into the area inhabited by the isolated peoples in an attempt to speed up their contact actions. The Pioneers have thus become one of the most energetic evangelical groups in terms of their efforts to establish contact with the isolated peoples of the upper Purús.

The cultural dimension of the view some Pioneer Mission members have of the Mashco is reflected in the following quote:

“Scott Welsh and his wife, Nicole, both expressed dismay at the current Mashco way of life, lacking in Christianity as it is, and with the living patterns of nomadic hunter gatherers, which they believe must cause great suffering to the Mashco. They professed the belief that the intervention of Pioneer Mission would improve their lives substantially by bringing them the Word of God and the material benefits of modern civilization, which would allow the Mashco to adopt a different living pattern” (Ibid).

In 2000, by means of Supreme Decree N° 010-99-AG, the government approved the Management Plan for the National Strategy for Protected Natural Areas, in which Priority Areas for the Conservation of Biological Diversity were designated, including the area of the Territorial Reserve for isolated peoples in the upper Purús. Since then INRENA, in agreement with conservation NGOs and natural resource specialists from overseas universities, has been carrying out studies for the zoning of the Protected Natural Area and has proposed its classification as a National Park. The arguments put forward by INRENA and the ecologists in support of this proposal have included the need to conserve the high biodiversity of the area and of the ecosystem in which it is found, to guarantee biological connectivity between the protected areas existing in Peru and Brazil and to minimize access to the traditional territories of indigenous peoples in isolation. For its part, the national indigenous organisation, AIDESEP, and its grassroots organisations have been asking INRENA to recognise the existence of the Territorial Reserve for the isolated peoples of the upper Purús and to respect the territorial rights of these peoples, this being the main demand of the Amazonian indigenous movement.
Technical studies for the territorial demarcation of the indigenous peoples in the north of the Mashco Piro Reserve, on the border with Brazil, are also pending.

**Territorial Reserve for the Isconahua ethnic group**

As with the above reserve, this reserve was proposed by AIDESEP and established by the State in 1998 by means of Regional Departmental Resolution No. 00201-98-CETARU/DRA. It covers an area of 275,665 hectares in Callería district, Coronel Portillo province, Ucayali department.

In 1999, the Anadarko company was carrying out exploration activities in the south-west of the area inhabited by the Isconahua (Zarzar, 1999). However, they found no oil. As in previous cases, the area currently forms part of the immense zone available for fossil fuel contracts. The proximity of a number of plots awarded to Maple Gas for the purposes of exploration and exploitation, on the western side, constitutes a risk to the physical integrity of the indigenous peoples, as well as to the area’s biodiversity and ecosystems.

Timber extraction has been ongoing since the 1970s and continues to this day, causing the displacement of the Isconahua towards the highest parts of their territories. It is this extraction sector that is currently promoting the construction of a highway from Pucallpa to the town of Cruceiro do Sul, in Brazil, crossing the Territorial Reserve. Drugs trafficking also takes place in the area, and this is another factor putting pressure on the isolated indigenous as it constitutes a risk to their lives.

The evangelical mission has been carrying out actions of contact and evangelisation for almost half a century. In 1959, members of the South American Mission settled in the area and, after establishing contact, transferred 20 Isconahua to the neighbouring indigenous community of Callería, at the mouth of the river of the same name. Not long after, an epidemic broke out that decimated the population. The survivors have formed a community and are requesting its official recognition and titling of their territory. The remaining families are still in the forest, rejecting contact with outsiders.

As in the previous case, the area of the Isconahua Reserve has been included in the so-called Priority Areas for Conservation of Biological Diversity. Consequently, IRENA and a consortium of national and international conservation NGOs are carrying out supporting technical studies for the establishment of the Sierra del Divisor National Park, which would be superimposed on the reserve. The existence of the Sierra do Divisor National Park on the
other side of the border, in Brazilian territory, is one of the reasons for creating this protected area as it would give rise to the formation of a large binational park for conservation purposes. The reaction of the indigenous organisations promoting the Isconahua Reserve has been similar to that for the proposed Alto Purús National Park, in terms of demanding that INRENA respect the territorial rights of the indigenous peoples in isolation.

Reserves in the process of being established

Reserve for the Cacataibo ethnic group

This was proposed and technically justified to the Ucayali Regional Agrarian Department by AIDESEP in 1999. It is located in the district and province of Padre Abad, Ucayali department and covers an area of 110,690 has.

According to a study supporting the territorial demarcation of this reserve (AIDESEP, 1999), loggers – who years previously were logging in the lower reaches of various tributaries of the Aguaytia River – have since the early 1990s been entering the higher reaches of these rivers, which are navigated by the isolated indigenous populations of this area. Since then, the loggers have not only witnessed the presence of isolated indigenous but, in addition, have organised attacks against them due to their frequent raids on their camps for the purposes of taking tools that are useful to them. Information received from members of nearby indigenous communities suggests that these clashes have resulted in the deaths of a number of isolated indigenous, and yet the authorities have taken no action in this regard. One such event, which took place in 1998 and which also resulted in an indigenous death, is recounted by Segundo Silva Odicio:

“They say this death took place because the timber merchant had been robbed of his things a number of times and so he contracted armed men to make sure that no-one entered or left the camp. But that day, the men who were guarding the camp went off to hunt and the calatos (sic) took the opportunity of stealing a large quantity of provisions. It would seem they were also watching the loggers’ movements or, if not, how did they know whether the camp was empty or not? Well, the merchant became very bitter at this last robbery and, out of pure anger, one day made as if to go into the forest with everyone, very early. But in actual fact they were all hiding in the undergrowth, waiting to find out who had stolen their provisions. Once the camp was quiet, two calatos entered to take more things. But the loggers were waiting in..."
hiding, and they began to fire, killing one of the calatos who had entered the camp. The other one managed to escape and warned the others who were there. Then, together, they began to rain arrows down onto the loggers, who had fired so much they had no bullets left” (AIDESEP, 1999: unnumbered annexe).

As noted in the same AIDESEP study, clashes between isolated indigenous and loggers have been the reason that men have been hired to guard the camps for a number of years now.

“This is why my calato compatriots now rarely go down to the beaches to fish or seek turtle eggs, because they are afraid of being shot by the loggers” (AIDESEP, 1999: annexe).

In terms of fossil fuel activity, in 1996 the Maple oil company obtained a plot in the zone in which it was working. The reserve currently forms part of oil plot 31, which has been allocated once more to this company.

In May 2001, by means of Supreme Decree No 031-2001-AG, the government established the Cordillera Azul National Park, which covers the whole area proposed by AIDESEP as a Reserve for the isolated Cacataibo people. The creation of the Protected Area surprised AIDESEP’s leaders not only because they had submitted the proposal for a Territorial Reserve two years previously but also because it was created while consultation meetings were taking place between Amazonian indigenous organisations and the State institutions, in the context of the Round Table of the Special Multisectoral Commission for Native Communities, established by ex-President Valentín Paniagua, and whom the organisation had informed of the said proposal.

AIDESEP is continuing its negotiations with the Ministry of Agriculture to achieve official recognition of the territory inhabited by the Cacataibo people in isolation, via the establishment of the proposed Territorial Reserve.

Territorial Reserve for the isolated peoples of the upper Yavari, Loreto

The technical dossier supporting the creation of this reserve, also produced by AIDESEP and its regional organisation, ORAI, was submitted to the Loreto Regional Agrarian Department in April 2004. It covers the upper basin of the Tapiche River, in Requena province, Loreto region. The technical work has the official backing of the Ministry of Agriculture via the Inter-institutional Support
Agreement signed between the Special Project for Land Titling and Rural Land Registry (PETT – Lima) and the Inter-ethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Forest (AIDESEP), in 2002, and extended via an addendum signed on 26 September 2003. According to the anthropological, historic and testimonial information obtained as a result of the technical studies (AIDESEP, 2003), the proposed area is inhabited by four indigenous peoples in a situation of voluntary isolation, probably belonging to the Matsés ethno-linguistic group, classified as part of the Pano linguistic family. The area suffers from the superimposition of 70 forestry exploitation units in the Tapiche and Blanco river basins; areas available for fossil fuel contracts; part of the area proposed as the Sierra del Divisor National Park, and the invasion of illegal loggers who are causing a breakdown in the migratory routes of isolated peoples in some sectors.

The area is adjacent to the Yavarí Indigenous Land in Brazil, officially recognised by the Brazilian federal government for indigenous peoples in a situation of isolation and initial contact in that region.

Territorial Reserve for the isolated indigenous peoples of the upper Napo – Arabela
This has been proposed by AIDESEP and ORAI. It covers the area comprising a number of tributaries and sub-tributaries of the right bank of the Napo River, close to the border with Ecuador. As with the previous proposal, the technical studies have been carried out in the context of the Agreement signed between AIDESEP and the Special Project for Land Titling and Rural Land Registry of the Ministry of Agriculture in 2002. According to the studies carried out, the zone is inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation classified as forming part of the Záparo and Huaorani linguistic family. The presence of other hitherto unidentified peoples is also possible. In June 2004, fossil fuel plots 67, 39 and part of 1 AB, granted under contract to the Barret, Repsol and Pluspetrol companies respectively, were superimposed on the area, along with plot 102, in the process of negotiation. In addition, there are problems of superimposition of more than a dozen forestry exploitation units.

Other proposals
AIDESEP is currently carrying out the supporting technical studies for the establishment of the Yavarí Mirim Territorial Reserve, in
Loreto, and is also continuing its work of identifying other areas inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation in order to negotiate their official recognition on the part of the Peruvian State.

Notes

1 According to the Civil Code, the native communities have legal status.
2 According to the 1993 Constitution, the native communities’ territories lost their inalienable and non-seizeable status.
3 These people actually call themselves Nanti. “Kugapakori” is a name given by neighbouring peoples and it has a pejorative connotation, although its use has become widespread.
6 Amazon Watch, July 2002.
7 Kacper Swierk.
8 Report 001-2002-RDP/CUS/CCNN/DDHH.
10 La República newspaper, 21 August 2003.
11 It is important to note the role played by AIDESEP, the NGO Shinai Serjali and the Ombudsman in support of the community.
13 The language of this group is quite similar to that of the Yora.
14 Amazon Watch, July 2002.
15 According to Carneiro (1962, quoted by Zarzar, 1999), the Isconahua are the last remnants of the group historically known as the Remo who, in previous times, suffered the raids of the Conibo and Shipibo from the lower Ucayali and those subsequently carried out by the rubber workers from Brazil.
16 This is what the loggers and locals generally call the isolated indigenous.
The Native Federation of the Madre de Dios River and its Tributaries, FENAMAD, is the organisation that represents all the indigenous peoples of the Madre de Dios region, both those organised into native communities and those in a situation of isolation. Every two years, the indigenous communities’ representatives meet in a General Assembly to analyse their problems, suggest solutions, participate in the organisation’s decision-making and elect a new leadership.

Founded during one of the most turbulent times in the history of Madre de Dios, FENAMAD was the result of a process of organisational maturation. Increases in the international price of gold had led to a wave of migrations from different parts of the country to the region’s mining area, regardless of the fact that a large part of the area was the territory of indigenous communities. The indigenous population’s rejection of these miners led to serious conflict. The following problems were raised by the indigenous representatives during the First General Assembly of Madre de Dios in 1992: invasions of their territories, a failure to allocate property titles, threats, deceit and abuse from the invading miners, the authorities’ pro-mining bias when resolving conflicts and the unfair lawsuits taken out by miners against indigenous leaders (Iviche, pers. comm., 2000).

FENAMAD’s main objectives at the time were to defend the fundamental rights of those indigenous peoples involved in the organisation, to consolidate their territories and promote their self-management and sustainable development (Ibid). The leaders negotiated with the State for the recognition, demarcation and titling of the indigenous communities, the establishment of an Amarakaeri Communal Reserve and the financial compensation of miners who were on their communal territories as a way of getting them to leave. They drew up a draft law on mining issues for native communities and denounced the abuses being committed by miners through the local authorities. The organisation also took up the legal
defence of indigenous people being tried in court because of miners’ complaints.

The problems of the indigenous peoples in isolation were also discussed by the native communities during FENAMAD’s assemblies. Their proposals focused primarily on requesting the creation of Reserves in order to safeguard their territories. However, the issue reached a new level in March 1996 when the Peruvian State signed a contract with the Mobil - Elf Aquitaine – Exxon consortium authorizing it to commence seismic prospecting in plot 77, located in the upper basin of the Los Amigos, Las Piedras, Tahuamanu and Yaco rivers. Given the consortium’s initial refusal to listen to FENAMAD’s position and reasons, the organisation initiated a series of actions aimed at bringing about the company’s withdrawal once and for all.

This indigenous pressure subsequently led the consortium to seek consultation mechanisms and agreements such as, for example, the monitoring of exploration operations. The consortium also agreed to take all necessary precautions to avoid negative effects on the populations in isolation. Nonetheless, following the departure of Mobil’s sub-contractor, which was carrying out seismic work in the zone, biologists hired by the international organisations confirmed that a series of irregularities had been committed by the company, such as inappropriate disposal of waste, undetonated explosives and so on (La Torre, 1998).

FENAMAD’s work was soon recognised both by the local population and national institutions. It was awarded the international Bartolomé de las Casas Prize by the Spanish Casa de América in December 1996 for “its fierce defence of the indigenous populations in isolation in Madre de Dios” (Speech by Prince Felipe de Borbón, 1996).

In 1999, shortly after the oil consortium had withdrawn, FENAMAD entered into negotiations for the territorial demarcation of the indigenous peoples’ land. But this time it came up against a new and even more powerful obstacle: the logging sector, eager to exploit the area’s mahogany and cedar forests.

Its policy

FENAMAD’s policy of protecting these indigenous peoples is grounded in an awareness of the traumatic contact experiences those currently in isolation have experienced in the past, their firm and clearly reluctant attitude towards contact, their high vulnerability to illness, the permanent threat that loggers, missionaries and other outsiders within their territories represent for them and their difficulties in negotiating their territoriality.
As Antonio Iviche, ex-President of FENAMAD notes, memories of the tragedy of initial White/indigenous contact are still fresh in their minds. “The impact was so devastating on the population that, as an indigenous person and president of the Federation, I could not allow it to happen again” (pers. comm., 2001). The Arakmbut people, to which Iviche belongs, was finally contacted in 1956. From then on, the rapid spread of epidemics caused by this contact led to the death of between 50% and 60% of their population.

With the authority gained from having themselves experienced the effects of contact and from having taken up the defence of the indigenous in isolation, FENAMAD’s leaders have adopted a policy of respect towards these peoples’ right to self-determination, such that it will be for them to decide when they wish to interact with national society. In other words, contact will not be encouraged unless the initial decision has been taken by the indigenous in isolation themselves.

Until that day, FENAMAD is taking both a protective and a preventive position: protective because it is seeking to negotiate the legal security of their territories and guarantee the integrity of their natural resources, and preventive because it is proposing that the State should adopt legal, operational and administrative measures to avoid the entry of outsiders, who could cause great damage to their territories.

By the time the indigenous peoples in isolation are ready to interact with national society, the organisation hopes to have made progress in establishing adequate mechanisms to prevent processes of change that could lead to ethnocide (Iviche, pers. comm., 2001). In this regard, the first measure taken by the organisation has been to produce contingency plans to be implemented in the case of the possible appearance of isolated indigenous in nearby settlements. This is something that has been occurring sporadically over the last two years. Measures to be taken in the long term seek to ensure that these peoples are able to develop their own management mechanisms to deal with issues that may arise from inter-ethnic co-existence. One of the organisation’s long-term goals is to propose State policies to achieve the effective protection of these isolated indigenous groups, both in Madre de Dios and the rest of the Peruvian Amazon. On the basis of actions to defend the peoples in isolation, the organisation’s goal of integrating itself and its demands into regional social processes has taken on greater force.
Negotiations for the protection of the territory of the peoples in isolation: a long history

Submission of the proposal for a study
On the basis of the Second Transitory Provision of the Law on Native Communities (DL 22175), ILO Convention 169, the Political Constitution and international treaties signed by Peru, on 17 August 1999 FENAMAD initiated the procedure for official recognition of the territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation of the Los Amigos, Las Piedras, Tahuamanu, Acre, Yaco and Chandless rivers, in the north of Madre de Dios. As a first step, it requested the signing of an inter-institutional support agreement with the Regional Agrarian Department for implementation of the technical studies required by law and the issuing of a Resolution to declare FENAMAD’s proposed area for a territory for the isolated peoples as an immediate and temporary Area of Study.

Both FENAMAD and most of the Amazonian indigenous organisations have been handling requests for the legal and physical regularisation of the communities they represent through inter-institutional agreements with the Regional Agrarian Departments of the respective areas. For each process or activity envisaged in these agreements, the indigenous organisations generally contribute economic, logistic and human resources so that the steps to be taken by the State can be expedited.

The Area Director received the proposal, informing FENAMAD’s leaders of the existence of another proposal to declare areas for “Permanent Forestry Production” that would overlap with 90% of the area proposed by FENAMAD. The leaders were surprised by this news as scarcely two years had passed since their fierce publicity campaign in local, national and international fora on the problems oil activity could cause for the area’s isolated populations. They wondered how a proposal of this kind could emerge when both the population and the government authorities themselves already knew of the existence of isolated populations in the area, having even issued an opinion on FENAMAD’s position regarding the oil consortium.

The organisation therefore reinstated its actions in defence of the populations in isolation, sending public statements and letters to the local population, government officials, indigenous organisations and pro-indigenous national and international organisations. It called for “solidarity to prevent a new outrage against the indigenous peoples in isolation and the environment” (Statement, September 1999).

Friendly organisations around the world were quick to respond and sent letters to the government requesting that it consider the
organisation’s request. Local multisectoral commissions such as the Madre de Dios Regional Environmental Commission (CAR-MDD), a branch of the National Environmental Commission, supported FENAMAD’s proposal, as did the Agrarian Federation of Madre de Dios, FADEMAD, its main ally, the Catholic church, environmental NGOs and others.

While FENAMAD was launching its campaign to protect the indigenous populations in isolation, the President of the Transitory Council for Regional Administration, the Regional Director of Agriculture and officials from the Agrarian Agencies of Tahuamanu Province informed the province’s loggers that they were negotiating at the highest government level to ensure that forestry exploitation contracts would be awarded throughout the whole province. Very soon, the local authorities began to award these contracts illegally, so confident were they that the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Institute for Natural Resources, INRENA, in Lima would agree to their persistent requests to open up new areas. In September, these irregularities became public knowledge and, as noted in previous chapters, the government of the time ordered a halt to forestry activity in the province, transferring the function of awarding forestry contracts to the INRENA central office in Lima and removing those responsible for these illegal acts from their posts.

The study
FENAMAD continued to put pressure on the new local authorities to sign the agreement. Finally, on 3 May 2000, the new Regional Director of Agriculture called FENAMAD’s leaders to sign the long-awaited agreement, clause four of which established implementation of the supporting technical studies for demarcation of the territory of the isolated populations.

Although preliminary studies had already commenced, they were now formalised via this agreement. The Danish government, through the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, IWGIA, provided financial support. A multi-disciplinary technical team was established, comprising anthropologists, lawyers, natural resource specialists and surveyors. They had to apply a sui generis research methodology, given the situation in which the isolated populations were living and FENAMAD’s policy of not establishing contact with them under any circumstances, unless in a health emergency. The research methodology applied by AIDESEP in previous years when carrying out the supporting technical studies for the establishment of the three territorial reserves in Ucayali department was partially used.
Primary information came from people who, finding themselves in an area frequented by isolated indigenous for one reason or another, had had experience of direct contact with them or had found evidence of their presence, such as temporary dwellings, footprints, arrows, bonfires, dead animals with arrows embedded in them, etc. Material evidence such as photos taken by the inhabitants of neighbouring areas, arrows and pieces of cloth found by fishermen and loggers when entering the area was also analysed.

Secondary information was gathered from documents issued by State bodies such as the National Police or public hospitals following complaints submitted regarding attacks by isolated indigenous on fishermen and loggers; reports produced by Mobil while it was carrying out seismic prospecting in the area; articles, travel reports and texts written by rubber workers, missionaries and members of scientific expeditions when visiting the area in previous years, etc.

As a result of this work, they managed to record – in a relatively short period of time – more than one hundred testimonies of sightings or the finding of evidence, and this was to form the basis of information on which the corresponding technical study was produced. An analysis of all this information enabled the areas of migration of indigenous populations in isolation to be identified, in some cases
their ethno-linguistic affiliations and, in others, an approximation of their ethnic identity, cultural characteristics and current problems. The biological study, for its part, was aimed at analysing the relationship between the indigenous in isolation and the environment, in terms of natural resource use, their living areas, the management of ecosystems, etc.

As will be considered in a separate chapter, the contacts that were established with some officials of the National Indian Foundation in Brazil throughout this process were of particular importance, both from a documentary and a political point of view.

**The economic and ecological zoning of Madre de Dios**

Between 2000 and 2001, the Institute for Research in the Peruvian Amazon (Instituto de Investigaciones de la Amazonia Peruana - IIAP) began a process to formulate a proposal for the Economic and Ecological Zoning of Madre de Dios. The intention was for this to become the instrument by which to produce plans for territorial organisation and to facilitate the formulation of policies, plans and programmes aimed at the sustainable development of the Madre de Dios region (IIAP, 2001).

A number of the department’s social sectors and players were involved in the process, by means of consultation workshops. The native communities and FENAMAD stated two of their most important demands: the creation of the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve in the upper basin of the Madre de Dios River and the establishment of a Territorial Reserve for the indigenous peoples in isolation in the north of the region. Both proposals were taken up within the process and included in the final zoning proposal, which was completed and presented in March 2001. The area envisaged by the IIAP for isolated peoples was called the Zone of High Epidemiological Risk, and most of its area coincided with FENAMAD’s proposal.

This proposal for the Ecological and Economic Zoning of Madre de Dios is currently in the process of being legally and administratively enacted at national level.

**INRENA or PETT?: ambiguities in procedures**

According to the local department of INRENA, in accordance with the new powers conferred on it by the Executive in terms of granting it greater involvement in managing the nation’s natural resources, it was its responsibility to evaluate FENAMAD’s proposal before submitting it to the Special Project for Land Titling (Proyecto Especial de Titulación de Tierras - PETT), the body that had up until then been legally responsible for such work.
In addition, INRENA had provided technical support for the creation of the Alto Purús Reserved Zone, established by Supreme Decree at the same time as FENAMAD was requesting protection for the territory of the indigenous in isolation. The Alto Purús Reserved Zone covered the northern part of FENAMAD’s proposals, excluding approximately one million hectares to the south.

FENAMAD’s insistence that the government should protect the whole of the territory inhabited by the isolated indigenous peoples from the possibility of falling into loggers’ hands gave rise to the request being taken up by INRENA, who proposed - as an alternative - the extension of the Alto Purús Reserved Zone to the south, covering all the area proposed by FENAMAD.

INRENA’s offer to deal with the proposal in the face of the incapacity of PETT, which was legally responsible for handling such procedures, created an atmosphere of uncertainty among FENAMAD’s leaders. Although INRENA was offering to speed up the procedure, it was proposing the establishment of a category of protected area that did not explicitly recognise the existence of the isolated indigenous groups or their territorial rights, and it was not establishing regulations for the special management of the area in line with this status.

The situation of the indigenous peoples in isolation inhabiting the Manu National Park was a reflection of this reality: there had been a failure to demarcate the territorial area they occupied and hence an absence of protective measures for these areas, enabling the entry of scientists, tourists, explorers, INRENA officials and so on, giving rise to outbreaks of illness among the isolated population and consequent attacks on foreign vessels navigating the Manu River. And what would happen to the isolated peoples once they had established sustained contact with members of national society, were organised and wanted to request the titling of their territories within the Manu National Park?

Nonetheless, the proposal that PETT should establish a State Reserve had greater disadvantages: ineffectiveness, lack of financial resources and staff to move the proposal forward and a dire history in terms of managing reserves established for isolated populations, such as the case of those created in Ucayali and Cusco.

Having weighed up all the pros and cons, FENAMAD decided to accept INRENA’s proposal, on condition that its criteria for exercising management and control of the territory would involve protection of the physical, cultural and territorial integrity of the isolated peoples and that, whenever these peoples decided to settle, their territories would be titled. The proposal was accepted by INRENA. Communication was established specifically with the General De-
partment for Natural Protected Areas, and the cartographic section of the study was produced jointly. The study was presented and justified to INRENA in March 2001. The next step was to formulate a proposed Supreme Decree creating the Reserved Zone. However, news had by now reached the ears of the industrial logging sector and its supporters, who began a series of actions to prevent protection of the territory from becoming a reality.

**Difficulties with the procedure: human rights and economic interests**

Despite the fact that— as noted by the Director of Natural Protected Areas— it was an INRENA priority to redefine the boundaries of the Alto Purús Reserved Zone to cover the area proposed by FENAMAD, the procedure for its establishment was hindered by the presentation of a proposal for forestry extraction areas on the part of the Association of Small Loggers of Tahuamanu Province, APEMAP-T.

APEMAP-T’s proposal was supported by the industrial logging sector in Madre de Dios, which had been involved in the illegal extraction of timber in that province two years previously. With the financial support of these industrialists and the influence of some Congressmen, the APEMAP-T lobbied the government to obtain areas for forestry extraction within the area proposed by FENAMAD, and to achieve modification of the new Forestry Law which, given its requirement for the sustainable management of forest resources, had become an obstacle to their interests.

Faced with the pressure exerted by this group of loggers, INRENA chose to promote consultation and to take decisions guided by this process. This new procedure was formalized in an agreement, the result of a meeting requested by the logging sector.

Alongside this, the industrial loggers undertook all kinds of action against FENAMAD with the aim of discrediting it, intimidating it and forcing it to discontinue its proposal for the territorial protection of the indigenous peoples in isolation. They used the press to accuse the leaders of opposing the right to work and attempting to plunge the department into poverty. They organised marches on FENAMAD’s offices, hurling all sorts of abuse and threats at the leaders and isolated populations themselves. They physically attacked some of the organisation’s support staff, and so on.

Despite the fact that FENAMAD considered that INRENA’s decision showed a lack of criteria by which to judge proposals of hugely differing levels of importance, it agreed to participate in the consultation meetings in order to inform and facilitate the process.
A number of meetings were held, at which FENAMAD defended its proposal. But the loggers denied the existence of the isolated populations and argued that the territory defended by FENAMAD was already being logged by illegal extractors and hence isolated indigenous groups could not exist there. The loggers continued to verbally assault FENAMAD’s leaders, who refused to give in to their demands for these areas.

Faced with the impossible task of reaching an agreement, INRENA assumed responsibility for defining areas both for permanent forestry production and for a reserve for the isolated populations. INRENA also supported the suggestion made by one industrialist to send a mission to the Tahuamanu River to assess the level of logging intervention and, as noted by the local INRENA chief, to seek signs of isolated populations in order to verify the information provided by FENAMAD.

FENAMAD considered this last INRENA decision to be inappropriate and irresponsible, in stark contrast to the care with which the organisation had carried out the supporting technical studies. It seemed that the authorities did not understand that it was a question of vulnerable people rejecting contact, and that the dynamic of their mobility was being overlooked by INRENA in planning the trip.

We know that, shortly before the mission arrived in the area, APEMAP-T and the industrialists carried out a series of actions aimed at encouraging the local population to deny the existence of isolated populations: they offered a free house to the poor family of a young fishermen who had been attacked by isolated indigenous months previously on condition that he would deny the incident. Similarly, settlers from Iberia said that some members of the APEMAP-T, concerned by a possible encounter with isolated groups during the mission’s visit, planned to arrive early and scare off the indigenous by detonating fireworks. They also unsuccessfully tried to gain support from the province’s grassroots organisations to draft a memo demanding that the government open up logging areas for them within those territories.

Finally, in May 2001, an INRENA committee presented a proposal for Permanent Forestry Production Areas to the different associations and NGOs of Puerto Maldonado. This included around 300,000 hectares of FENAMAD’s proposal on the eastern boundary, an area in which there was information on the regular presence of isolated populations and even the existence of migratory paths or corridors. With the aim of speeding up the process, FENAMAD accepted INRENA’s proposal, holding it responsible for all consequences that could result from the presence of loggers in the area and demanding contingency plans from these latter, given the clear possibility of
encountering isolated populations. The industrial loggers withdrew from the meeting in a show of disagreement, as they had wanted a much greater area of forest.

It was henceforward up to INRENA to formally establish the areas of Permanent Forestry Production and the extension of the Alto Purús Reserved Zone. However, this did not take place and illegal loggers continued to enter the territory of the populations in isolation. INRENA’s ineffectiveness gave rise to the presentation of a Habeas Corpus on the part of FENAMAD given “the threat of violation of the constitutional human rights to life and physical integrity of the indigenous peoples in a situation of isolation, known as the Mashco Piro and Yora and others as yet unidentified, due to the inaction in declaring their area of habitation a Reserved Zone or Territorial Reserve” The Habeas Corpus was presented to the Puerto Maldonado district attorney’s office in June 2001.

In September, the FENAMAD leaders met with government authorities, Congressmen and the national press to raise awareness of the problems of the populations in isolation and to obtain legal protection of the area once and for all. The loggers did the same in relation to their interests. INRENA officials indicated that a new association of loggers had appeared, aspiring to areas of forest in the southern part of the area proposed by FENAMAD and that, consequently, the most appropriate thing would be to reach an agreement with them, resulting in another consultation.

History repeats itself

The proposals of both the loggers’ associations and FENAMAD were presented to the recently appointed Congressman for the department of Madre de Dios, who felt it appropriate to call all sectors involved in the issue to a consultation meeting. Once there, although FENAMAD’s leaders defended their proposal on the basis of the last agreement that had been reached with INRENA, the industrial loggers managed to convince all the loggers’ associations present to request areas for forestry extraction throughout virtually the whole of the area requested by FENAMAD, with the exception of the Alto Purús Reserved Zone. Just as they were ready to sign an agreement to this effect, to be personally delivered to the Minister of Agriculture, the FENAMAD leaders informed everyone present, including the Congressman’s staff, that they would call upon every available international human rights body to protect the life and territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation. This position caused concern among the participants, who backtracked on their inten-
tions. Finally, dialogue was resumed, and it was agreed to maintain the proposal for establishing permanent forestry production areas as proposed by INRENA and to carry out verification studies regarding FENAMAD’s report in support of protecting the territory of the isolated populations. These studies were to use an appropriate methodology that would take into account their vulnerable situation.

The FENAMAD leaders signed the agreement, given that the request for permanent forestry extraction areas was in line with what had been agreed with INRENA.

The agreements were accepted and ratified by the INRENA officials, who undertook to implement them within the shortest possible timeframe. However, one week after signing the agreement, the industrialists and their supporters challenged it, arguing that FENAMAD’s study would first have to be verified, so that they would be able to define ‘much greater’ areas for extraction. In contrast with the industrialists’ position, the associations of small loggers and FENAMAD ratified the agreement, publicising the event by means of letters sent to the highest government representatives.

Two weeks later, in the face of INRENA’s inaction, the associations of small loggers, FENAMAD and the youth and mothers’ associations of Tahuamanu province once more organized a journey to Lima to gain fulfilment of the agreements. After publicly stating their proposal and being welcomed by the First Lady, Eliane Karp, they were received by the Minister of Agriculture, who undertook to make the agreements effective, signing a new commitment to this effect. The areas of permanent forestry production proposed by the alliance and INRENA were created on 17 November 2001, while modification of article Nº 97 of the Regulations governing the Forestry Law, aimed at ensuring that the areas created would benefit the associations of small loggers who had requested them, was left pending. In addition, by order of the Minister of Agriculture, the Director of PETT – Lima assumed responsibility for dealing with the proposal for a Territorial Reserve submitted by FENAMAD for the indigenous in isolation.

**FENAMAD’s complaints: the State’s silence and impunity**

Alongside implementation of the study, FENAMAD established a monitoring system in the area surrounding the territory of the indigenous populations in isolation. This action was part of the activities implemented with the financial support of the North American W. Alton Jones Foundation. The idea was to find out in detail the kind of outsiders who were entering their territory and to obtain documentary proof with which to make the relevant complaints.
The area had no category of protection established for it, and so lacked any regulations that would restrict access on the part of outsiders. Nor was it authorized for logging, however, and this was reason enough to prohibit the entry of loggers. FENAMAD’s complaints were therefore declared legitimate in this regard. In terms of other outsiders, such as fishermen, hunters, tour operators and missionaries, complaints were submitted on the basis of crime prevention, given that their presence on the territory of the indigenous peoples constituted a threat to their physical and cultural integrity.

With the support of the Regional Ombudsman’s Office in Madre de Dios, FENAMAD also supported its complaints on the basis of the right to life, to moral, psychological and physical integrity, to free development and well-being, to the inviolability of the home (Art 2 of Peru’s Political Constitution); on the fact that ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities should not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights); on each person’s right to ethnic and cultural identity, to protection of their health, their family environment and community, as well as a duty to contribute to their promotion and defence; on the right to freedom of conscience and religion, either alone or in community (Universal Declaration of Human Rights); on the duty of governments to take responsibility for developing, with the participation of the peoples concerned, coordinated and systematic action to protect the rights of these peoples and to guarantee respect for their integrity; on the fact that indigenous and tribal peoples should fully enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms, with neither obstacle nor discrimination (ILO Convention 169), among others.

With these legal arguments, FENAMAD presented dozens of complaints to INRENA, the Technical Secretariat of Indigenous Affairs and the President of the Republic himself. However, only once throughout the whole year, and given the gravity of the complaint made by FENAMAD due to the heavy presence of illegal loggers and encounters between some of them and the populations in isolation, did the Environmental District Attorney countenance a legal settlement, whereby it was decided that INRENA should be asked to take the necessary measures to prevent ecological and personal crimes. In response to this settlement, the head of INRENA – Madre de Dios called the National Police, the Environmental District Attorney and FENAMAD to a meeting to organise an inspection of the area, also requesting FENAMAD’s logistical support given its “lack of operational and staffing capacity”.
Tools and timber were confiscated but, on arrival at Puerto Maldonado, the National Police representative accompanying the mission inexplicably returned the confiscated tools and arms to the illegal loggers. Within two weeks they had returned to Alto Piedras to continue working illegally. The INRENA director acknowledged the irregularities committed by the National Police representative and the ineffectiveness of the inspection, given the immediate return of the illegal loggers to their places of work.

The Alto Purús case, in which the possible deaths of between 5 and 7 isolated indigenous were denounced, was investigated only at the request of FENAMAD and almost a month after the incident had occurred. The police report acknowledged that a group of isolated indigenous had indeed appeared along the Santa Cruz stream but that there had been no deaths. When the Ombudsman and SETAI (Technical Secretariat for Indigenous Affairs) were questioned as to the state of procedures to remove the illegal loggers and to request the withdrawal of the Evangelical mission from the territory of the isolated population, there was no response.

The role of the local organisations

The agreement reached between representatives of the different social sectors in Madre de Dios in terms of proposing a solution to two of the most acute and prolonged problems in the department was considered an historic event among some intellectual and political circles.

A few years earlier, FENAMAD alone had begun to establish alliances with the department’s Agrarian Federation (FADEMAD) and environmental organizations.

“Although over the years there have been problems between the agricultural colonists and indigenous peoples as they compete for resources, they have discovered that they are united over two important questions: Firstly, they both need to influence the regional state authorities to provide them with facilities. Secondly, both indigenous peoples and agriculturalists are in a struggle to defend their lands from the invasions of gold miners”. (Gray, 1997: 85).

The FENAMAD leaders were aware that defending the indigenous peoples in isolation was a difficult task, given the economic power of the loggers. They also knew that they would need the support of other social sectors if they were to be successful in their demands.
This meant becoming involved in the region’s social processes. It was thus that, in early 1999, FENAMAD began to contact some of the most like-minded local sectors, such as FADEMAD, the Catholic Church, environmental NGOs and some of the press, to inform them of its concerns with regard to the issue. Its idea was to set up a Regional Front in defence of the populations in isolation. Such actions of information and awareness raising have continued to this day, with a number of different methods being used in this regard: public conferences, press releases, regular appearances on local news programmes, distribution of written materials, television spots, etc.

In addition, some of the local population, primarily from Tahuamanu province, have repeatedly stated their desire to have natural resource reserves in order to guarantee the future economy of their children and to develop alternative activities such as eco-tourism. These initiatives have been presented in different arenas: open advocacy meetings, the process for Ecological and Economic Zoning, the process for drafting the provincial Strategic Plan, etc. This sector has played an important role in convincing the province’s small loggers’ associations to take a more measured approach to requesting permanent forestry extraction areas, with a view to conserving timber resources for the future, a proposal which implicitly includes respect for the territory inhabited by the indigenous populations in isolation.

A harmony and complementarity of objectives began to be expressed in early 2001, when the associations of small loggers and local settlers issued public statements in support of FENAMAD. As previously mentioned, there were even groups of loggers that broke away from the industrial loggers’ association to set up their own associations and which, from the very start, informed FENAMAD that they would respect the territory of the indigenous populations in isolation. The reciprocity in this alliance became clear when friendly associations of small loggers took forcible measures to demand that the government establish areas of permanent forestry extraction for them outside the territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation. FENAMAD visited the area and offered them legal advice “because their demands were just and demonstrated respect for the territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation” (Iviche, pers. comm., 2001).

The alliance has remained in place to this day and its greatest achievement has been to exercise significant pressure on the State to ensure respect for its position: respect and legal protection for the territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation, the establishment of areas of permanent forestry production as a way of regulating forestry activity, and prioritising local populations by establishing mechanisms for accessing these forests. And it has had another even greater advantage, with important political repercussions: that of
having managed to organise and bring together other well-established and representative social and productive sectors in the department, such as associations of Brazil nut workers, truckers and a faction of the small miners, to create the Regional Committee for the Defence of the Interests of Madre de Dios (Comité Regional de Defensa de los Intereses de Madre de Dios), a macro-regional organisation that has become the spokesperson for Madre de Dios civil society before the State.

Some specialists consider that the success or failure of this forestry consultation process will indicate the short-term possibilities of instigating a process of reorganisation of the Peruvian Amazon forest from a context of sustainability.

Very different opinions can be found among the rest of the local population on this issue. There are some who prefer to ignore the problem or have a prejudiced attitude towards FENAMAD because of its indigenous composition; there are others who highlight the humanitarian aspect of its campaign, and who see in the protection of the indigenous territory a way of ensuring the livelihoods of future generations; and, finally, there are those who simply support FENAMAD’s defence because they are opposed to the chaos created in the region by the large logging companies and their figureheads.

---

The Reserve for peoples in isolation

On 22 April 2002, shortly after the creation of the Permanent Forestry Production Areas and almost six years after FENAMAD had begun negotiations, the government established the State Reserve for indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios, covering approximately half the territory they inhabit. The other half, the northern part of their territories, now forms part of the Alto Purús Reserved Zone. In the fourth and fifth “whereas” clauses of the Ministerial Resolution establishing the State Reserve, the existence of “native family groups of ancestral occupation, who are characterised as being nomadic, devoted to activities of hunting, fishing and gathering for subsistence purposes and being in voluntary isolation” was recognised, as well as “people involved in the established logging companies and settlers in surrounding areas... using different methods to terrify these native groups with the clear aim of evicting them from the land they have ancestrally occupied, and so it is necessary to ensure the continuation of these ethnic groups in their environment, establishing a land reserve for them”. (Ministerial Resolution N° 0427-2002-AG).
Notes

1 As noted in previous chapters, these “Permanent Forest Production” areas were the result of the work of Forest Zoning undertaken by INRENA and the La Molina National Agrarian University.
2 Forestry extraction was authorised only in Tahuamanu district but not in Iñapari or Iberia.
3 Supreme Decree 036-99-AG.
4 At that time, this responsibility fell to Mr. Luis Alfaro.
5 The agreement was signed on 20 February 2001.
6 Unlike the loggers’ requests, FENAMAD’s dealt with such fundamental and incontrovertible issues as respect for the most elemental human rights, protected not only by the country’s Political Constitution but also by international treaties signed by Peru.
7 The Habeas Corpus was presented to the Puerto Maldonado district attorney’s office in June 2001.
8 The Association of Small Timber Extractors of Iberia (APEMIB), the Association of Small Timber Extractors of Iñapari (APEMI), the Association of Small Loggers of Tahuamanu province (APEMAP-T), the Association of Small Forestry Extractors of Tambopata (APEFOT).
9 Agreement signed on 3 October 2001 when the Minister undertook to establish permanent forestry production areas in October and to speed up the verification studies for the report presented by FENAMAD in support of the territorial demarcation for the indigenous peoples in isolation.
10 Ministerial Resolution N° 1218-2001-AG
11 This action was part of the activities implemented with the financial support of the North American W. Alton Jones Foundation.
In October 2000, FENAMAD’s leaders entered into discussions with representatives of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), based in Acre. This body is the department of the Brazilian Ministry of Justice responsible for dealing with indigenous affairs in Brazil.

The Brazilian government’s indigenist policy has undergone significant changes in recent years, aimed primarily at respecting the right of indigenous peoples in isolation to themselves determine the level of contact they wish to have with national society. Aware of this new direction, the FENAMAD leaders decided it was important to work with them to coordinate the work the FENAMAD technical team was to undertake in Brazil as part of the study for the establishment of a territorial reserve for the isolated indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios, including those whose area of migration includes both sides of the Peru/Brazil border. They also wanted to ask for their solidarity and support in urging the Peruvian government to put a stop to the unregulated and illegal logging that was posing a threat to the isolated indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios living along the border with Brazil, which officially recognises their territories.

This contact with FUNAI not only met FENAMAD’s initial expectations but surpassed them in terms of obtaining detailed information on the grave situation facing these peoples. Throughout the 20th century, and to this very day, serious clashes have been taking place involving the isolated peoples living on both sides of the border and the Cashinahua, Asháninka, Culina and Yaminahua from neighbouring villages in Brazil. The reasons for this violence are many: the occupation of their traditional living spaces by shiringa companies and other indigenous groups involved in this activity; an indigenous attraction to the metal objects found in the settlements they raid; the pressure exerted on their territories by advancing logging, road construction and colonization along with the presence of evangelical missionaries on the Peruvian side of the border and, lastly, the probable thirst for revenge felt by the indigenous in isolation for the abuses committed against them ever since the time of the rubber boom.
For three decades, FUNAI has attempted to handle this situation by implementing a variety of indigenous policies. At first it followed a developmental and integrationist policy but, more recently, it has established a policy of respect for these peoples’ ways of life, generally removing “non-isolated” inhabitants from these territories, establishing reserved areas for the isolated groups and monitoring the reserves from control posts in order to prevent outsiders from entering.

Given that current pressures on the territory and resources of the indigenous peoples in isolation along the border come primarily from the Peruvian side, it is clear that the unilateral measures being taken by the Brazilian federal government will be insufficient to put a stop to the territorial dislocations and attacks that are occurring. With this in mind, representatives of the National Indian Foundation, FENAMAD and, now, AIDESEP have been in discussions with the aim of drawing up joint proposals for the protection of these peoples in isolation. However, it is clear that the Peruvian government must take a lead role in this process.

The isolated peoples of the area

Isolated indigenous peoples, probably from the Pano linguistic branch, have been identified in the area that covers the Xinane, Envira, Humaitá, Tarahuacá, Jordao and Yaco rivers, in the regions of Ucayali and Madre de Dios on the Peruvian side and Acre State in Brazil. These peoples are semi-nomadic; their villages and fields are located near the sources of the above rivers. This is where they remain during the rainy season, moving to the lower reaches of the rivers in Brazil during the summer for subsistence purposes. Some of their traditional migration routes, which are travelled mainly during the driest months of the Amazonian summer, have been in use for almost one hundred years (Aquino and Iglesias, 1995). Unlike other peoples, they build their huts in the middle of the forest without forming clearings. This has made FUNAI’s attempts to find them, which began in the 1970s, difficult.

The local population call them “braves”, “Papavo”, Yaminahua, etc. Father Constantin Tastevin (1926) notes that, in the 1920s, “savage” peoples belonging to the Pano linguistic branch were living in the area, such as Nehanawa, Kontanawa, Mainawa, Machonawa, Nichinawa, Tchaninawa, Bastanawa, Charanawa, Yaminawa and Chanenawa (sic). Townsley (1994) describes various of these groups as Pano from the south-east, with an ancestral presence in the upper basins of the Envira and Yurúa rivers.
A little background

Before the rubber boom, little was known of the indigenous peoples from the Yurúa and Purús rivers. It is thought that, from the 17th century onwards, the increasing presence of Spaniards along the Ucayali river was the reason for a series of movements on the part of the peoples living along its banks and in the adjacent forest hinterland towards the south-east of Ucayali. At that time, the Pano peoples that Chandless visited along the Yurúa and Purús rivers were aware of the presence of outsiders settled along the Ucayali, and knew of their technology (Townesley, 1994). It is thought that these outsiders caused intermittent outbreaks of new illnesses. Throughout the following century, the colonization of Ucayali by Andean and coastal migrants, along with the emergence of a trade in forest products such as sarsaparilla, Brazil nuts and salted fish, encouraged the capture of slaves, in which some indigenous peoples acted as intermediaries between the outsiders and their neighbouring indigenous peoples (Ibid). It was thus that raids against the peoples of the interior began.

By the early 20th century, hundreds of people had entered the region, explorers coming mainly from the north-east of Brazil and Peruvian rubber tappers from the north and central forests. Shiringa extraction was greater on the Brazilian side, for which reason work camps were established in the very highest reaches of the region’s rivers, such as the Jordão and Tarahuacá.

"...The ‘cariús’ were arriving and killing many Indians, carrying out raids. They were killing and the braves were retreating. The shiringa workers were arriving and opening up shiringa work camps right up to the last shiringa stand in the headwaters of the rivers“. (Getulio Sales Tene in Valle de Aquino and Piedrafita, 1998: unnumbered).

With regard to the presence of the Peruvian rubber barons, Tocantins (1979) notes:

“The children of Inca country crossed the Ucayali and spread out along its right bank until they reached the sources of the Purús, Yurúa and Yavari. A vast area – the last bastion of South America’s geographic secrets - began to be penetrated by the rubber workers in their desire to extract latex from trees felled by axe. They faced fierce opposition from the aboriginal peoples, whom they either destroyed to save their own lives or enslaved into the work that had attracted them into those vast and isolated regions” (Tocantins, 1979: 338).
The indigenous people maintained a hostile attitude to the shiringa workers who were occupying their lands, becoming a problem for them due to the constant raids they made on their camps. And so the shiringa bosses financed armed expeditions against them, hiring experienced guides familiar with the region and its inhabitants. Other patrons established agreements with the Peruvian rubber barons which allowed them to search for rubber on their properties in exchange for the extermination and expulsion of the indigenous people within and around their shiringa stands (Aquino and Pereira, 1998).

This systematic killing decimated entire “encampments” of indigenous along many rivers and tributaries of the Alto Yurúa valley, and many deaths were caused by armed massacres due to increasing inter-ethnic conflicts and by the introduction of hitherto unknown illnesses. One of the main consequences of the “raids” was to disperse the indigenous peoples around the headwaters of the most remote tributaries of the Yurúa and Purús valleys, on both sides of the Peru/Brazil border.

Many of the survivors, such as the Cashinahua, Culina, Manchineri and Asháninka, to name but a few, were incorporated into the shiringa system, where they remained until the end of the 1970s when the National Indian Foundation, the Indigenist Missionary Council (CIMI), the Acre Pro-Indian Committee (CPI-Acre) and, later, the Union of Indigenous Nationalities of Brazil (UNI) and other organisations began working in Acre State (Aquino and Pereira, 1998).

Peoples in isolation and conflicts along the border

Meanwhile, other peoples opted for a more independent and traditional life, distancing themselves from their ancient territories, now transformed into shiringa work camps, and beginning to occupy an estimated 10-million-hectare belt of forest straddling the Brazil/Peru border. The fact that shiringa and rubber, two of the main resources exploited and marketed by shiringa companies, did not exist there had protected this sparsely populated region (Aquino, 1998).

News was subsequently received that the peoples in isolation along the border were clashing with neighbouring settlements, up to the 1970s with the shiringa companies and their workers and thereafter with other indigenous peoples integrated into national society who had taken over these lands. Father Constantin Tastevin and the anthropologists Marcelo Piedrafita Iglesias and Txai Terri Valle de
Aquino noted these events and described them in the documents, “Le Haut Tarahuacá” (1926) and “Os Kaxinawá e os indios brabos: territórios e deslocamentos populacionais nas fronteiras do Acre com o Peru” (1995) respectively. This latter text forms the basis of the information provided in this sub-section.

Tastevin (1926) noted that, in the early 1820s, a shiringa patron known as Revisao, working on the Jordão river very close to the border with Peru, contracted the services of the famous guide Felizardo Cerqueira so that, along with the Cashinhua (who he had managed to pacify), he could form a “border police” to patrol the upper Jordão, Tarahuacá and Breu rivers with the aim of avoiding attacks from the indigenous in isolation (Aquino and Iglesias, 1995). A year earlier, the shiringa patrons of the upper Tarahuacá had requested his help to defend them from the so-called Papavó who “were causing deaths and numerous robberies every year” (Ibid.: unnumbered). The patrons, primarily those who had shiringa camps along the upper reaches of these rivers, also hired Asháninka from Peru to repel the isolated groups.

“During the time Ribamar Moura was in charge there, he penetrated as far as the headwaters of the Breu river to hire more than 20 indigenous Kampa (sic), who were working with the Peruvian Julio Pérez to guard the headwaters of the Jordao river because, the way the situation was, no shiringa worker wanted to cut it (shiringa) through fear of the braves” (Aquino and Iglesias, 1995).

The successive conflicts that have taken place since the 1960s between the Asháninka and Isolated Indigenous land on the Envira river and isolated groups from the headwaters led to the group of Asháninka families splitting into eight nuclear families living in different settlements in the lower reaches (Ministry of the Environment, 2000).

At the end of the 1970s, when FUNAI began its work, the shiringa stands became part of the Indigenous Lands that were created for the indigenous people who had been working for the shiringa bosses. Since then, it is they who have had to put up with attacks from groups of indigenous in isolation, attacks that continue to this day.

“In the region comprising the headwaters of the Envira, Tarahuacá, Jordão and Humaitá rivers, essentially in the Kampa and Isolated of the Envira River, Alto Tarahuacá and Kashinahua of the Jordão River Indigenous Lands, bloody conflicts have been occurring in recent years involving, on the one hand, the braves, such as isolated indigenous groups known in the region and, on the other, the Asháninka (Kampa)
Reserves created for indigenous peoples in isolation along the Peru-Brazil border

1. Isconahua Reserve
2. Murunahua Reserve
3. Mashco Piro Reserve
4. Nahua Kugapakori Reserve
5. Madre de Dios Reserve
6. Jordao Reserve
7. Alto Tarahuaca Reserve
8. Campas e Isolados Reserve
9. Xinane Reserve
10. Mamoadeate Reserve
In the summertime, the indigenous populations in isolation generally raid neighbouring indigenous villages when they are deserted, which means they must be observing the routine of these families from inside the forest. Once in the villages, they take the metal objects they find in the houses, machetes, knives, pots and, more recently, firearms and munitions. Being able to obtain such arms has become a serious danger to the inhabitants of these villages as the isolated groups use them in their looting. This has led to a series of expeditions on the part of the indigenous people affected and these have ended in massacres, with deaths on both sides.

FUNAI's role

Its integration policy

In 1967, during the Brazilian dictatorship, the National Indian Foundation was created as an organ of the Ministry of Justice, responsible for dealing with indigenous affairs in Brazil. This replaced the Indian Protection Department (SPI), which had been created at the turn of the 20th century.

In 1975, FUNAI established an office in Acre where it began its work of identifying, delimiting and demarcating the indigenous lands, a process that envisaged the allocation of former shiringa camps to the Asháninka, Cashinahua, Manchineri, Yaminahua and Culina populations of the area. During its work, the FUNAI team became aware of the existence of populations in isolation. The fact that these populations were the protagonists of frequent conflicts with neighbouring settlements was a reason for trying to contact them, to “pacify” them and relocate them.

Activities to find and attract them were therefore undertaken by means of expeditions that followed their migration routes. Posts known as “Attraction Posts” were established along these routes. One such post was the Jordão Attraction Post, situated on the Jordão river and from where they tried to “make contact with the group of unknown isolated indigenous that travelled the area of the Acre/Peru border” (Aquino and Iglesias, 1995: unnumbered). The respective report noted that, “as the work progresses, we shall see whether these Indians will be attracted to a place to be established by the team in charge” (Ibid).
However, by creating situations of extreme tension in which both the indigenous and FUNAI workers were attempting to save their own lives, this search ended in the unintentional killing of indigenous people living in isolation, including some ‘Masko’. In addition, the attraction posts were repeatedly attacked by the indigenous, putting the FUNAI staff in serious danger and even causing deaths.

Acre is just one example of what was happening in other regions of Brazil due to the policy of forced contact and integration of indigenous peoples into national society and the incorporation of new areas of the country into the national economy. As a consequence, and just as in situations caused by the invaders’ firearms or by the expansion of epidemics, this policy led to a drastic fall in the indigenous population. Other cases that can be noted include the deaths of 2,000 indigenous Waimiri-Atroari (1968 – 1971) at the hands of the repressive Brazilian state forces when they offered organised resistance to the invasion of their territories during construction of the Manaus-Boa Vista highway\(^7\) (CIMI, 2001), the death of 90% of the Kranhacarore\(^8\) population, who opposed the building of a highway close to their hamlet (Veja, 1998) and the lethal results of the “pacification” of the Matis\(^9\) between 1976 and 1979 (Erickson, 1994).

This policy was strongly challenged by various pro-indigenous sectors, both in terms of the government’s theoretical concept of the issue and its tragic results. In fact, during the 1980s, half the indigenous population died through epidemics. The Indigenist Mission-
ary Council (CIMI), a sector of the Brazilian Catholic church with a respectful vision of indigenous autonomy indicated that, “the indigenist body was acting as a “pacifier” of isolated peoples, forcing them into contact, seeking both to facilitate the construction of works and to avoid attacks and assaults from those resisting the entry of Brazilians onto their territories” (CIMI, 2001: 146).

A sector of social scientists also challenged the fact that the future of the indigenous peoples was in the hands of those running FUNAI, who took decisions for them and on their behalf. “To attract and pacify the Indians – as the indigenist tradition of the Brazilian State says – and arbitrarily impose on them names and chiefs, is historically related to colonial practices of social control: spatial concentration of the population, which has the consequence of contamination with illnesses and post-contact depopulation; implementation of paternalistic and fragile welfare systems; territorial confinement and exploration of the available natural resources. All in the name of the integration of the indigenous into the national community” (López and Grupioni, 1995).

A new phase: respect for the right to autonomy

The dramatic consequences of FUNAI’s earlier contact policy were instructive. From the 1990s on, their position changed dramatically. FUNAI’s Department for the Indigenous in Isolation henceforward adopted a policy of respect for the isolated peoples’ right to autonomy. It recognised that the best policy was one of respect for the will of these peoples and, consequently, eliminated forced contact once and for all. “As long as they were not directly threatened, the State would not promote contact but merely protect, from a distance, their habitat.” (Gallois, 1998: 121).

This was a very significant change in the federal government’s policy and thus in its strategy for protecting indigenous peoples in isolation. The federal government also issued a statement regarding the evangelical churches that were forcing contact, prohibiting their actions in areas inhabited by indigenous groups in isolation.

“The official indigenist organ now considers them (the evangelical churches) unqualified to guarantee these groups the conditions necessary to maintain their autonomy: the deculturing interference promoted by the fundamentalists, not only in terms of religious proselytization but at all levels of the social, economic and political life of indigenous groups, is officially condemned”. (Gallois, 1998: 130).
This new State policy on indigenous peoples was reflected in the changes that took place in the contact posts established by FUNAI in Acre. From the start, the research carried out by the Attraction Post on the Jordão river resulted in a proposal for the creation of new systems of protection aimed fundamentally at maintaining the way of life of the indigenous people in isolation, unless spontaneous contact should occur; at preventing the entry of hunters, fishermen and loggers into the area, at the environmental preservation of these lands, at deepening the knowledge of the areas of migration of these groups and at guaranteeing FUNAI’s effective and constant presence in the region before any further problems might arise that could threaten the physical and cultural survival of these groups (Meirelles, 1987; in Aquino and Iglesias, 1995).

It also sought to raise awareness among the Asháninka and Cashinahua of the need to avoid any type of systematic contact with those in isolation and to avoid entering their areas of movement around the headwaters of the Envira and Jordão rivers. That same year, the FUNAI presidency decreed a ban “for the purposes of study and definition” from the indigenous lands of the Alto Tarahuacá and Xinane, 52,000 and 175,000 has., respectively (Ibid.).

However, attempts to bring attacks by groups of isolated indigenous on neighbouring villages to a halt were only partially successful. Clashes continued throughout the 1990s. As a consequence, not only did a number of deaths occur but the FUNAI facilities were also affected, and workers’ lives endangered. Now, new groups of isolated indigenous coming from Peru began to launch attacks: those known as the Masko who generally travelled around the north of Madre de Dios and who at that time attacked a contact post on the Envira river. Another post was also attacked by a group of Peruvian Yaminahua recently contacted by North American missionaries in the upper Yurúa, and so on.

The research that was carried out into this indicated that members of nearby settlements tended to frequent the same hunting and fishing grounds as the groups in isolation which, unlike the lower reaches where the intensity of hunting and fishing had led to shortages, were characterised by an abundance of resources (Meirelles, 1998). In his report, Meirelles commented appropriately that:

“The shiringa camps situated on the D’Ouro stream and in the upper Tarahuacá, from the mouth of the D’Ouro to its headwaters, must be considered the areas of occupation of these Indians. The proximity of the shiringa camps to their huts is dangerous, both for the shiringa workers and for the Indians. We know that, by tradition, an isolated
indigenous seen by a shiringa worker loses his status of human being and becomes a target (for fire). It is not possible to protect these Indians in the presence of the shiringa workers, as both are using the same territory for hunting and fishing”. (1998: unnumbered).

The abandonment of government pricing and market policies for shiringa in the 1990s was a signal for traders to arrive, and inhabitants and even shiringa owners began illegal logging activities, particularly of mahogany, cedar and ishpingo. This was in addition to the commercial hunting with dogs that was taking place and the invasion of lakes by professional fishermen.

In addition, there was a growing awareness of the incessant advance of loggers on the Peruvian side, which was probably causing territorial dislocations among the ‘Masko’.

This situation led to a redefinition of the forms of indigenous land occupation, creating restrictions on the use of natural resources and intense migratory processes on the part of family groups of Cashinahua to the lower reaches. The FUNAI presidency then promulgated a resolution establishing a restriction on the right of entry, movement and residency of people other than FUNAI staff into the Alto Tarahuacá Indigenous Land, which was increased to an area of 132,500 has. The Envira Contact Post became known as the Envira Ethno-Environmental Protection Post.

More recent attacks: agreements between Brazilian authorities

Attacks between the isolated and non-isolated populations have continued into the new millennium, causing deaths on both sides. As with FUNAI, this situation began to concern officials at other levels in the Brazilian government. In early 2001, therefore, the FUNAI presidency, the government of Acre State and the Municipal Prefecture of Feijó signed an agreement aimed at strengthening the actions of the Envira Ethno-Environmental Protection Post and protecting the indigenous groups in isolation on the Kampa and Isolated Peoples of the Envira, Alto Tarahuacá and Xinane Indigenous Lands.

“The governor, Jorge Viana, took this decision personally after visiting the Post’s facilities and flying over the camps, accompanied by technicians from FUNAI and the Ministry for the Environment...” (Iglesias, 2001: unnumbered).

The agreement, which is of a two-year duration, proposes establishing a monitoring post at the mouth of the D’Ouro river in the Alto
Tarahuacá Indigenous Land, hiring qualified staff and purchasing materials and equipment to be used at the Post’s two bases.

“In line with this new direction on the part of FUNAI’s Department for the Indigenous in Isolation, the agreement does not seek to promote any kind of contact with the isolated indigenous but to guarantee them the exclusive use of the natural resources on the territories they inhabit in indigenous lands already recognised by FUNAI”. (Iglesias, 2001 no page number).

Other state authorities were involved in this process, such as the Ombudsman and the Governor of Acre State, who recommended the relocation of non-indigenous people and the protection of the area, in addition offering money for the relocation. In the case of the Alto Tarahuacá indigenous area, 53 families had to be compensated.

“Compensating for these changes is of great importance, at local level, in terms of reaffirming official recognition of this land, guaranteeing the indigenous in isolation the exclusive enjoyment of their natural resources and preventing a continuation of tensions and conflict that may have social and environmental consequences that are even more tragic than those of the past” (Ministry of the Environment, 2000).

Lands for the indigenous in isolation

In the Yurúa valley, along the international border between Peru and Brazil and its surrounding area, eight indigenous lands recognised by the federal government of Acre State, Brazil, covering an area of 962,712 has, form the areas of habitation and migration of the indigenous peoples in isolation (Iglesias, 2001). These reserves are at different stages of administrative recognition.

- Kaxinawá/ Asháninka of the river Breu Indigenous Land.- As its name indicates, this is also inhabited by Asháninka and Cashinahua indigenous populations. It covers an area of 31,277 has and is located in the municipality of Marechal Taumaturgo. It has been delimited and demarcated.

- Alto Tarahuacá Indigenous Land.- Inhabited only by indigenous groups in isolation. It is situated at the headwaters of the Tarahuacá and Murú rivers, in the municipality of Jordão. It was created by means of Resolution No. 3,764/87 and covers 142,600 has. It is delimited.
• Kaxinawa of the river Jordão Indigenous Land.- This also has a population of Cashinahua. Located in the municipality of Jordão, it is fully recognised and covers an area of 87,293 has.

• Xinane Indigenous land.- This is in the municipality of Feijó. It was established by means of FUNAI Resolution No. 3,765/87. It comprises the hamlet of Xinane, considered by FUNAI as inhabited by isolated indigenous who have not yet been identified. It covers an area of 175,000 hectares and is in the process of being regularized.

• Kulina of the river Envira Indigenous Land.- In the municipality of Feijó. It is home to the Madijá (Kulina) population. It covers an area of 84,364 has. and is regularized.

• Kaxinawa of the river Humaitá Indigenous Land. – Also in the municipality of Feijó. It has a Kaxinawa population. It is regularized and covers 127,383 has.

• Kampa and isolated peoples of the Envira Indigenous Land.- This is in the municipality of Feijó. It has a population of 230 people and covers 232,000 has. It is regularized.

• Jaminawa /Envira Indigenous Land.- This is in the municipality of Feijó. It also has a Kulina and Asháninka population. It is delimited and demarcated.

FUNAI estimates there to be between 600 and 1,000 isolated indigenous people in the area, belonging to at least 3 different groups. They constitute the largest population of identified indigenous groups in isolation in the Brazilian Amazon (Ibid).

**Coordination with Peru**

Given the failure of its extensive and ardent efforts to put a stop to the raids carried out by isolated indigenous populations from the Peruvian side against Brazilian settlements, some representatives of Brazil’s National Indian Foundation came to the conclusion that the problem was complex because the isolated indigenous were coming from “another country”. FUNAI officials were aware of the need to work alongside the Peruvian government to define common procedures for this border region, particularly aimed at protecting the isolated indigenous populations that live and travel on both sides of
the border and also the indigenous people living in the area who are integrated into national society.

Thus in 1998, FUNAI proposed that the federal government should enter into dialogue with the Peruvian government. The aim was to obtain further knowledge on the situation of the isolated peoples in the neighbouring area, the pressures existing both on them and on their territories and the Peruvian government’s plans for the territories they inhabited. They were also hoping to make contact with the indigenous people and American missionaries who were attempting to contact these groups and with the region’s authorities in order to urge them to avoid armed confrontation (Meirelles, 1999). As stated in a report from the head of the Envira Ethno-Environmental Protection Post:

“We need to gather information on the isolated and acculturized Indians in Peruvian territory: the Kampa of the river Envira, the Kaxinawa of the river Jordão, Kaxinawa of the river Breu, and the people of Alto Tarahuacâ and Xinane Indigenous Lands, for the following reasons: we are working in a border area, groups of isolated and acculturized Indians do not recognise these borders and are freely crossing from Brazil to Peru and vice versa. The Envira river rises in Peru, in the lands that divide the waters of the Ucayali from the sources of the Yurua, Purús and Madeira (Tahuamanu) rivers. This immense verdant grove of some 10 million has, with no White men present, is home to various groups of isolated indigenous. Information regarding their existence in the region, the presence of Indians, the Peruvian government’s plans for this vast territory, would be of great use because, although we cannot interfere in another country, at least we would know what is going on on the other side of the border. The Department for the Indigenous in Isolation must gather this information from like-minded institutions, the Peruvian Embassy and similar NGOs...” (Meirelles, 1998: no page).

In October 2000, given that they were carrying out technical studies for the territorial demarcation of the indigenous populations in isolation, FENAMAD began a sustained and fruitful dialogue with a number of officials from FUNAI with the aim of providing information on the proposal they had been working on, as well as proposing joint work around the defence of the indigenous populations in isolation in Madre de Dios-Acre.

FUNAI’s work to protect the peoples in isolation has made good progress in recent months. The Integrated Project for the Protection of Indigenous Populations and Lands in the Amazon (PPTAL), implemented by FUNAI, announced that it would be identifying and
demarcating the Xinane Indigenous Land, an area of 175,000 has. in Feijó municipality on the border with Peru, intended for indigenous groups in isolation, during the third quarter of 2001. In addition, the Brazilian Ministry of Justice, to which FUNAI is attached, has issued a resolution declaring the Alto Tarahuacá Indigenous Land, an area of 142,600 has. in Jordao and Feijó municipalities along the international border with Peru, to be a permanent possession of the indigenous in isolation.

Notes

1 Hebea brasiliensis or a type of rubber tree. Trans. note.
2 According to Aquino and Iglesias (1995), the generic identity of the Papavo included a wide group of indigenous populations who traditionally lived and travelled the headwaters and formative rivers of the upper Yurúa river.
3 Scientist who travelled the Peruvian and Brazilian Purús region in the early 20th century.
4 Smilax officinalis. A plant with medicinal properties.
5 This refers to the rubber barons.
6 The term Kampa is a name that has been used by outsiders to refer to the Asháninka indigenous people since their first invasions of their territory.
7 The Manus - Boa Vista highway, affecting the Waimiri Atroari, was opened between 1974 and 1977.
8 This people lived in Sierra de Cachimbo, Pará and Mato Grosso, in Brazil. By 1975, they had already lost 90% of their population.
9 The Mati live in the Yavari Valley in Brazil.
10 There are now more than 50 indigenous peoples in isolation spread throughout various regions of the Brazilian Amazon.
A number of alternatives have been suggested with regard to the indigenous peoples living in isolation. Obviously, these depend largely on one’s concept of indigenous peoples and the interests of the sector or body proposing them.

The fundamentalist Evangelical churches, and a sector of the Catholic church, who know of their existence and are undertaking systematic actions to seek out, attract, contact, evangelise and integrate them into national society, define them as “marginalized or excluded people”, suggesting that the desire to remain in a situation of exclusion comes not from within the people themselves. In other words, they are implying that such a decision is not taken by the indigenous peoples themselves, of their own free will, but that it is a national-level policy. This apparently justifies their evangelisation. To this can be added another ethnocentrically loaded argument dating from colonial times: the supposed barbarity of these peoples, their state of savagery that prevents them from leading a way of life that is ‘decent’ in Western eyes. Within the Catholic church there are also, however, groups that hold diametrically opposing views, such as the Indigenist Missionary Council of Brazil (CIMI), which looks on them as “free people”, respecting their decision to distance themselves from the wider society and thus rejecting the idea of forced contact, even for the purposes of evangelisation.

Some social scientists, particularly anthropologists, see them as interesting objects of study. To further their research, expeditions are thus organised with the aim of contacting them. Some radical environmentalists believe that indigenous peoples in general alter the balance of the forests in which they live to such an extent that, if those forests form part of Natural Protected Areas, indigenous peoples should be relocated outside of them. The mankind/nature relationship which, for indigenous people, is inseparable becomes mistakenly torn apart by these natural scientists who are unable - or unwilling - to understand why the majority of areas classified as “priority conservation areas” in the Peruvian Amazon are precisely
those territories that have been inhabited by indigenous peoples for centuries.

In economic terms, some tourist agencies see these peoples as the exotic and coveted objects of attraction for explorers and film or TV producers and so do not think twice before bringing their clients into these territories, despite the high risks for all parties to this type of adventure. The oil/gas and timber companies, along with the illegal loggers, see them as huge obstacles to their economic desires, due primarily to: the fear they instil in their workers; the permanent monitoring and submission of complaints by indigenous organisations regarding violations of the human and collective rights of the peoples in voluntary isolation; the extra sums of money the oil and gas companies have to invest in hiring anthropologists to produce contingency plans and plans to mitigate the impact of any contact, which the state authorities now require.

Raised awareness of the problems of peoples in isolation at international level also creates a need to implement costly communication and publicity strategies enabling the criticism from international human rights, indigenous and environmental organisations to be attenuated. The forced transfer of these populations outside of the concessions is consequently one alternative presented by the corporate sector.

Whilst the Peruvian state has lacked any special national-level policy for indigenous peoples in isolation, the conduct of most of the country’s political rulers or decision-makers has demonstrated an explicit and worrying lack of sensitivity, interest, respect or consistency in this regard. This is particularly evident in the granting of third party rights over land inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation, while most authorities remain impervious to the invasions of illegal loggers and missionaries suffered by indigenous peoples onto their territories. Moving on to the more specific development plans of the state body responsible for establishing territorial reserves, FENAMAD’s experience very clearly shows the difficulties indigenous organisations face when attempting to complete the administrative procedures for official recognition of their territories, despite the fact that both procedure and institutional responsibilities are enshrined in national legislation. There are also significant and dangerous legal shortcomings and loopholes in terms of the security of the reserves, their administration, management and control. This is one of the main reasons for the confusion that now exists over their validity.

Megaprojects such as Camisea Gas have also given rise to statements from international human rights organisations and the World Bank. In fact, in his 2003 report on the situation of the human rights
and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples, the UN Special Rapporteur, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, presents a concrete example of how indigenous rights have been violated within the context of that project. For its part, Inter-American Development Bank policy prohibits forced transfers of local populations and it has hired consultants to evaluate the impact of the project’s activities on the area’s indigenous peoples before agreeing to grant the loans requested by the consortium’s lead agency.

As we have seen, it has been indigenous organisations such as AIDESEP and FENAMAD who, out of solidarity, have taken up the defence of the rights of indigenous peoples in isolation given that their situation does not permit them to elect their own representatives. Since the initial pioneering search for official recognition of the territories of indigenous peoples in isolation, these organisations have moved forward in their position and proposals, which are now aimed at creating a National Programme to “systematically and sustainably promote and implement actions that the regional indigenous organisations, and AIDESEP itself, have initiated in order to protect the physical, territorial and cultural integrity of these peoples” (AIDESEP, 2003). In this regard, AIDESEP’s policy is to defend the fundamental rights of peoples in isolation, involving the organisation’s grassroots members – but also civil society in general - as the main protagonists in this.

The Programme’s essential actions comprise: constant production of updated information on the situation of the indigenous peoples in isolation, the channelling of demands and proposals for their well-being to the state and, in the medium term, the establishment of a state policy, a legal and administrative system for the protection of these peoples, via approval of a proposed Special Regime that is being formulated with specialist support. Within this context, the creation of a high-level state institution responsible for addressing and resolving the problems affecting the isolated indigenous is being requested. As AIDESEP’s leaders note, “The Programme is built on the values and pillars of respect for life, territory, self-determination and the solidarity of indigenous peoples in defending such vulnerable populations as those living in isolation” (Ibid). On a more general level, the organisation has managed to get a highly representative block of Amazonian, Andean and coastal indigenous organisations to support a proposal for constitutional reform that includes these peoples’ rights to self-determination and territory. It has also managed to get an issue previously unknown - or simply avoided by many - included within national policies and in draft international standards such as the American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
It looks as though progress is being made in mapping out the path to follow in defending the rights of indigenous peoples in isolation. With the aim of helping this process to a speedier conclusion, we present below a number of demands and proposals, some of which are the initiative of the indigenous organisations themselves.

**Territory first**

*Territory for the indigenous peoples*
As previously noted, the indigenous organisations that have been defending Peru’s indigenous peoples in isolation have taken as the starting point of their protection programmes the physical and legal regularisation of the territories they inhabit, via the establishment of Territorial or State Reserves (the legal concept established in Peruvian legislation).

Guaranteeing territory is an unquestionable principle of the indigenous movement, given its importance in ensuring the socio-cultural continuity of indigenous peoples. What’s more, the indigenous organisations that are now defending the peoples in isolation themselves arose out of the need to take action in defence of their territories, whether due to invasion by miners, loggers, settlers or others.

From an indigenous point of view, territory not only provides a people with the space and material resources necessary for its survival but also constitutes the basis of its socio-political organisation. Territory is the basis of the spiritual world that supports and breathes life into culture.

A people without territory is condemned to extinction for, without a territory, it is unable to reproduce the economic, socio-political and spiritual systems that give it life.

For the indigenous peoples in isolation, territory is all the more important given that, external to the national economy, they depend uniquely and exclusively on the resources provided by that territory. Moreover, it must be remembered that they have been suffering a process of harassment that has been pressurizing the areas in which they live.

The need to guarantee territory via Territorial or State Reserves has thus been proposed from a perspective that seeks to ensure both the physical and socio-cultural survival of the peoples in isolation and not – as some people would have it – “to confine these peoples to some kind of laboratory so that they remain as museum pieces forever”. However, there is still work to be done in this area, as there are still a number of indigenous territories that have not yet
been recognised and a smaller number not yet identified. It has once more been AIDESEP and its grassroots organisations that have taken on this task. More active and effective support is still required from the state, however, given that there are third party interests in these territories. In this regard, it is paradoxical that peoples in isolation, such as those living along the Peruvian side of the border with Brazil, and who have become the focus of attention for the Brazilian authorities at various levels have not even been identified by the Peruvian government. On the contrary, their territories appear officially to be uninhabited spaces. Another important aspect of the territorial situation of indigenous peoples’ in isolation is the usual querying of the size of proposed Territorial Reserves on the part of state officials. They expect the applicable criteria for determining size to be that of people per hectare but this shows an unawareness of - or an unwillingness to take into account - these peoples’ territorial needs in accordance with their way of life, their rationale and the forest dynamic.

The indigenous peoples’ right to ownership and possession of the lands they traditionally occupy, particularly that of the nomadic peoples, has been recognised by the Peruvian state via national legislation and the ratification of international conventions such as ILO Convention 169. However, in practice, the State or Territorial Reserves have not been effective in protecting the territories of indigenous peoples in isolation. This is reflected in an alarming lack of knowledge regarding the existence of these reserves at various state levels and an absence of official mechanisms with which to protect these reserves, with the consequence that the rights of third parties (oil concessions, Permanent Forestry Production Forests) are placed above the indigenous peoples’ right to territory.

The concept of Territorial or State Reserve needs to be legally consolidated, the presence of vulnerable indigenous peoples within them recognised and, consequently, mechanisms established to ensure they receive the necessary attention. Faced with the threat of dissolution of the territorial reserves, AIDESEP has taken the emergency measure of producing and presenting proposals for regulations to the Ministry of Agriculture that would raise the category establishing the territorial reserves to Supreme Decree level, thus offering them greater legal security. It is hoped that the proposed Special Regime for these peoples will be approved by the Congress of the Republic, thus guaranteeing their right to territorial ownership and possession in the long-term, along with all the supervisory measures this implies.
Territorial supervision

As occurred some years ago, the members of FENAMAD’s and AIDESEP’s governing bodies are once more devoting much of their time to denouncing the serious clashes taking place between isolated indigenous groups and loggers, due to their presence within the Territorial Reserve created by the state for the indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios. They are also particularly trying to come up with immediate ways of resolving this problem, given the serious risk of death this represents for the indigenous peoples in isolation.

The scant official action to protect the reserve for isolated peoples in Madre de Dios thus far has been more the result of the indigenous organisations’ constant pressure to evict the invading loggers than the result of a state initiative. In fact, in mid-2002, FENAMAD achieved the signing of an Interinstitutional Cooperation Agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of the Interior and the Technical Secretariat for Indigenous Affairs, which set out the most important issues: state monitoring and supervision via the establishment of control posts, and actions aimed at removing unauthorised people who enter the Reserve. In this context, coordinated operations to evict loggers from the Tahuamanu and Las Piedras river basins were undertaken in 2002. However, the operational and financial fragility and unsustainability of the system quickly became apparent when those in charge of the monitoring posts began to fall into corruption, permitting illegal felling in exchange for money, while funding for staff posts ran out.

In addition, as García (2003) notes, the work of the Anti-Illegal Felling Committee (which, incidentally, has been characterized by its lack of coordination with the state institutions involved in this issue), has achieved no significant change in the now constant presence of illegal loggers in these areas (Madre de Dios State Reserve and the Alto Purús Reserved Zone).

If the problem of illegal logging in the territories of the indigenous peoples in isolation is to be resolved then the root causes must be acknowledged: the absence of a state policy to protect the indigenous peoples in isolation and its respective legal, institutional, administrative and operational resources; the great desire for profit based on the exploitation of wood of high commercial value; a lack of political will on the part of the central government authorities to resolve the problem, along with notorious weaknesses within the institutions responsible for managing and supervising the use of forestry resources; corruption at all levels of the state apparatus; strong pressure on the forests in the absence of economic alternatives, to name but a few.
An efficient defence of the indigenous territories, and the forests in general, must be based on a radical change in the attitude of all people and institutions involved in this task. Firstly, the public officials, specifically those who work in bodies reporting to the Ministries of Agriculture, the Interior, Justice and human rights defence bodies, must show an interest in addressing and resolving the problems that contribute to the reigning lack of security in the reserves for isolated peoples.

Secondly, the local population must respect the right of the indigenous peoples in isolation to their territories, resources and ways of life. A clear indication that this is possible can be seen in the different demonstrations various trade-based organisations have been organising in Tahuamanu Province of Madre de Dios in recent years, declaring their respect for the indigenous peoples in isolation that inhabit the Alto Tahuamanu river, their rejection of the illegal logging that has been taking place in their territories and their commitment to become the guardians of these territories.

Indigenous organisations, NGOs and all those wishing to contribute to the defence of indigenous peoples in isolation can, like the population of Tahuamanu, facilitate this necessary and urgent change in attitude, permanently monitoring the status of their territories, denouncing the entry of external agents onto these territories and undertaking systematic awareness raising campaigns among neighbouring populations around legislation in support of these peoples, their vulnerability and the need to respect their living spaces and resources.

One issue that must also be addressed by the state, with support from NGOs, is the need to promote an orderly and rational use of resources, along with alternative economic activities for the populations neighbouring the territories inhabited by the indigenous peoples in isolation, such that the pressure and threat of pressure on the natural resources existing within their territories can be eliminated.

**Indigenous Peoples in Isolation in Protected Natural Areas**

Some Protected Natural Areas (PNAs) overlap with the territories inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation. These are: the Manu National Park, the Alto Purús Reserved Zone and the Cordillera Azul National Park. The latter two were created after various indigenous organisations had already presented duly supported requests for the establishment of territorial reserves. Worse still, AIDESEP is currently coordinating a series of protests against INRENA in the
face of this institution’s apparent desire to continue to superimpose PNA on top of indigenous territories.

Leaving aside the reasons for this decision, it is important to raise the need for those government institutions responsible for creating PNA to respect the territorial rights of the indigenous peoples in isolation and not superimpose PNA on them, as this only creates conflict both now and in the future. It is a known fact, for example, that the National Parks are established with predominantly conservationist criteria. If a protected area of this type is superimposed onto the territory of a people in isolation, what guarantee is there that they will obtain their title in the future and will be able to use their resources in accordance with their needs and desires?

In addition, in the case of the PNA that were already in existence, such as the Manu National Park, their park management teams need to adopt the recommendations being proposed by indigenous organisations and specialists regarding effective protection of the PNA boundaries, bearing in mind the characteristics of the indigenous peoples in isolation. Despite being called “protected”, most of these parks are in fact being invaded by loggers and drugs traffickers.

At the same time, the zoning of the PNAs according to ecological or economic criteria constitutes a threat to the physical, territorial and cultural integrity of the indigenous peoples in isolation by cutting across their travel routes with tourist corridors, biological stations and other areas open to external presence. The case of the indigenous peoples in isolation in the Manu National Park is a case in point. This PNA is widely known for the scientists it has attracted over the last 30 years.

**Prevention**

The best way of preventing any forced contact that could affect the physical and cultural integrity of indigenous peoples in isolation is for the state to stop granting fossil fuel and logging concessions, or any other rights of ownership, exploitation or use of natural or other resources to third parties within the territories inhabited by the peoples in isolation.

Should the isolated indigenous themselves take the initiative to seek contact, approaching settlements, monitoring posts, biological stations or any other nearby establishment, as has been occurring in areas such as the Las Piedras River, guides or plans advising villagers and nearby people on how to act must be produced in order to prevent contagion and to deal effectively with emergency health cases.
Contingency Plans

A contingency plan is a dynamic instrument with which to try to prevent the undesired impacts of contact and mitigate their effects. For this reason it has to be continually updated to take account of the behaviour of the indigenous in isolation.

There is a history of implementing contingency plans. In 1996, more than one oil company that was commencing operations in areas inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation was required to produce and apply these plans in the face of demands from indigenous organisations. These companies expressly stated their policy for avoiding contact with isolated populations. In 2001, consultants hired by FENAMAD produced a contingency plan on the basis of wide evidence reflecting the different contexts in which contact could occur. Recently, the Manu National Park management team decided to do the same, given the presence of various isolated peoples within the area.

A contingency plan comprises basic information on the cultural characteristics, movements and attitudes of indigenous peoples in isolation, general precautions, decision-making responsibilities, possible situations of contact and procedures to follow should such contact occur.

These contingency plans must be used by all people in establishments neighbouring the areas of movement of isolated indigenous groups. This includes members of native communities, neighbouring villages, monitoring posts, biological stations, loggers, hunters, fishermen, etc. Information on every incident involving the sighting of isolated indigenous or the finding of evidence of their presence must be appropriately provided to the indigenous organisation or government body – if one has been established – that has taken up the defence of these peoples. This body must, above all, be capable of evaluating the incidents, anticipating situations of contact and taking whatever decisions necessary. In Madre de Dios, this task has been assumed by FENAMAD.

It is important to bear in mind that these contingency plans are not a panacea for avoiding the risks of contact but guidelines for conduct and action to mitigate them. Their implementation must thus be accompanied by a range of measures to protect the physical integrity of the indigenous peoples in isolation.

Emergency health plans: controlling illness

These plans have arisen out of the need to guarantee the survival of indigenous peoples in isolation in the face of the epidemiological
problems that occur through direct contact with external agents, a principal factor in loss of life among these peoples.

Specialists have, on numerous occasions, raised the need for emergency health plans. In 1997, the anthropologist Klaus Rummenhoeller suggested that the Manu National Park management team should produce a Strategic Emergency Plan, to be provided with permanent funding and which would envisage health prevention measures to mitigate the risks of transmitting Western illnesses, in addition to emergency actions to be taken in post-contact situations (Ministry of Agriculture, 1997).

Monitoring the health status of settlements, monitoring posts, biological stations and any other establishment that may experience the presence of isolated indigenous groups is essential. Preventive actions here would contribute to controlling the spread of high-risk epidemics due to their proximity to the territory of groups in isolation. Post-contact actions require the deployment of human, material, logistic, financial and pharmaceutical resources to deal effectively with emergency cases in contact situations. The risks of an illness spreading rapidly and the consequent danger of mass deaths among the indigenous population in isolation require a commitment to care and joint efforts on the part of various state sectors, both local and national, in particular the Ministry of Health and the Ombudsman.

Difficulties in accessing areas inhabited by the indigenous in isolation, their territorial dispersion and constant movement are factors that have previously hindered actions of this kind. The oil companies that have operated in territories inhabited by isolated Kugapakori and Mashco Piro indigenous groups, along the Urubamba and Madre de Dios rivers respectively, corroborate this.

The policy and strategy for epidemiological prevention deployed by Shell, PISAP (Plan Integral de Salud para la Amazonía Peruana – Integrated Health Plan for the Peruvian Amazon) and the public authorities in the Bajo Urubamba minimize the risks of illness in zones where access is relatively controlled but do not prevent the occurrence of cases produced by the migratory dynamic of the indigenous groups themselves and their encounters with other players in areas not subject to a similar system of health monitoring and illness prevention (Shell, 1998:5).

A couple of years ago (2002), the importance of implementing these health plans led FENAMAD to invite members of the Regional Health Directorate, the Ombudsman and INRENA, along with other public institutions in Madre de Dios, to attend a meeting for the purposes of an exchange of information and proposals. These meetings continue to this day. At national level, the signing of an Agree-
ment between the Ministry of Health’s General Office of Epidemiology (OGE) and AIDESEP constitutes an important precedent and institutional framework with which to make progress in producing guidelines for addressing the health problems of the indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact. The aim of the agreement is to cooperate around the production of Indigenous Health Analyses for various Amazonian peoples, using a methodology that takes into account the particular cultural way in which they perceive health and illness, the specific determining factors and their socio-cultural response to the problem.

**From isolation to sustained contact**

One of the indigenous peoples in isolation could initiate a process of sustained contact with national society at any moment. These situations generally occur when an indigenous group is affected by illness and hence contacts the nearest settlement for help. They may also approach these settlements with the aim of obtaining the metal tools, such as knives and machetes, they are so fond of. As for the missionaries, they could be successful in contacting them. Then again, it could be that the frequent visits of some groups of isolated indigenous to nearby settlements will become permanent.

Whatever the case, they will need to be provided with all the necessary health and other support to counteract the effects of contact. It will be necessary to show respect for their right to self-determination should they decide - or need - to establish sustained contact with national society, and to contribute to ensuring that the process of change they embark upon is conducive to developing their own mechanisms for dealing with the problems that result from inter-ethnic coexistence, in order to ensure that ethnocide is avoided. This may seem rather idealistic given that the upheaval caused to the socio-cultural structures of a people following initial contact tends to be devastating. And yet, in spite of everything, if appropriate attitudes are adopted, these effects can be minimized.

The dependence, poverty, loss of identity and self-esteem that generally characterize indigenous peoples once they abandon their isolation can be prevented if the state and indigenous organisations support them in this process of change, adopting an attitude of respect for their right to autonomy and to their own development perspective. The representation of these peoples that has been assumed by the indigenous organisations, along with the actions that have been promoted in their defence during their isolation to ensure their socio-cultural continuity will, following contact, become subject
to the decisions of the group, as these peoples will then be capable of expressing and dealing with their own demands. As Chirif notes (1991), when an indigenous people retains its identity and ethnic pride, it can overcome resignation and face its future independently. On the other hand, overprotective or paternalistic attitudes only create relations of domination that destroy these peoples’ capacity to face up to new situations as they arise, making them once more dependent, in the broadest sense of the word.

In addition, we need to eliminate the idealistic view many of us have of indigenous groups as being completely impervious to influence from the outside globalizing society. This is an illusion that prevents us from making any progress in our analysis of the situation. In fact, to achieve harmonious inter-ethnic coexistence, a people needs to be able to get to know and gradually compare, as far as is possible, different forms of coexistence. This enables it to construct ways of relating to different sectors of society and to propose a strategy for inter-ethnic coexistence that is capable of guaranteeing the preservation of its cultural identity. Experiencing various situations and getting to know different human groups, on an equal footing, does not affect the autonomy of a people. Quite the opposite, it affirms it.

As Gallois (1998) notes, the anthropology of the ethnic movements proves that the most efficient way of strengthening group autonomy is to allow it to recognise its distinct collective identity. This strengthening is a dynamic process, a constantly changing task that is neither contagious nor hereditary. Experiences from various parts of the world show that a cultural identity does not disappear through contact with different ways of life or thinking. On the contrary, an identity dies when left in an enclosed space that limits comparative reflection, that creates no contrasting praxis, with external agents trying to pass as the protectors of a traditional culture, idealized and immobilized in time.

A process of autonomous development implies that the defining of needs, the planning and implementation of actions should be controlled by the indigenous people themselves. These actions will need to be aimed at achieving a people’s economic independence by using resources in a way that is appropriate to ensuring its continuity. They must be capable of strengthening the identity and unity of the people as a culturally differentiated society (Gallois, 1998).

According to Chirif (1991), the basic conditions for a process of autonomous development are: a sufficient resource base that enables diversification of production activities, a sufficient level of self-determination and the security of territorial reorganisation should a serious degradation of resources occur.
The importance of enjoying the appropriate space and resources with which to facilitate the move from isolation to sustained contact and to establish the bases for autonomous development requires that the state, through contact, continues to guarantee the sustainability of the indigenous territories, which means granting them the legal status of titled territories.

The great challenge for the government

On 29 July 2001, Alejandro Toledo was inaugurated as president of Peru in a ceremony held in the ancient city of Machu Picchu, symbol of the country’s Andean and indigenous roots. Important symbolism and ritual representations of the Incas were introduced once more. In line with this, the first official action carried out during this ceremony was the reading of the Machu Picchu Declaration, signed the previous day by the presidents of the countries comprising the Andean Community of Nations (Comunidad Andina de Naciones - CAN). Through this instrument, the heads of state undertook to defend the fundamental rights of indigenous and other peoples and to continue to implement political strategies that place higher value on the ethnic plurality and multicultural nature of their nations, with the aim of promoting the full participation of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities.

Some months later, the President’s intentions were specified in a number of regulatory texts creating, for example, the National Commission for Andean and Amazonian Peoples, a commission within the state apparatus established with the aim of “promoting, coordinating, guiding, implementing, supervising and evaluating policies, programmes and projects relating to peoples targeted within the framework of standards and principles stipulated in the relevant international Treaties to which Peru is a party” (DS 111-2001-PCM). Nonetheless, it is also clear that declarations, treaties and commissions require substantial changes in the theoretical constructs of the state apparatus, the law and the attitudes of government officials in this regard.

To implement such an indigenist policy requires an in-depth knowledge of the characteristics, problems and proposals of indigenous peoples. It requires overcoming the paternalistic concepts and policies that have thus far continued to subordinate indigenous peoples, their inefficiency reflected in counterproductive results. It requires the creation of a state body that is, above all, endowed with adequate human, material, logistic and financial resources such that it can take decisions that make indigenous demands a reality and
coordinate all areas of the state apparatus around the same objective. It is a question, when all’s said and done, of applying an indigenist policy that is in line with the demands of indigenous peoples and marked by a new and appropriate vision of these peoples.

In order to begin addressing the problems of indigenous peoples in isolation, it is first necessary to legalise their territories and continue with the adoption of mechanisms for monitoring these areas, producing plans for the prevention of contact and for action should such contact occur.

One instrument that should be used by the state authorities when implementing actions to protect isolated peoples is the Action Plan produced by the indigenous organisations, ministries, NGOs and specialists involved in the Committee for Dialogue and Cooperation. According to the Decree creating the Special Multisectoral Commission for Native Communities, one issue to be considered was “the establishment of mechanisms for the protection of uncontacted native groups”. This commission was established as a result of the organisation ARPI’s initiative to take a group of indigenous leaders from the central forest to Lima to meet the President of the time, Valentín Paniagua. The whole indigenous movement, headed by AIDESEP, subsequently took up this initiative. Another important precedent was the great mobilisation of indigenous peoples in Madre de Dios that took place in Puerto Maldonado in July 2000 to demand, among other things, territorial protection from the government for the indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios.

Following establishment of this commission, joint work commenced in which the indigenous organisations played a leading role. The concrete expression of their demands can now be seen in the plan’s actions. The plan was completed and subsequently published in the daily newspaper El Peruano under the name “Action Plan on Priority Issues”. Three broad issues were put forward with regard to indigenous peoples in isolation, on the basis of which a series of proposals were developed.

The first issue comprises the establishment of a special legal system for indigenous peoples in isolation, involving: the creation of bodies responsible for coordinating actions to protect these peoples; the production of contingency plans and special protection mechanisms; the implementation of studies on external causes and factors that constitute threats to the peoples in isolation; and the creation of legislation governing environmental and resource extraction in order to prohibit all kinds of research activity, evangelisation, political and religious proselytisation, as well as contracts for the exploitation and use of natural resources in the territories of indigenous peoples in isolation, given that they constitute a threat to their integrity and life.
The second refers to the creation of special territorial reserves for indigenous peoples in isolation. This includes promulgating ratification of the territorial reserves already created for indigenous peoples in isolation, as well as resolving the proposed reserves that are still outstanding.

The third seeks to protect indigenous peoples in isolation from all unauthorised intrusions onto their territories by people alien to them. This means negotiating the immediate withdrawal of the South American Mission, loggers and researchers present in the Alto Purús and Murunahua territorial reserves. It also seeks to create an inter-institutional commission to develop rapid procedures for monitoring and identifying the agents or factors that threaten the security and lives of isolated indigenous groups and to define interinstitutional responsibilities and procedures in order to resolve and appropriately address emergencies that may endanger the lives of the indigenous in isolation. Finally, it aims to define decisive and immediate mechanisms and procedures by which to apply sanctions against those responsible for threatening the security and lives of the indigenous peoples in isolation.

A table of state-level responsibilities for each action is given at the end of the plan. The state authorities included in this are the former Technical Secretariat for Indigenous Affairs, the Ombudsman, the Ministry of Health, the National Police, INRENA, PETT, the Congress of the Republic and the Ministry of Justice.

On 22 June of the same year, outgoing President Paniagua approved - by means of Supreme Decree 072-2001-PCM - the formation of a Standing Committee for Dialogue to resolve the problems of the indigenous communities of the Peruvian Amazon.

The Paniagua government also gave the Technical Secretariat for Indigenous Affairs responsibility for guaranteeing respect for and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact, although this is particularly aimed at this latter group. Thus far, this office has lacked the necessary human and financial resources to effectively “watch over and guarantee respect for and promotion of” the rights of indigenous peoples in isolation.

Final thoughts

At this current time, most of the indigenous peoples in isolation in Madre de Dios, and in the Peruvian Amazon in general, are in a situation very similar to that of the decimated Yora of the Mishagua River almost 20 years ago: their territories are being invaded by loggers or granted to oil or gas companies, clashes are occurring
between indigenous groups and external agents, the missionaries are coming dangerously close to establishing contact with them. And what happened 20 years ago? 50% of the Yora population, primarily the most vulnerable sectors of society, the children and elderly, died as a consequence of the illnesses that were passed onto them following forced contact. Today, almost two decades on from that tragic moment, the population has still not recovered, either demographically or psychologically, from the tragedy.

The Peruvian state now has the information with which to understand the situation of the indigenous peoples in isolation and what could happen if it does not act rapidly and effectively to halt the many threats against their lives. It has also been offered a series of proposals for protecting the isolated peoples, produced by various sectors of society, both indigenous and non-indigenous, jointly and individually. Another advantage the state now has is that of having obtained an offer of technical and financial support with which to implement these plans. So there is no excuse not to act to safeguard the physical, cultural and territorial integrity of these peoples as rapidly as possible.

Although it may seem difficult, in addition to concrete proposals, the government’s neoliberal policy also has to be in line with its indigenist policy. If not, promotion of foreign investment in the forests inhabited by the isolated indigenous peoples of the Amazon will continue to unleash yet further social problems. The policy of “harmonizing” indigenous rights with logging interests, so highly publicized and applied by government officials when considering proposals for the establishment of “Reserves for the indigenous peoples in isolation” shows, surprisingly, that both aspects remain of equal importance to the Peruvian state. The constitutional rights of indigenous peoples, their territorial demands, as enshrined in the international agreements and treaties signed by Peru, are thus being ignored.

And yet logging - as it is currently being undertaken in the Peruvian Amazon - must be halted as soon as possible, as it constitutes a serious threat to the fundamental rights of indigenous peoples in isolation and, moreover, is decimating the forest resources. In addition to this, it yields no benefits either for the Peruvian state or Peruvian society as a whole.

The state’s attitude is clearly one of double standards and contradictory behaviour: at the same time as participating in producing laws and regulations aimed at promoting sustainable forestry activity that respects the rights of indigenous populations, it is also adopting measures that encourage illegal logging by making it legal. This creates confusion among the population and worrying reversals in the awareness raising process being undertaken by FENAMAD and other indigenous organisations with regard to the need to
respect the rights of indigenous peoples in isolation, and by non-
governmental organisations with regard to the need to manage
forest resources appropriately.

The presence of extraction agents on indigenous territories not only
constitutes an attack on the human rights of these peoples but also on
the environment, as they are not complying with the minimum require-
ments for replenishment and care of the ecosystem. It is inexplicable
that no government sector seems capable of putting a stop to this.

This is probably the last opportunity the Peruvian state will have
to prevent the annihilation of those indigenous peoples that have
opted for isolation as a mechanism of self-defence in the face of the
outrages that were once committed against them.

Consequently, the state absolutely must take a firm position in
defence of these peoples. Otherwise, the violations of their human
and territorial rights will continue and, given the lack of institutions
responsible for addressing this issue, the complaints made by the
indigenous organisations in this respect will, as has been the case so
far, fall on deaf ears.

There is a need for the political will to implement this. And yet,
meanwhile, news of encounters between loggers and isolated indig-
igenous groups continues to reach us, along with reports of deaths
among these latter.

Notes
1  UN Economic and Social Council, 2003
2  To date, the creation of Territorial or State Reserves has guaranteed neither the
security of the territory nor its resources. However, this is no reason for not
demanding them; on the contrary, they must be effectively guaranteed on all
necessary levels, both legal and physical, that is, in law and in practice.
3  These agents are found, for example, in the Alto Purús Reserved Zone and the
Cordillera Azul National Park.
4  See Mobil Exploration and Producing Inc, 1996
5  See Rummenhoeller and Huertas, 2001
7  This comprises Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia and Peru.
8  This committee was established by provision of the Special Multisectoral
Commission for Native Communities created, in turn, by former President
Valentín Paniagua via Supreme Decree 015-2001-PCM (13/4/01), which states
its aims as: “to study the current situation and problems of the native com-
munities of the Amazon, as well as to produce, within 120 days of its establish-
ment, integral proposals to guarantee the full validity of their constitutional
rights and to promote their well-being and economic development”.
9  24 July 2001
10 Supreme Decree N° 013-2001-PROMUDEH
Summing up

- The northern part of Madre de Dios department is home to at least three indigenous peoples in a situation of isolation. They are the so-called “Mashco Piro”, of the Arawak linguistic family, and two others possibly related to the Yora, of the Pano linguistic family. They live in the upper and middle basins of the Manu, Los Amigos, Las Piedras, Tahuamanu, Yaco and Chandless rivers.

- Indigenous peoples in isolation are population groups that limit their contact to members of their own peoples and, in some cases, to the indigenous communities in the vicinity of their territories, refusing to establish sustained relationships or interaction with indigenous or non-indigenous populations that could endanger their physical and cultural integrity. They may be indigenous peoples in their own right, with their own culture, values and practices, or they may be segments of other peoples that have developed sustained relationships with national society.

- The indigenous peoples in isolation practise hunting, fishing, gathering and small-scale sowing, for which purpose they cover a wide territory. They live exclusively from the resources provided by the forests and rivers, which are essential to their subsistence.

- It is thought that the isolation of these peoples stems from the tragic experiences of contact that began during the rubber boom and which have continued to this day with the presence of loggers, oil companies, drugs traffickers and other external agents who do not hesitate to use force to frighten them away so that they can carry on their activities in complete freedom.

- The indigenous peoples in isolation are highly vulnerable in a number of ways. They do not have bodily defences against current common illnesses, they are suffering exclusion from their territories due to the advance of, primarily, loggers into their migratory zones, they are the object of aggression on the part of
external agents and are sought by missionaries with the aim of contacting and evangelising them.

- The loggers’ advance is causing serious clashes with indigenous groups in isolation, with deaths resulting on both sides.

- The indigenous peoples in isolation retain their legitimate right to recognition of that which legislation establishes on behalf of indigenous peoples, including the possibility of obtaining, at the appropriate time, recognition of their legal status as native communities and legalisation of their communal territories, previously identified and reserved by the state.

- Since 1995, the Native Federation of the Madre de Dios River and its Tributaries – FENAMAD has been raising awareness around the problems of the indigenous peoples in isolation in this region, negotiating the legal and physical regularisation of their territories and denouncing the presence of external agents within them. Although official recognition of part of the territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation in the north of the region has been gained, the state has adopted no effective actions to protect these territories from the invasions they are suffering, primarily from loggers who are threatening the physical, cultural and territorial integrity of the peoples who live there.

- Apart from the indigenous peoples in isolation in the north of Madre de Dios, there are other indigenous peoples in isolation within Peru who are exposed to risk through the presence of external agents on their territories. These are primarily Arawak and Pano speakers living in remote areas, also considered “areas of refuge”, in the Loreto, Ucayali, Huánuco and Cusco regions. AIDESEP has played a very important role in the territorial defence of these peoples, achieving the creation of territorial reserves for them in Ucayali and producing the technical files justifying new reserves in other regions of the country.

- Despite the fact that Peruvian legislation recognises the territorial rights of indigenous peoples in isolation via the concept of State or Territorial Reserve, to date these have provided no guarantee of protection for the space or resources of these peoples. On the contrary, oil and logging concessions have been superimposed on them, allocated by the state itself. What is more, they suffer pressure from other external agents such as illegal loggers, drugs traffickers, tourist agencies and missionaries.
The presence of external agents on the territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation along the Peru/Brazil border has been causing their territorial dislocation towards Brazilian territory, and creating conflict with local populations for this living space. This has caused concern at local, state and federal level in that country, and the Brazilian authorities have made repeated yet fruitless attempts to establish contact with the Peruvian authorities to address the problem.

A state policy of protecting the indigenous peoples in isolation would require deep-rooted changes in the state apparatus’ concept of indigenous peoples, along with changes in the way it contributes to their development, changes in legislation and changes in the way its institutions function.

There are still a number of territories of indigenous peoples in isolation that have not yet been identified and, hence, have not received official recognition from the state.

Recommendations

- The state should recognise that the indigenous peoples in isolation are extremely vulnerable both to illness and to the aggression that is being meted out to them by agents alien to their cultures.

- The state should have a protection policy for indigenous peoples in isolation that protects their territories, respects their right to determine their level of integration into wider society themselves, provides for emergency prevention and action plans in case of the spread of post-contact illnesses, and establishes mechanisms to guarantee that contact with the wider society – whenever the indigenous should decide they want this – leads neither to genocide nor ethnocide.

- The process of identifying the areas currently occupied by indigenous peoples in isolation should be concluded and these territories protected. This process must be with the involvement of the indigenous organisations that have taken up the defence of these peoples.

- The Ministry of Agriculture should concretely establish the Territorial or State Reserves that have been proposed (Reserve for
the Cashibo – Cacacatibo, Alto Tapiche, Yavarí Mirim, Napo-Tigre indigenous peoples in isolation).

- The state should ensure the legal consolidation of the Territorial or State Reserves created for the indigenous peoples in isolation by issuing regulations that support them and give them greater solidity.

- The state should not grant private oil concessions nor establish Forests of Permanent Forestry Production in reserves or in areas where there is a presence of indigenous peoples in isolation.

- The state should prohibit the existence of external agents such as missionaries, loggers, fishermen, hunters, turtle egg gatherers, tourist agencies, explorers or any others in the territory of the indigenous peoples in isolation and establish a system of sanctions if this prohibition is transgressed.

- The state, along with indigenous organisations and NGOs who wish to contribute to protecting the indigenous peoples in isolation, should promote information and awareness raising campaigns among people living in areas around the territories inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation so that they themselves can take on the role of guardians of these territories.

- The different state bodies involved in this issue should draw up contingency plans to mitigate the effects of contact with indigenous populations in isolation. These contingency plans should be accompanied by a government commitment to make all efforts and deploy all logistical, financial, staffing, equipment and medical resources necessary in case of contact.

- State institutions, and NGOs that wish to be involved in the issue, should draw up prevention and medical emergency plans to prevent the spread of epidemics and to effectively address these situations should they occur.

- The state should establish a fund for cases of post-contact health emergencies.

- The state should promote alternative economic activities in the areas bordering the territories inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation with the aim of avoiding pressure on their resources.
INRENA should establish more effective mechanisms for monitoring the Protected Natural Areas with an indigenous presence, such as the Manu National Park. Similarly, it should record each incident that proves the presence of isolated indigenous groups, produce contingency plans, health prevention and emergency plans and train its staff to avoid situations of contact. If such situations should occur, it should be able to appropriately deal with them.

The Peruvian state should respond to the Brazilian government’s request to put an end to the actions of loggers and missionaries who are causing constant territorial dislocations and attacks by groups of isolated indigenous against Brazilian settlements along the international border.

In the case of peoples in initial contact, the state - along with those indigenous organisations and NGOs that wish to be involved in the issue - should have an action plan which, based on respect for autonomy and equality of treatment, guarantees that contact will not produce drastic cultural shocks or emergency situations that could endanger the socio-cultural continuity of these peoples.

Life, health, territory and cultural identity are the fundamental rights of indigenous individuals and peoples, and are enshrined in the most important laws of the country such as the Peruvian Political Constitution itself, Legislative Resolution 26253 (known as Convention 169) and numerous international agreements and treaties signed by the Peruvian state. State officials and representatives, from within their respective institutions, have an obligation to comply with these laws, thus contributing to improving the living conditions of indigenous peoples in isolation, for many years subjected to humiliation in some of the country’s regions.
FENAMAD Declaration in defence of the interests of the uncontacted Indigenous Peoples of Madre de Dios

We have, for a number of years, been seeking ways to protect the territories of our indigenous Mashco-Piro, Amahuaca and Yora peoples, known as ‘uncontacted’ because they live in voluntary isolation in the north-west of Madre de Dios department.

In this regard, we welcome the initiative to participate in the meetings of the Regional Environment Committee (CAR) in order to produce a proposal for the department’s Ecological and Economic Zoning, along with the Madre de Dios CTAR and other bodies.

We are submitting a proposal for territorial demarcation on behalf of these three indigenous peoples in order to ensure that outside interests cannot affect their lives and well-being and that they are able to maintain their way of life without restriction or coercion.

In early August 1999, we presented an Operational Plan regarding territorial demarcation for uncontacted groups to the Regional Department for Agriculture and the Madre de Dios CTAR, in which we indicated the steps to be taken to achieve this for our indigenous Mashco Piro, Amahuaca and Yora brothers.

Peruvians call our department “the biodiversity capital of Peru” because of its biological wealth. It is also known to be the habitat of around 20 indigenous peoples, a cultural diversity that goes hand in hand with this biological diversity. More than this, we believe that it is this cultural diversity that has actually guaranteed the biological diversity.

Notwithstanding these efforts, we are faced with the sad reality that the Regional Agrarian Department has preferred to put the interests of the logging sector first and is intending to turn the ancestral territories of these uncontacted indigenous peoples over to forestry exploitation. This is why we are making the following statement, in order to prevent the greatest wealth we Madre de Dios
inhabitants have from being destroyed, a wealth that is opening up a new range of activities with the potential to generate substantial income while at the same time ensuring our territories’ conservation. We are referring, of course, to ecotourism as an economically sustainable activity.

Forestry development?

For those working on the issue of forestry it is clear that there is no forest region where such activity can be said to have been a factor of lasting social and economic development, even though it may have created short-term benefits by generating employment.

These days, the spectre of globalisation hangs over the world. And Peru is no exception.

The Madre de Dios CTAR and the Regional Agrarian Department are not playing fair when they invite us to participate in meetings for the economic and ecological zoning of our department, for they know full well that they have already decided who they are going to hand over the forest wealth of our indigenous peoples to. Nor are they playing fair when they know in advance that the logging companies are incapable of creating stable social and economic development and that they will squander the greatest biological wealth of our department, thus destroying the natural habitat of the indigenous and mestizo peoples that are permanently settled in our region.

Once the logging is finished, pastures will appear. We will end up with a desolate landscape, for the natural habitat of the wildlife will also have disappeared. The loggers will move on to another area with their chainsaws. The poor will be left with the stubble.

One question all Madre de Dios inhabitants must ask, be they indigenous, locals, settlers who have come to live alongside this biological wealth, or people or companies who have adapted their economic conditions to this biodiversity in search of sustainable development, is whether it is possible to prevent logging interests alone from deciding the future of our department, for the loggers see only the trees and not the people living within this bountiful environment.

In ecological terms, only long-term arguments hold any water. Economies that produce temporary income but no long-term development not only impoverish the people and exterminate our indigenous peoples but also impoverish the countryside and destroy the environment.

We must not therefore allow a path of unfair competition in natural resource exploitation, one against the other and everyone
against the forest, nature and indigenous peoples, to be trodden in our department.

Who are the uncontacted?

The uncontacted are a sector of the department’s indigenous population who, as a result of previous traumatic experiences, have voluntarily chosen to isolate themselves from national society, which constitutes a threat to them.

Groups of uncontacted Mashco-Piro, Yora and Amahuaca have so far been identified, populations living on the resources found within their territories: the basin of the Las Piedras river, whose shores and forests they travel seasonally in search of animals, fruits and different products for their subsistence.

This situation of isolation makes the uncontacted highly vulnerable to illnesses that could be transmitted via the presence of groups of strangers on their territory. One example of this was the case of the Kugapakori-Nahua of the Urubamba and Manu basins, whose population fell by 50% as a consequence of violent clashes that were instigated by loggers and continued by the Shell oil company. Cases such as this are commonplace throughout the world.

Faced with this worrying situation, we are calling upon the solidarity of the central and regional government authorities, CONAM and CAR in Madre de Dios, the people of Madre de Dios, national and international indigenous peoples and organisations, and friends of the Amazon, to prevent a new outrage against nature and the indigenous peoples who have voluntarily decided to live in harmony with it.

Puerto Maldonado, 02 September 1999

Press release: On the disappearance of a logger in the territory of the Indigenous Peoples in isolation of Madre de Dios

On Friday 5th of this month, Mr. Genaro Quispe disappeared whilst felling timber on the Curiaco river, a tributary of the Las Piedras river, which forms part of the area of movement of the indigenous
populations in isolation. At the spot where he disappeared, his colleagues found an arrow, which was subsequently taken to our offices and, after being examined by the technical team, it was concluded that it belonged to the isolated “Mashco Piro” group that has lived in the area since time immemorial.

In this respect, FENAMAD, as representative of the indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios, states the following:

**To his relatives:**

- We very much regret what has happened to Mr Genaro Quispe and the difficult times you must be going through following his disappearance.
- We know that you have decided to go in search of him, and we do understand this; however, we would urge you to avoid any direct contact with the indigenous populations in isolation that are to be found in the area, as this could lead to further violent clashes and, moreover, spread illnesses that could cause the death of this indigenous group.

**To the authorities:**

- Tired of asking, we now DEMAND that you restrict the local population’s access to the territory of the indigenous groups in isolation and that a study zone be established for the final demarcation of the area, as has been proposed by our organisation for many years.
- Move ahead with the proposal for protection policies for the indigenous populations in isolation in the Peruvian Amazon, as they also form part of our nation and must be considered part of the country’s cultural heritage.

**To the local population:**

- Support FENAMAD’s proposal and prevent further unfortunate incidents from occurring.

*FENAMAD, Pto. Maldonado, 12 January 2001*
Declaration

On the attack on a group of isolated indigenous from Alto Purú

The Native Federation of the Madre de Dios river and tributaries – FENAMAD – wishes to communicate the following to the local and national authorities and the general public:

On 12 February this year, a group of isolated indigenous who were travelling along the headwaters of the PurúS river came unexpectedly upon the Amahuaca Santa Cruz Native Community, situated on that river in PurúS district, PurúS province, Ucayali department. A violent clash with the inhabitants of that community ensued, resulting in a considerable number of the indigenous in isolation receiving bullet wounds and even, according to reliable but unconfirmed sources, in the deaths of seven members of that group.

Given the gravity of events, members of our institution are currently in the area carrying out investigations into the case. However, we consider it particularly important that the following should be made known:

1. The headwaters of the PurúS river, in Ucayali department, from part of the migratory path along which indigenous populations in isolation travel. This fact has been recognised by the Peruvian State which, by means of Departmental Resolution N° 000190-97-CTARU/IRA of the Regional Agrarian Department of Ucayali, issued in 1997, created the Territorial Reserve for the noted indigenous populations in isolation, and which has been included in the Alto PurúS Reserved Zone, established by Supreme Decree N°030-2000-AG of 7 July 2000.

2. Despite the existence of this Territorial Reserve established to protect the indigenous populations in isolation, timber companies have continued to enter the area at different points for the purpose of felling high value timber species.

3. The untimely presence of isolated indigenous in the Santa Cruz Native Community was due to the pressures being exerted on their territories by the loggers, causing forced displacements and consequently leading to clashes with nearby indigenous populations.

4. At the same time, a group of missionaries from the evangelical South American Mission (SAM), known as the “Pioneers” has created a community within the area of movement of the affected...
indigenous populations in isolation for the express purposes of evangelising them, undertaking in this regard dangerous actions of contact. In the past, in other cases in the Amazon, it has been precisely these religious groups that have been responsible for spreading illnesses and exterminating the indigenous peoples in isolation.

In this regard, we call upon the Peruvian State and its institutions to urgently request:

• **AN EXHAUSTIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE INCIDENT, LEADING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INTELLECTUAL AND MATERIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CRIMINAL ATTACK ON THE INDIGENOUS IN ISOLATION OF THE ALTO PURÚS.**

• **EXPULSION OF THE LOGGERS WORKING WITHIN THE TERRITORIAL RESERVES FOR INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN ISOLATION IN THE ALTO PURÚS.**

• **THAT THE EVANGELICAL SOUTH AMERICAN MISSION BE PREVENTED FROM CONTINUING TO CARRY OUT MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES WITH INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS IN ISOLATION.**

• **THAT EFFECTIVE MEASURES BE APPLIED BY WHICH TO CONTROL THE ALTO PURÚS RESERVED ZONE.**


*FENAMAD, Puerto Maldonado, 19 February 2001*
Puerto Maldonado, 2 April 2001

Attn:  
Executive Director, Regional Operational Unit  
INRENA-MDD

Re.: Complaint of logging in unauthorised areas within the territory of the isolated indigenous of the Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers.

Dear Sir,

I am once again writing to you to complain about the presence of numerous loggers in unauthorised areas along the Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers, an area that is inhabited by indigenous groups in isolation, as we have endeavoured to make known for almost the last decade.

According to information provided by the inhabitants of nearby settlements, various loggers, as noted in the attached list, have had the opportunity of sighting isolated indigenous while felling timber. This constitutes an underlying danger that could provoke tragedies along the lines of others that have occurred recently.

To give some examples, of which you are aware, last February a logger disappeared while working on the Curiaco river. In his place an arrow was found, similar to those made by the group in isolation commonly known as the “Mashco Piro”, who live in the area (copy of police report attached). That same month, the logger Jorge López Espinoza found between 13 and 16 temporary huts near the area where he was logging, that is, five meanders upstream of the Canales stream, on the Tahuamanu river. Some months previously (September), a group of fishermen was attacked in the lower reaches of the Canales stream by a group of isolated indigenous. The young Samuel Peralta Janampa (police and medical reports attached) was seriously wounded. We do not know if any indigenous were injured. In April 2000, a group of loggers including Wilber Inuma, Tafur and Luis Capia were attacked by a group of indigenous in isolation on the Las Piedras river, close to the Chanchomayo river.

We are also concerned at news of violent clashes taking place between loggers and indigenous in isolation, who are being silenced in the interests of the loggers. We are looking into this further.

How many more isolated indigenous, loggers or fishermen must be wounded, die or disappear before your institutions adopt effec-
tive control mechanisms for the area which – moreover – is not authorized for logging activity?

We respectfully request that this problem be considered with the seriousness it deserves. We are concerned when we receive news of isolated indigenous groups in danger, but it also saddens us to receive the wives or relatives of people who have disappeared or are wounded by our indigenous brothers in isolation, asking for help in finding them or providing medical assistance for their loved ones. It should be recalled that the summer or dry season is approaching, a time when the indigenous groups in isolation migrate to the main rivers, and the possibility of clashes or sightings increases. If measures are not taken, we will hold the State – via yourselves – responsible for any ensuing events, which we will denounce.

Yours faithfully,

Antonio Iviche Quique
President of FENAMAD

Letter N°013 – FENAMAD - 01

Attn: Ing. Matías Prieto Celi
Head of the National Institut for Natural Resources
INRENA - Lima

Re: Requesting urgent measures in relation to loggers invading indigenous lands on the Peru/Brazil border.

Dear Sir,

By means of a letter from the FUNDAÇAO NACIONAL DO INDIO DE BRASIL-FUNAI, we have been informed of the invasions being suffered by indigenous Asháninka populations of the upper Yurua, on the Brazilian side, due to the advance of Peruvian logging companies who, moreover, appear to be building a road between Pucallpa (on the Ucayali river) and Tipishca (headwaters of the Yurua river), which would clearly increase these invasions.

According to information, again from FUNAI, the logging advance towards this region is causing territorial dislocations of indigenous populations in isolation located in the regions of the sources
of the Yurúa, Purús, Tarahuacá, d’Ouro, Envira and Xinani rivers, both in Peru and Brazil.

As we have been stating for a number of years now, the Peru-Brazil border zone forms a corridor inhabited by various indigenous populations, both groups that are already settled and others in a situation of isolation. The case of these latter requires special consideration given that their living areas are being gradually eroded by the advance of extraction agents such as the loggers who, moreover, could provide a means for transmitting illnesses against which the indigenous people in isolation have developed no defences.

In this respect, I am writing to request that you kindly provide us with further information on this situation and take the necessary measures before the problems intensify and unfortunate consequences occur.

We would also like to take this opportunity to ask you about the position of our organisation’s application to create a study area in favour of the indigenous populations in isolation along the upper reaches of the Yaco, Chandless, Tahuamanu, Los Amigos and Las Piedras rivers, in Madre de Dios department.

Yours faithfully,

Antonio Iviche Quique
President of FENAMAD
19th General Assembly of the Indigenous Organisation of the Atalaya Region – OIRA

Declaration

To the President of the Republic
To the President of the Congress of the Republic
To the President of the Council of Ministers
To the Ministers of Agriculture, Justice, the Interior, Defence and PROMUDEH.
To the Ombudsman
To the Transitory Councils for Regional Administration (CTAR) of Junín and Ucayali.
To the National Institute for Natural Resources – INRENA
To the Municipalities of Atalaya and Satipo
To the Prefectures and Sub-Prefectures of Atalaya and Satipo.
To the international organisations, human rights institutions and international cooperation.
To the general public and national and international press.

Following a meeting from 8 to 10 December 2000 in the Santa Clara native community, on the Urubamba river, of Raimondi district, Atalaya province, Ucayali department, the leaders and delegates of the Native Communities attending the 19th General Assembly of the indigenous organisation, OIRA, whose signatures appear below, have agreed to make the following public statement:

Whereas:

- The intensification of logging activity that can be seen in the deforestation of more than 2 million hectares of the Central Forest alone over the last 25 years, the imminent start-up of projects such as Camisea Gas, oil exploration, the Satipo – Atalaya, Bolognesi - Yurúa and Puerto Ocopa – Interior of the Ene river highways, the increased pressure from settlers and the still unresolved consequences of social violence have endangered the integrity of our Asháninka, Yine, Ashéninka, Yaneshá, Nomatsigenka, Machiguenga, Kakinti, Yamimahua, Amahuaca, Shipibo - Conibo and voluntarily isolated peoples living along the courses of the Urubamba, Tambo, Ene, Peréné and Alto Ucayali rivers, in the provinces of Atalaya, Ucayali department and Satipo, Junín department.
Despite the fact that the 1993 Constitution has eliminated the inalienable and non-seizable nature of the lands of indigenous communities – a situation that must be corrected as soon as possible – it still guarantees the free use and disposal of our lands. Moreover, ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, which has legal force in Peru, stipulates that the native peoples must be recognised the right to ownership and possession of the lands they traditionally occupy and that they must be consulted in good faith, via appropriate procedures, on administrative/legislative decisions and development plans that directly affect them. This is not currently the case.

Recognition of the El Sira Indigenous Communal Reserve and the Vilcabamba Communal Reserve was one of the main requests of our organisations and will benefit 120,000 indigenous inhabitants from the Asháninka, Ashéninka, Nomatsigenka, Yaneshá, Shipibo – Conibo, Yine, Kakinti and Machiguenga peoples. Both are of fundamental importance in protecting our forest and safeguarding its biodiversity, as well as ensuring the material and spiritual survival and continuity of our peoples. However, through lack of recognition and official protection, they are gradually being affected by highways penetrating deep within them. This is in contravention of ILO Convention 169, Agenda 21, the Convention on Biodiversity and the Climate Change Agenda, along with other international provisions and agreements.

In the Murunahua Communal Reserve, inhabited by our brothers in voluntary isolation (uncontacted) known as the Shitonahua, loggers are assaulting their territories in an uncontrolled and illegal manner, under the protection and with the collusion of corrupt officials working for INRENA, the CTAR – Ucayali, the PNP, the Prefecture and Sub-Prefecture, the local District Attorney’s Office and even the Armed Forces. One result of this territorial pressure on the uncontacted is the violence that took place within these groups on 19 November last, in which the deaths of five of our indigenous Shitonahua brothers were noted.

In the region of the Ene river and Pangoa valley, our Asháninka brothers still live a fragile existence due to intense colonisation, the presence of subversive groups and logging companies. This is causing the loss of our Asháninka territories and the expulsion of part of their communities. To all this must be added the serious effects of the previous decade’s violence, which has resulted in child and teenage orphans, abandoned without access to any kind of State social service.
• The implementation of infrastructural (road) projects such as the Satipo-Atalaya, Bolognesi-Yurúa and Puerto Ocopa-interior of the river Ene highways is being carried out without consideration of technical and socio-environmental regulations and, particularly, without due consultation of the indigenous peoples and communities, affecting our territory and integrity.

• The previous central government, out of an uncontrollable PROSYLYTISING desire, has been ignoring our own forms of government and our customary law, imposing police authorities parallel to our own and superimposing systems on our legitimate traditional authorities, in an effort to weaken them.

• A serious deterioration can be seen in the health status of our indigenous peoples, proof not only of the lack of protection and promotion of our own methods and systems for health and physical, social and spiritual well-being but also the serious limitations in accessing the public health system.

• The education policy applied in the indigenous communities is out of line with our peoples’ realities, it weakens our identity, values and cultural expressions and is imparted in a unidirectional (and not intercultural) manner, through teachers who have no mastery of the mother tongue of the indigenous students with whom they are working.

• In the region of the Ene river and Pango valley, the territorial claims and demands for titling of communal areas in the Central Forest region, comprising the departments of Junín and Pasco, are being put off and not dealt with.

We declare:

• That the general policy, contracts, concessions and licences granted over indigenous territories and reserve areas of the native communities should be revised, that our cultural, social and territorial rights should be respected and illegal activities of logging and marketing of timber suspended, along with the construction of highways that is taking place with no community consultation.

• That the government should grant recognition of the El Sira and Vilcabamba Indigenous Communal Reserves.
• That the government should respect and ensure respect for the Murunahua Communal Reserve, inhabited by our indigenous brothers in voluntary isolation, and immediately suspend the concessions granted in areas of the said reserve. Establishing sanctions for the illegal actions of officials from various public departments, which are seriously affecting our uncontacted brothers.

• That we are expressing our open solidarity with our Asháninka brothers of the Êne river and the Pangoa Valley, and request that the colonization of their land be halted, the orphans and widows caused by the drugs/terrorism violence be compensated and cared for, and the ongoing subversive action be confronted.

• That the construction of highways in indigenous territories be suspended until national legal provisions have been implemented, particularly those stipulated in ILO Convention 169, and solutions found for the impacts caused, future planned and unplanned impacts as determined by the indigenous peoples affected.

• That the figures of Lieutenant Governor (Teniente Gobernador) and Municipal Agents within the indigenous communities be eliminated and our traditional authorities respected.

• That adequate health service and infrastructure be implemented and that Indigenous Health and Traditional Medicine systems practised by the indigenous peoples be provided with effective support.

• That the provisions, regulations and initiatives on bilingual intercultural education be respected and effectively applied and that the training and appointment of bilingual teachers in the languages of the communities be strengthened.

• That we show solidarity and demand that the national government, via its relevant authorities, implement the necessary procedures for the situations raised in relation to the titling of the communal areas of our brothers in the Pangoa Valley and the San Carlos Reserve.

Santa Clara Native Community, 10 December 2000

cc. Municipalities of R. Tambo, Tahuamanu, Sepahua, Yurúa and Bolognesi.

Wrays Pérez R.         Guillermo Ñaco Rosas         Marcial Vásquez F.
Secretary               Coordinator                   Coordinator
AIDESEP                 ARPI-CEA                     ORAU
Iberia, 5 February 2001


Mr. Antonio Iviche Quique
President of FENAMAD - Puerto Maldonado

Re: Reference letter N°029-2001-

It gives me great pleasure to write to you with my warmest greetings, in reply to your letter reference N° 029-2001, WITH REGARD to the youth Samuel Peralta Janampa, a patient of 17 years of age who was admitted to our hospital on 11-09-2000 for a period of illness of approximately two and a half days, presenting a penetrative wound in the back of the neck and paralysis of the left hemibody. According to his account, he was attacked by natives, being hit by an arrow in the back of the neck and bleeding profusely.

On physical examination, he was clearly in a bad condition, a fairly deep 3cm wide penetrative wound in the back of his neck with a possible medullary injury, fracture of the first cervical vertebrae, widespread pain in the ribcage and reduced respiratory system in the left hemibody. He was admitted with the diagnosis of a penetrative wound in the back of the neck, medullary injury ruled out, cervical column fracture ruled out, and sent to Lima given the severity of the case. This is everything of any consequence that was in the clinical history provided to me.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my personal esteem and respect for you.

Sincerely,

CTAR Madre de Dios
Regional Health Department
San Martín de Porres-Iberia Hospital

Hugo Rodríguez Arenas
Director - CMP. 99480
The undersigned SO2.PNP Secretary of the DEINCRI/POLFIS PNP Puerto Maldonado:

CERTIFIES: That, in the Book of Complaints of Disappeared Persons held by this PNP Sub-Unit, there is a complaint No. 04, which literally states the following:

“No.04.- Time: 13.10.- Day:09.- Month:01.- Year: 2001. FOR DISAPPEARANCE OF PERSONS.-

Being the time and date noted in the margin, did appear at this PNP Dept, the person of Siles Eugenio SÁNCHEZ ARQUIÑO (26), native of Puerto Maldonado, single, worker, having studied to the 4th year of secondary school, living in Calle Los Cedros S/N– Pueblo Viejo–Puerto Maldonado, and who with the knowledge of the Head of DEINCRI/POLFIS, stated: that on 05JAN01, at 13.00 approximately, while on the Kuriaco–Las Piedras road, his workmate Gé- naro QUISTE, whose maternal surname is unknown, went to cut some sticks for a platform to take timber down the river, and from that moment on did not reappear, despite a search being carried out by other workmates (Eugenio SÁNCHEZ GUERRA and Iván); that in searching the direction in which the disappeared person had gone, a native arrow was found apparently bloodstained at its tip, for which reason on 06JAN01, he returned to this town with his companions, frightened at having found a native arrow. He is reporting this to the PNP for the purposes of the law.-

Examining officer.- Signed.- Eduardo A. MENDEZ AGUIRRE.-

Plaintiff.- Signed.- Siles E.SÁNCHEZ ARQUIÑO.-

In accordance.- Signed.- Armando R. GUERRA RIVERA. Major PNP/Head of DEINCRI/POLFIS.-DECISION- To be investigated.”

Puerto Maldonado, 12 January 2001

Jesús Ortega Palacios
HEAD PNP
OP. 633167986-O

Examining officer
SO 31094928
Jhon A. Fagueroa Quispe
SO.Z. PNP
Certified copy of a complaint

The undersigned major PNP. District PNP Station Iberia, of the District PNP Station - Iberia:

CERTIFIES: That in the book of complaints of the District PNP Station – Iberia, there is a complaint number 16, which literally states the following:

“LDDPD. No.16.- Time:10.00.- Day:11SEP00.- SUMMARY.- FOR CRIMES AGAINST LIFE, LIMB AND HEALTH (Injuries). Being the time and date noted in the left margin, did appear before this CT PNP – IBERIA, the person of Roberto URQUIA TANGOA (40), native of Iberia, single, farmer, higher technician in agricultural and livestock farming, identified by LE. No. 05061698 and living in Barrio Alto Perú, no number, of this area in Iberia. With the knowledge of the PNP Major, he did report that on 24 AUG 2000, together with Mario Daniel RAMÍREZ AHUANARI (19), Victor Raúl URQUIA TANGOA (33), and Samuel PERALTA JANAMPA (16), he had been navigating the Tahuamanu river upstream for 6 days with the purpose of small-scale fishing and in the area close to the mouth of the Canales stream after 4 days travelling, on 8SEP00, at 12.00 am., approx. they suddenly suffered a clash with a group of uncivilized people (indigenous) who, with rustic arms (arrows), attacked them causing serious injury to the latter, Samuel PERALTA JANAMPA (16). According to the appellant, after a shot into the air with a firearm (16mm calibre shotgun), these indigenous people fled, giving the appellant and his companions a chance to escape from the attack, rejoining their vessel and providing the wounded with care by admitting him to the San Martín de Porres Hospital in Iberia. He is reporting this to this Police Station for its investigation and all relevant purposes.-

Signed: The plaintiff Roberto URQUIA TANGOA (40), and signed: the Examining Officer SOT3 - PNP. Esteban MAMANI LOAYZA.— Signed: PNP Lieut. Luis AMORETTI HERNÁNDEZ, Head of Crime and Offence Investigation Section.— Signed: PNP Major. William PAJARES RUIZ,-Tahuamanu Station - PNP Iberia”

DECISION - By means of report number (no number)- JPT-PNP/ CTI., the incident was referred to the DEINCRI SR-PNP- MDD. This report is issued at the request of the interested party for whatever purpose he sees fit. Iberia, 28 February 2001.

Examining officer
Esteban Mamani Loayza
SOT3. PNP. - CIP. No. 30538023

Re: Observation made in relation to the appearance of uncivilized persons (native MASHCOS) in the “GASTA BALA” and “SANTA CRUZ” (upper Purús river) native communities for reasons indicated. DETAILS

b).Letter N°.005-IN-0302-P-UCAY/SP-PURÚS, of 14FEB01

1. On 11 FEB2001 at 17.50 approximately, a radio communication was received from the agronomist Luis TABOADA BALANDRA in the “Santa Margarita” native community (upper Purús river), who stated that in the “Gasta Bala” native community around three hundred (300) uncivilized persons (native MASCHO) had appeared. Moreover, on 14FEB2001 Letter N°005-IN-0302-P-UCAY/SP PURÚS was received by means of which it was made known that, in the place known as “Pozo Santa Cruz”, two hours upriver from the “Gasta Bala” native community, five hundred (500) natives known as “MASHCO” had appeared, showing an allegedly aggressive behaviour towards the locals. They were repelled with arms, causing seven MASHCO deaths.

2. The undersigned, in the company of SO3.PNP. Zharky RENGIFO RAMIREZ and SO3.PNP. Rafael NUÑEZ GRANDEZ, set off on 18FEB at 05.30 approx. on board the FU – 7595 heading for the upper Purús river (C.N. “GASTA BALA and SANTA CRUZ”) with the aim of verifying “in situ” the information given in point number one of this document.

3. Thus on 18 FEB at 18.30 approx. we arrived at the “GASTA BALA” Native Community (upper Purús river), where we met with the community leader Mr. Gustavo MELENDEZ CASTRO (50), native of Gasta Bala, married, primary school completed, farmer, whose personal documents were not seen, and inhabitants who stated their knowledge of the fact that, on 11FEB in the morning, uncivilized people known as “CALATOS” or “MASHCO” had appeared in the “Santa Cruz” Native Community. On realising that they had looted the village and killed some animals, they set off for the place of the incident. They did not see any MASHCO, but did observe undetermined numbers of footprints or marks (barefoot) along the bank of the Purús and Santa Cruz stream. They assumed that they were those of the Mashco.
4. On 19FEB at 10.00 approx., we arrived at the “Santa Cruz” Native Community (upper Purús river) where it was possible to note the existence of three houses (huts). Their inhabitants were not to be seen but we interviewed some children we found in the area, and were able to understand that their families were out working in the fields. When these youngsters (native AMAHUACA) were asked if they had noted the presence of MASHCO savages, they indicated that on 11FEB at approx. 09.00 they had seen a group of naked people, of dark and olive-skinned complexion, carrying bows and arrows, machetes, axes, mosquito nets and poultry (chickens, pigs, etc). They also killed their dogs. They were asked if members of their community had clashed with the native MASHCO, and the response of these youngsters was that there had been no clash, nor deaths as a consequence of any supposed clash.

5. These youngsters also mentioned that this was not the first time that MASHCO savages had appeared in the area. They indicated that during July and August they travel along the different shores of the upper Purús river to gather turtle and tortoise eggs.

6. The PNP staff of this PNP-Purús headquarters carried out a foot patrol around the area to which the MASHCO may possibly have fled with the aim of verifying the existence of signs of blood and/or bodies. The result was NEGATIVE in this regard.

7. Returning on 20FEB at 22.30 approx. No further news. Detailed to higher authorities for the purposes of the case.

Puerto Esperanza, 21 Feb. 2001

Examining officer
Francisco Bardales Salazar
SO2.PNP.
To the Honourable Mr.
Antonio Iviche Quique – President of FENAMAD
Puerto Maldonado – Madre de Dios – Peru

Mr President,

Warm greetings and thank you for informing us, through the anthropologist Beatriz Huertas Castillo and also by means of letter no. 319-FENAMAD-00 dated 11.10.00, of the studies you are undertaking to protect the indigenous population still in isolation in the Peruvian Yaco.

I am hereby enclosing a copy of our Memo No. 135/GAB/AER RBR dated 09.03.00 (annexe 01), sent to the President of FUNAI at that time, Dr. Carlos Marés, informing him of the dangerous situation in which the indigenous peoples along the Brazil/Peru border (including isolated indigenous) were living, and requesting that he take precautions and inform the Itamaraty/Army/SAE/FUNAI/Federal Police. This was with the aim of developing a political consensus with the Peruvian government to jointly monitor the common border region for roads being opened up by loggers, which would threaten and affect the lives and property of the Brazilian and Peruvian indigenous of that region. On 10.03.00 I sent a copy of that document to various institutions (Federal Police – AC, Attorney-General’s office - AC, 4º BIS, IBAMA – AC, ABIN-AC, Acre Governor, Federal Deputy Sergio Barros).

I am thus far unaware as to whether any effective measures were in fact taken by the Brazilian or Peruvian governments in the border region of the upper Jurúa, and so I hereby enclose some documents confirming that the Kampa of the Amônea River Indigenous Land, on the Brazilian side of the border, in the municipality of Marechal
Thaumaturgo – AC, Acre region, is being invaded by Peruvian loggers who are opening up a road between Pucallpa (on the Ucayali river) and Tipisca (source of the Jurúia River, on Peruvian territory). This road is already affecting the lives of the Asháninka of the Amônea River in Brazil and, if it continues, will affect the lives of indigenous populations in isolation in Brazil and Peru, around the sources of the Tarahuacá, d’Ouro, Envira, Xinane and Purús rivers:

1) Note, received via radio on 22.12.00, informing us “that invasion of the indigenous area is confirmed” (annexe 02)  
2) Letter dated 23.10.00 from Francisco da Silva Pinhata, an Asháninka, denouncing the invasion of national territory and informing us “that the region of the Amoninha River, inside the Kampa of the Amônea River Indigenous Land, is already being devastated by Peruvian loggers who are building a road between Pucallpa and Tipisca (annexe 03).  
3) Map showing the area being invaded by Peruvian loggers (annexe 04)

I will send a copy of all these documents to the President of FUNAI, the Governor of Acre State, the Federal Police – AC, the Attorney-General’s Office AC, 2º BIS, ABIN-AC, the Legislative Assembly of Acre State, Senators, Federal Deputies, IBAMA – AC, the Prefecture of Marechal Thaumaturgo – AC, and all the newspapers in Río Branco AC.

Given that FENAMAD’s aim is to protect the indigenous people of our common border area from any projects that might affect their lives or the environment of this Brazilian/Peruvian border area, I am requesting that you make efforts to prevent this type of incident from continuing to occur in the upper Juruá. This is our common cause, which we must undertake if we are to effectively protect the indigenous populations being threatened by the loggers’ road. I would also ask you to keep us informed of any precautions your federation may take.

Yours sincerely,

Antonio Pereira Neto  
Regional Administrator AER Río Branco /FUNAI  
Estrada Dias Martins, n°2111 – Ie 0,0-470 – Río Branco – AC – Brazil
Memo. Nº135/GAB/AER RBR

Río Branco, 09 March 2000

To: Dr. Carlos Federico Marés
President of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI)

Re: Problems along the Acre border with Peru affecting the indigenous peoples in permanent contact and isolation on the Brazilian side.

1. In 1988, the *sertanista* José Carlos dos Reis Meirelles Junior, who is currently head of the Envira Contact Post, sent a document to the Department for the Indigenous in Isolation (DEII) in Brasilia, entitled “Work Proposal for the Envira Contact Post”. This was dated 25.03.98 and in it he suggested “gathering information on the isolated and acculturized indigenous in Peruvian territory bordering on the Kampa of the river Envira, Kaxinawa of the Jordão River, Kaxinawa of the Breu River, Alto Tarahuacá and Xinane Indigenous Lands”, for the following reasons: “We are working in a border area. Groups of isolated and acculturized indigenous do not recognise these borders and freely cross from Brazil to Peru and vice versa. The Envira River rises in Peru, in the lands that divide the waters of the Ucayali from the sources of the Yurua, Purús and Madeira (Tahuamanu) rivers. This immense verdant grove of some 10 million has, with no White men present, is home to various groups of isolated indigenous. We must have information regarding their existence in the region, the presence of indigenous, the Peruvian government’s plans for this vast territory. This would be of great use because, although we cannot interfere in another country, at least we would know what is going on on the other side of the border. The Department for the Indigenous in Isolation must gather this information from like-minded institutions, the Peruvian Embassy and similar NGOs. This is my suggestion for there is a need to have this information at our fingertips”.

Unfortunately, the DEII never carried out any such important and potential “diplomatic” work.

2. Confirming what the *sertanista* Meirelles Junior foresaw in 1998, the AER Río Branco sent Memo Nº270/GAB/AER RBR dated
26.06.99 to the Department for the Indigenous in Isolation in Brasilia, informing them that we had received news that Peruvian indigenous “contacted not long ago and who are under the responsibility of a Protestant mission, will probably travel to the region during the summer period (July to October) in search of arms, munitions and domestic utensils. If this takes place, clashes will occur between these Peruvian indigenous and indigenous Brazilian Kaxinawá, Kampa and also with the non-indigenous who still live in the Alto Tarahuacá Indigenous Land, prohibited”. In order to clarify this situation and obtain further information on these Peruvian indigenous, we requested funding to enable the sertanista Meirelles Junior to travel to Peru via the upper Juruá River. This funding only arrived at the end of 1999 and the trip was not completed through lack of time on the part of this gentleman, as he had begun working at the Envira Contact Post.

3. Confirming the “attack” that was forewarned in our document dated June 1999 (previous item), by July 1999 Peruvian indigenous had invaded Brazilian territory, along the upper Envira River, setting fire to Kampa houses in the Kampa and Isolated of the Envira River Indigenous Land, as we informed the DEII/Brasilia via Memo No. 335/GAB/AER RBR dated 13.07.99: “I would inform your honour that indigenous Jaminawa from the upper Juruá, on Peruvian territory, contacted by American Missionaries, are in the region of the upper Envira and burned four houses in Karijó hamlet belonging to the indigenous Kampa families known as Raimundiño, Antxare, Karijó and Kagiá. Raimundiño Kampa, who is indigenous, is in Peru in the hamlet of Dulce Gloria, near to Jaminawa on the upper Juruá, and he told my by phone that the Jaminawa of the upper Juruá are entering via the Envira River. We have already convinced the Kampa that the isolated indigenous along this river are not responsible for this. The situation is complicated given that the Jaminawa of the upper Juruá live in another country. Best wishes, José Carlos dos Reis Meirelles Junior, Head of the Envira Contact Post”.

We informed the Superintendence of the Acre Federal Police (Official Letter N°162/GAB/AER RBR dated 15.07.99) and the Acre Attorney-General’s office (Official Letter N°163/GAB/AER RBR dated 15.07.99) of this “attack”.

4. On 29.09.99, the AER Rio Branco sent Memo N°554/GAB/AER RBR to the Department for the Indigenous in Isolation in Brasilia informing them of the concerns made known to us by the Peru-
vian NGO Afluentes, based in Puerto Maldonado, Madre de Dios, Peru, regarding the existence of a Peruvian government plan to log and open up a road right on the Peruvian border with Acre State, specifically in the region that comprises the headwaters of the Yaco, Acre and Chandless rivers, in territory probably inhabited and travelled by an indigenous people still in isolation known as the “Masko”, who generally enter Brazilian territory during the summer, around the Mamoadate Indigenous Land, where indigenous Jaminawa and Manchinery traditionally live. News of these indigenous “Masko” in the Mamoadate Indigenous Land is well documented, including in reports from the sertanista José Carlos dos Reis Meirelles Junior, dating from 1987. We surmise that, if the complaint is confirmed, any incident that impacts on the Peruvian side of the border will also clearly affect both the indigenous Manchinery and Jaminawa who traditionally live in the Mamoadate and Cabeceras del Acre Indigenous Lands, and the isolated Masko.

This same report was sent to Acre State (Official Letter N°278/GAB/AER RBR dated 20.09.99) and the Superintendence of the Acre Federal Police (Official Letter N° 227/GAB/AER RBR dated 29.09.99)

5. On 26.10.99, the Envira Contact Post was invaded by a large group of isolated indigenous. Our employees had to flee to save their lives. I informed the Department for the Indigenous in Isolation of what had happened via Memo N607/GAB/AER RBR dated 30.10.99. We also informed the Federal Police (Official Letter N° 303/GAB/ER RBR dated 30.10.99) and the Acre Attorney-General’s office (Official Letter N° 304/GAB/AER RBR dated 20.10.99).

In an incident report dated 07.7.99 and entitled “Masko presence in the Envira Post”, the sertanista José Carlos dos Reis Meirelles states his certainty that the indigenous who invaded the Envira Contact Post were Masko, because of the arrows found. As these Masko traditionally inhabit the border region of Peru around the headwaters of the Acre, Yaco and Purús rivers, their presence in the upper Envira river was strange to say the least, and possibly caused by some movements or operations occurring on their territory that forced them to change their physical space...”. So, it would seem that the concerns raised by the Peruvian NGO (see item 4 above) are logical. Something must be happening in the Acre border region with Peru, near to the Asís Brasil – AC municipality, and this is - for one reason or another - forcing the isolated Masko to seek refuge around the headwaters of the Envira River. Road construction? Loggers?
6. In the report on Identification and Demarcation of the Alto Tarahuacá Indigenous Land, which we completed on 30.12.99 (File FUNAI/BSB Nº1941/92, currently with the DEID/DAF), we provided repeated information on the situation along the Peru/Brazil border. In this report, we highlighted the need for the Brazilian government to come to an arrangement with the Peruvian government in order to establish a common agenda and procedures for that region, particularly with the aim of protecting the indigenous in isolation who live and travel both sides of the border, and also the integrated Brazilian indigenous who live in indigenous areas along that border (Headwaters of the Acre River Indigenous Land, Mamoadate Indigenous Land, Alto Purús Indigenous Land, Xinane Indigenous Land, Kampa and Isolated of the Envira River Indigenous Land, Yaminahua/Envira Indigenous Land, Alto Tarahuacá Indigenous Land, Kaxinawa of the Jordao River Indigenous Land, Kaxinawa/Asháninka of the Breu River Indigenous Land and Kampa of the Amônea River Indigenous Land).

7. As further proof of the need for such a joint international policy to protect this border region, we received another document, a trip report dated 25.02.2000 from Antonio Bezerra Salgado (annexe), describing his trip to the Kampa of the Amônea River Indigenous Land, in which he highlights two situations with a very serious impact on the indigenous Asháninka who live in that Brazilian indigenous territory:

a) The building of a road in the upper Amônea, on the Peruvian side, encouraging indiscriminate timber exploration in the region (which, if we are not careful, could have an impact on the Indigenous Land in Brazilian territory) and

b) the efforts being made by drugs traffickers to encourage the Asháninka to build a landing strip in their area by offering them thousands of dollars for their collaboration, a proposal that the indigenous have been rejecting.

Mr. President: It is clear that FUNAI alone cannot solve these border problems. It is also clear that FUNAI is doing its part, protecting the lands of the Brazilian indigenous who live along the border with Peru, not only for the indigenous already integrated into national society but also for the isolated indigenous that live there. But meanwhile we understand that, on the other side of the border, in Peru, the same efforts are not being made. And as this is a virtually uninhabited region (on the Peruvian side) everything that takes
place there ends up affecting our side of the border. If something negative occurs, it will thus reflect negatively, primarily on the indigenous of that region, who are the main people who live there. The news of the opening of roads and logging, both in the Peruvian region close to the headwaters of the Acre, Iaco and Chandleless rivers (Purús River basin) and in the sources of the Amônea river (Juruá River basin) on the Peruvian side, will thus undoubtedly have an impact not only on Peruvian territory where it is occurring but also on the Brazilian side, particularly in the territory of the indigenous Kaxinawa, Asháninka, Kulina Manchinery, Jaminawa and isolated indigenous. The news of drugs traffickers hanging around the Asháninka of Amônea is also very worrying.

I am thus requesting that the Presidency address this issue “of the dangerous situation in which the Brazilian indigenous of Acre, along the Peruvian border, are living” both rapidly and attentively. The best thing would be for the Brazilian (ITAMARATY/FUNAI/SAE/DPF/ARMY) and Peruvian governments to meet and agree a joint system for managing this region, if possible with the creation of a national park (on the Peruvian side) free from the threats of roads, logging companies and drugs traffickers. We do not know what the Peruvian side of the border is like. We therefore believe that political and diplomatic efforts must be made to ensure that measures are implemented on the Peruvian side. By protecting that side of the border, we will thus be in a better position to guarantee the future of the indigenous for whom we are responsible in Acre and Brazil.

Yours sincerely,

Antonio Pereira Neto
Regional Administrator
Port. 375/PRES OF 26.05.99
OFFICIAL LETTER N° 054/GAB/AER RBR
Regional Departmental Resolution nº 000189-97-CTARU/DRA

Pucallpa, 01 April 1997

Given:

The administrative file produced by the Special Project for Land Titling and Rural Land Registry of the Agrarian Regional Department – Ucayali in relation to the demarcation of the territorial area of 481,560 ha. of forest lands located in the districts of Yurúa and Antonio Raimondi, Atalaya province, Ucayali department;

Whereas:

The Second Transitory Provision of Decree Law Nº 22175 “Law on Native Communities and Agricultural Development of the Forest and High Forest Regions” prescribes that, for the demarcation of native communities when they are in a situation of initial or sporadic contact with other members of the National Community, a provisional area will be established in accordance with their traditional methods of natural resource use until one of the cases referred to in paragraphs a) and b) of article 10 of the said law is established;

In the headwaters of the rivers and tributaries of the Yurúa and Mapuya there exist family groups of natives known as Murunahua, belonging to the Murunahua ethno-linguistic group, Pano linguistic family, who are characterised as being nomadic, devoted to hunting, fishing and gathering for subsistence purposes and being in initial contact with the national community;

People linked to the logging companies are using different methods of harassment against this native group with the clear aim of using the natural resources and evicting them from the lands they
have ancestrally occupied, and thus it is necessary to ensure the continuation of this ethnic group in its environment, establishing a land reserve on its behalf;

For this purpose, specialist technical staff from the Agrarian Regional Department – Ucayali have carried out studies and actions relating to determining an area of four hundred and eighty-one thousand five hundred and sixty hectares (481,560 ha) located in the districts of Yurúa and Antonio Raimondi, Atalaya province, Ucayali department, according to the boundaries and perimeter measurements detailed in the plan and descriptive report provided in the file;

In accordance with the provisions of article 89 of the Political Constitution of Peru, and using the powers conferred by article 14 of Decree Law N° 22175 and article 5, section c) of Supreme Decree N° 003-79.AA, Decree Law 25902 and its Regulations, Supreme Decree N 053-92-AG, and being informed by the Special Project for Land Titling and Rural Land Registry and the Legal Advice Office of this Regional Department;

Regional Departmental Resolution n° 000189-97-CTARU/DRA

It is decided:

**Article One.** To register the Murunahua Native Community, belonging to the MURUNAHUA ethno-linguistic group, of the PANO linguistic family, located on the headwaters of the Yurúa and Mapuya rivers, Yurúa and Antonio Raimondi districts, Atalaya province, Ucayali department on the deconsolidated National Registry of Native Communities held by the Ucayali Agrarian Regional Department.

**Article Two.** To declare the area of four hundred and eighty-one thousand five hundred and sixty (481,560) hectares of forest land located in Yurúa and Antonio Raimondi districts, Atalaya province, Ucayali department, as Territorial Reserve for the Murunahua ethnic group, according to the perimeter boundaries and measurements that appear in the plan and descriptive report that form part of this Resolution.

**Article Three.** That the territorial reserve is established with the aim of preserving the right of the native group over the lands they traditionally occupy in order to use the natural resources existing in the area.
Article Four.- That the territorial reserve will continue until one of the situations referred to in paragraphs a) and b) of Article 10 of Decree Law N° 22175 is established.

Article Five.- To provide that the Atalaya Agrarian Agency will be responsible for fulfilling the provisions of this Resolution, in accordance with current legislation.

That this may be registered and published

Agrarian Regional Department
Ing. Olga Z. Ríos Del Aguila
Regional Director

Regional Department Resolution n° 000190-97-CTARU/DRA

Pucallpa, 01 April 1997

Given:

The administrative file produced by the Special Project for Land Titling and Rural Land Registry of the Regional Agrarian Department – Ucayali relating to demarcation of the geographical area of 768,848 has of forest lands located in Purús district, Purús province, Ucayali department.

Whereas:

The Second Transitory Provision of Decree Law N° 22175 “Law on Native Communities and Agricultural Development of the Forest and High Forest Regions” prescribes that, for the demarcation of native communities when they are in a situation of initial or sporadic contact with other members of the National Community, a provisional area will be established in accordance with their traditional methods of natural resource use until one of the cases referred to in paragraphs a) and b) of article 10 of the said law is established;

In the headwaters of the rivers and tributaries of the right and left banks of the Purús river, around the Cocama stream and right bank of the Curanja river, and around the Guayabal stream, there exist native family groups known as Mashco, belonging to the Ma-
shco Piro ethno-linguistic family, Arawak linguistic family, who are characterised as being nomadic, devoted to hunting, fishing and gathering for subsistence purposes and being in initial contact with the national community;

People from Puerto Esperanza involved in logging and commercial fishing are using different methods of harassment against this native group with the clear aim of using the natural resources and evicting them from the lands they have ancestrally occupied, and thus it is necessary to ensure the continuation of this ethnic group in its environment, establishing a land reserve on its behalf;

For this purpose, specialist technical staff from the Agrarian Regional Department – Ucayali have carried out studies and actions relating to determining an area of seven hundred and sixty-eight thousand eight hundred and forty-eight (768,848 has), located in the district of Purús, Purús province, Ucayali department, according to the boundaries and perimeter measurements detailed in the plan and descriptive report provided in the file.

Regional Department Resolution n° 000189-97-CTARU/DRA

In accordance with the provisions of article 89 of the Political Constitution of Peru, and using the powers conferred by article 14 of Decree Law N° 22175 and article 5, section c) of Supreme Decree N° 003-79.AA, Decree Law 25902 and its Regulations, Supreme Decree N 053-92-AG, and being informed by the Special Project for Land Titling and Rural Land Registry and the Legal Advice Office of this Regional Department.

It is decided:

Article One.- To register the MASHCO Native Community, belonging to the MASHCO –PIRO ethno-linguistic group, of the ARAWAK linguistic family, located on the headwaters of the Purús and Curanja rivers, Purús district, Ucayali department on the deconsolidated National Registry of Native Communities held by the Ucayali Agrarian Regional Department.

Article Two.- To declare the area of seven hundred and sixty-eight thousand eight hundred and forty-eight hectares (768,848 has) located in Purús district, Purús province, Ucayali department, as Territorial Reserve for the Mashco Piro ethnic group, according to the
perimeter boundaries and measurements that appear in the plan and descriptive report that form part of this Resolution.

**Article Three.**- That the territorial reserve is established with the aim of preserving the right of the Mashco native group over the lands they traditionally occupy in order to use the natural resources existing in the area.

**Article Four.**- That the territorial reserve will continue until one of the situations referred to in paragraphs a) and b) of Article 10 of Decree Law N° 22175 is established;

**Article Five.**- To provide that the Atalaya Agrarian Agency will be responsible for fulfilling the provisions of this Resolution, in accordance with current legislation.

That this may be registered and published

______________________________

**Official Letter N° 00201-98- CTARU/DRA-OAJ-T**

This Agrarian Regional Department has issued the following

**Regional Departmental Resolution N° 00201 -98- CTARU/DRA**

**Pucallpa. 11 June 1998**

**Given:**

The administrative file produced by the Special Project for Land Titling and Rural Land Registry of the Regional Agrarian Department – Ucayali relating to demarcation of the geographical area of 275,665 has of forest lands located in Callería district, Coronel Portillo province, Ucayali department.

**Whereas:**

The Second Transitory Provision of Decree Law N° 22175 “Law on Native Communities and Agricultural Development of the Forest
and High Forest Regions” prescribes that, for the demarcation of native communities when they are in a situation of initial or sporadic contact with other members of the National Community, a provisional area will be established in accordance with their traditional methods of natural resource use until one of the cases referred to in paragraphs a) and b) of article 10 of the said law is established;

In the headwaters of the rivers and tributaries of the Abujao, Utuquinia and Callería, there exist native family groups known as ISCONAHUA, belonging to the ISCONAHUA ethno-linguistic family, PANO linguistic family, who are characterised as being nomadic, devoted to hunting, fishing and gathering for subsistence purposes and being in initial contact with the national community;

People linked to logging companies and individual extractors are using different methods of harassment against this native group with the clear aim of using the natural resources and evicting them from the lands they have ancestrally occupied, and thus it is necessary to ensure the continuation of this ethnic group in its environment, establishing a land reserve on its behalf;

For this purpose, specialist technical staff from the Agrarian Regional Department – Ucayali have carried out studies and actions relating to determining an area of two hundred and seventy-five thousand six hundred and sixty-five hectares (275,665 has), located in the district of Callería, Coronel Portillo province, Ucayali department, according to the boundaries and perimeter measurements detailed in the plan and descriptive report provided in the file;

In accordance with the provisions of article 89 of the Political Constitution of Peru, and using the powers conferred by article 14 of Decree Law N° 22175 and article 5, section c) of Supreme Decree N° 003-79.AA, Decree Law 25902 and its Regulations, Supreme Decree N 053-92-AG, and being informed by the Special Project for Land Titling and Rural Land Registry and the Legal Advice Office of this Regional Department;

It is decided:

Article One.- To register the ISCONAHUA Native Community, belonging to the ISCONAHUA ethno-linguistic group, of the PANO linguistic family, located on the headwaters of the Abujao, Utuquinia and Callería rivers, Callería district, Coronel Portillo province, Ucayali department on the deconsolidated National Registry of Native Communities held by the Ucayali Agrarian Regional Department;

Article Two.- To declare the area of two hundred and seventy-five thousand six hundred and sixty-five hectares (275,665 has) located in
Callería district, Coronel Portillo province, Ucayali department, as Territorial Reserve for the Isconahua ethnic group, according to the perimeter boundaries and measurements that appear in the plan and descriptive report that form part of this Resolution;

**Article Three.** That the territorial reserve is established with the aim of preserving the right of the ISCONAHUA native group over the lands they traditionally occupy in order to use the natural resources existing in the area;

**Article Four.** That the territorial reserve will continue until one of the situations referred to in paragraphs a) and b) of Article 10 of Decree Law N° 22175 is established;

**Article Five.** To provide that the Coronel Portillo Agrarian Agency will be responsible for fulfilling the provisions of this Resolution, in accordance with current legislation.

That this may be registered and published (signed) Ing. Olga Z. Rios del Aguila – Ucayali Regional

I am sharing this with you for your information and other purposes.

Sincerely,

Inés Meléndez Valera
Transcriptions Officer
The Presidency of the Council of Ministers
Is forming a Special Multisectoral Commission
for Native Communities

Supreme decree N° 015-2001- PCM

President of the Republic

Whereas:

In accordance with paragraph 19) of article 2 of the Political Constitution of Peru, each person has the right to their own ethnic and cultural identity and the State recognises and protects the ethnic and cultural plurality of the Nation; moreover, article 69 of the Constitution establishes that the State will promote the sustainable development of the Amazon by means of adequate legislation;

According to article 89 of the Political Constitution of Peru, the Native Communities have legal existence and have independent legal status to organise their communal work and the use and free disposal of their lands, as well as their economic and administrative affairs, within the context established by the law;

The above mentioned article 89 of the Political Constitution of Peru establishes that ownership of the land of the Native Communities is essential, except in the case of abandonment, and that the State should respect their cultural identity;

Moreover, article 17 of the Political Constitution of Peru establishes that the State will promote bilingual and intercultural education according to the characteristics of each area, preserve the cultural and linguistic expressions of the country and promote national integration, for which it will implement appropriate programmes and services for the purposes of providing adequate attention for the Native Communities, covering their history, knowledge, value systems and implementation of educational programmes in their own language;
With ratification of Convention N° 169 “Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries” of the International Labour Organization – ILO, approved by means of Legislative Resolution N° 26253, the government of Peru took on a responsibility to implement, with the participation of the peoples affected, coordinated and systematic actions with a view to protecting the rights of these peoples, guaranteeing respect for their integrity;

Moreover, in the said convention, social, cultural, religious and spiritual values and practices are recognised and protected, both individually and collectively, in accordance with the laws of the Republic;

The government of Peru is signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity approved by means of Legislative Resolution N° 26181 and, in accordance with articles 66, 67 and 68 of the State Political Constitution, must promote conservation of the biodiversity and protected natural areas. In this context, the State must promote: respect for the Native Communities’ right to sustainably use the natural resources; respect for and protection of their traditional collective knowledge; just and equitable participation in the benefits deriving from the use of those resources, educational development, information exchange, human resource capacities and access to social security systems. It is its responsibility to ensure the highest possible level of physical and mental health; moreover, the State recognises, within the context of the law, the right of the Native Communities to have access to ownership of the lands they have traditionally occupied and the use of the resources they traditionally use in normal and subsistence activities, paying particular attention to uncontacted native groups;

Law N° 26821, the Organic Law on Sustainable Use of Natural Resources, has the aim of promoting and regulating the sustainable use of natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable, establishing an adequate framework for promoting investment that will secure a dynamic balance between economic growth, conservation of the natural resources and environment, and integrated human development;

The Native Communities are currently affected by serious problems that are threatening their rights to property, cultural identity and their right to access fundamental basic services such as sanitation, education, health and road and communications infrastructure;

There is a need for the State, through the actions of its relevant bodies, to carry out a serious evaluation of the problems affecting the Native Communities such that, with the participation of representatives from the ethnic groups involved, integrated proposals can be made that will improve the communities’ quality of life and raise
the level of human development of their members, as well as promote independent economic development integrated into the national economy;

By means of Supreme Decree N°012-98Promudeh, the Technical Secretariat for Indigenous Affairs – SETAI – was created as the body responsible for promoting, coordinating, directing, supervising and evaluating policies, plans, programmes and gender-focused projects for the development of the Peasant and Native Communities, respecting their ethnic and cultural identity and forms of organisation;

In accordance with the provisions of paragraph 8) of article 118 of the Political Constitution of Peru; and,

With the vote of approval of the Council of Ministers;

**Decrees:**

**Article One.** The Creation of a Special Multisectoral Commission.
To form a Special Multisectoral Commission responsible for studying the current situation and problems of Native Communities of the Amazon, and for formulating, within 120 days of its establishment, integrated proposals to guarantee the full effect of their constitutional rights and to promote their well-being and economic development.

In order to achieve its task, the Commission will establish a Dialogue and Cooperation Committee with representatives of the Native Communities, establishing the requirements for adequate representation.

The Commission will officially be known as the “Special Multisectoral Commission for Native Communities”.

**Article Two.** Members of the Commission.
The Special Multisectoral Commission for Native Communities will comprise the following:

- The Minister of Agriculture, who will chair the Commission
- The Minister for Education
- The Minister of Health
- The Minister for Energy and Mines
- The Minister for Fisheries
- The Minister for Women’s Promotion and Human Development – PROMUDEH
- The Minister for Defence; and
- The Ombudsman.

The Commission will have a Technical Secretariat supervised by the Head of the National Institute for Natural Resources – INRENA –
and the Technical Secretariat for Indigenous Affairs of the Ministry for Women’s Promotion and Human Development – PROMUDEH. On behalf of the Presidency of the Commission, the Technical Secretariat will be able to call upon representatives of the specialized bodies of those sectors involved in the issue of Native Communities. Those representing the Titulares de los Sectores will be appointed by Resolution of the respective Titular del Pliego. In all cases, the appointments must go to specialist professionals in the area.

The Technical Secretariat will also be able to call upon professionals and technical experts in order to obtain their permanent or temporary collaboration on general or specific issues relative to Native Communities’ issues.

**Article Three.** Priority Issues for the Commission.

Without prejudice to the functions indicated in article 1, the Special Multisectoral Commission for Native Communities will present, within a period of 60 days from its establishment, a proposal to resolve the following issues:

1. Respect and protection of their culture, their traditional collective knowledge regarding biodiversity and access to genetic resources.
2. Promotion of bilingual and intercultural education, according to the characteristics of each zone, preserving their cultural and linguistic expressions, promoting national integration, developing adequate programmes and services to deal with their needs, covering their history, knowledge, techniques, value systems and the implementation of educational programmes in their own language.
3. The vulnerability of the Native Communities with regard to their right to property, the process of colonization particularly noted in the Central Forest, the residual effects of terrorism and the damage caused by illicit drugs trafficking, which threatens the preservation of the ecosystem at community level.
4. The deficiencies in health care and prevention systems, education and support for children orphaned through terrorism and drugs trafficking.
5. Respect for the right of Native Communities to sustainably use their natural resources.
6. Just and equitable participation in the benefits resulting from use of the natural resources located within their spheres of influence.
7. Native Communities’ participation in the management of the Natural Protected Areas linked to them, strengthening their management capacities, as well as their establishment and final categorization, particularly with regard to Communal Reserves.
8. The establishment of protection mechanisms for native uncontacted groups.

In the case of proposals for health services, the possibility of integrating indigenous traditional medicine with traditional medicine of scientific origin will be considered.

**Article Four.** At the request of the Commission, the sectors will need to provide the information necessary for fulfilment of the provisions of article 3.

**Article Five.** This Supreme Decree will be signed by the President of the Council of Ministers, and by the Ministers of Agriculture, Education, Health, Energy and Mines, Fisheries, Women’s Promotion and Human Development and Defence.

Issued in the Government Palace on the thirteenth day of the month of February of the year two thousand and one.

- Valentín Paniagua Corazao  
  Constitutional President of the Republic

- Javier Pérez de Cuellar  
  President of the Council of Ministers

- Carlos Amat y Leon  
  Minister of Agriculture

- Marcial Rubio Correa  
  Minister of Education

- Eduardo Pretell Zarate  
  Minister of Health

- Carlos Herrera Descalzi  
  Minister of Energy and Mines

- Ludwig Meier Cornejo  
  Minister for Fisheries

- Susana Villarran de la Puente  
  Minister for Women’s Promotion and Human Development

- Walter Ledesma Rebaza  
  Minister for Defence
Introduction

Supreme Decree 15-2001-PCM was issued on 13 April 2001 by means of which the Special Multisectoral Commission for Native Communities was created, comprising the Ministries of Agriculture, Fisheries, Energy and Mines, Defence, Education, Health and Women and Human Development (PROMUDEH), in addition to the Ombudsman. This provision established the formation of a Dialogue and Cooperation Committee for the purpose of producing, with the involvement of the relevant indigenous organisations and institutions, actions to resolve the problems affecting the country’s native communities. The Special Commission will have a Technical Secretariat comprising the National Institute for Natural Resources – INRENA and the Technical Secretariat for Indigenous Affairs – SETAI, departments of the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry for Women’s Promotion and Human Development – PROMUDEH – respectively, which will have the power to formulate proposals, taking as inputs contributions from the Dialogue Committee. With the contribution of a specialist consultancy, the actions formulated will enable a document known as an Action Plan to be drawn up, divided into eight thematic areas according to the priority issues established by Supreme Decree 15-2001-PCM.

The structure of the Action Plan consists of areas divided into objectives. Each area starts with a general presentation. The objectives are a sub-area of each area. An objective does not cover other objectives in order to avoid duplication. An objective does not contain the description of the general problem. The objectives are
divided into actions that seek to attain the objective. An action, in precise terms, influences something that enables us to achieve the objective, without specifying those responsible for each action. The actions can be measured and for this reason, as far as possible, indicators of achievement are included. Each area is accompanied by a template or format in which those responsible for each action are specified along with the respective timetable for implementation, either immediate (before 28 July) or medium-term (between 2001 and 2006).

The document we are presenting is the fruit of collective, participatory work amongst members of civil society (indigenous organisations, non-governmental organisations, independent consultants, and so on) and representatives from different public sectors. The process we have participated in is an example of a form of dialogue that, up until a few months ago, would have been unthinkable. The actions noted are demands of the Amazonian indigenous peoples and communities that have been many years in the coming.

The openness of Dr. Valentín Paniagua’s government has thus taken a step forward in the country’s democratisation and in the consolidation of the rights of indigenous peoples. The dialogue has been a process in which we have all learned from each other, creating a dynamic of greater trust between the different players, a better understanding of the way in which the State works, a fuller understanding of each others’ arguments and a series of lessons that, in one way or another, are reflected throughout this document.

On 22 June, President Dr. Valentín Paniagua approved the formation of the standing Dialogue Committee for the resolution of the problems of the Indigenous Communities of the Peruvian Amazon by means of S.D. 072-2001-PCM. This new permanent Dialogue Committee will be devoted to producing an Integral Plan for the Development of the Native Communities with the aim of it being adopted by Dr. Alejandro Toledo’s government as a Government Plan.

Priority areas of supreme decree Nº 025-2001-PCM
G. to protect the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation

There live in the Peruvian Amazon an undetermined number of indigenous peoples characterized as not following a sedentary lifestyle. They do not live in one place or settlement but travel the Amazon forest seeking refuge from the different threats to their way of life. Among them there is a large as yet unidentified population, particularly along the Peru/Brazil border, which has given rise – on the Brazilian side – to the creation of various indigenous reserves for special protection.
Different ethno-linguistic groups, including the Kugapakori, Nanti, Kirineri, Asháninca and Poyenitzare, of the Arahua, Chitonahua, Maxonahua, Mornahua, Marihanua and Sharahanua linguistic families, of the Pano linguistic family, have chosen to live in voluntary isolation from national non-indigenous society and thus do not have native communities with legally recognised lands. The indigenous peoples in isolation, of whom we have thus far been able to identify 14 ethno-linguistic groups with an estimated population of between 5,000 and 10,000 inhabitants living in the departments of Cusco, Madre de Dios, Apurimac, Ucayali, Huanuco and Loreto, are in a particularly vulnerable situation. They are exposed to new illnesses and deadly epidemics, along with all kinds of threats resulting from environmental destruction and the invasion of their territories for oil, timber and gold exploration and exploitation, from the pressure of religious groups via forced contact, from ethno-botanical, linguistic/cultural researchers, from being a destination for eco-tourism, colonization, political violence, drugs trafficking and other things.

Various Amazonian indigenous organisations have taken up the defence of these peoples in voluntary isolation, given that they have no representation before Peruvian society. Their defence is based on their right to freely choose if they want to live in isolation from people alien to them or not, and their right to occupy their territories without unauthorized intrusions onto their lands by third parties or outsiders. According to ILO Convention 169 “governments shall take measures to prevent such offences” (Art. 18). The Peruvian State must thus officially recognise the existence of the indigenous peoples in a situation of voluntary isolation, along with their territorial rights. It must also make a commitment to protect them, given the situation of vulnerability in which they live, respecting at the same time their desire to live in isolation until they themselves – freely and voluntarily – decide to change this decision and express a desire to approach the rest of national society.

Objective G 1:
To establish a special legal system for the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation.

Special protection of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation requires a series of special measures aimed at guaranteeing their protection, ensuring respect for their human rights, guaranteeing the legal security of their territories and promoting appropriate action whenever they may decide to initiate a process of interaction with national society.

Action G 1.1:
To create a State body responsible for coordinating and implementing, in coordination with other sectors and with the indigenous organisa-
tions of the area, actions to protect the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and to ensure unrestricted respect for their rights.

**Action G 1.2:**
To create an inter-institutional commission to define the bodies responsible for implementing contingency plans in case of contact between isolated indigenous peoples and people alien to them.

**Action G 1.3:**
To promote within the inter-institutional commission a strategic alliance with relevant State bodies in order to implement joint criteria for biodiversity conservation policies and policies to protect indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation.

**Action G 1.4:**
To create a commission to produce legal and special protection mechanisms for the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation with the participation of the indigenous organisations.

**Action G 1.5:**
To implement a specific study into the external causes and factors that constitute threats for the indigenous peoples in isolation, to facilitate the implementation of special measures for their elimination within the special legal system.

**Action G 1.6:**
To establish environmental legislation and resource extraction regulations prohibiting any kind of research, evangelisation and political or religious proselytisation activities. Along with contracts for the exploitation and use of the natural resources on the territories of the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, given that they are a threat to their integrity and life.

**Objective G 2**
To guarantee the connectivity of the territory of the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation by establishing a cultural/ecological corridor.

*There is a need to create Special Territorial Reserves for Indigenous Peoples in voluntary isolation. These territories must be complementary to the Protected Natural Areas and Reserves for Isolated Indigenous created by the Brazilian state on its border with Peru. In those cases in which the different categories of existing Protected Natural Area are superimposed on territories occupied by indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, there will be a need to*
guarantee the future land tenure for when those peoples decide voluntarily to interact with national society.

**Action G 2.1:**
To promulgate the ratification of territorial reserves created for the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation:

- Isconahua Territorial Reserve
- Alto Purús Territorial Reserve
- Muruhanua Territorial Reserve
- Nahua-Kugapakori State Reserve

**Action G 2.2:**
To resolve the outstanding process in favour of making the territory of the Cashibo – Cacataibo indigenous people in voluntary isolation in the department of Ucayali official.

**Action G 2.3:**
To extend the Alto Purús Reserved Zone on the basis of the technical proposal “Establishment and territorial demarcation for the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation of the upper basin of the Yaco, Acre, Tahuamanu, Las Piedras and los Amigos rivers”, in order to provide immediate protection to the Yora, Amahuaca, Mashco Piro and other indigenous populations in voluntary isolation. The supreme decree extending the Alto Purús Reserved Zone must guarantee the future titling of the indigenous population in voluntary isolation, when these people choose to settle.

**Action G 2.4:**
To design a special legal mechanism to guarantee respect for interconnected territories as ecological and cultural corridors for the protection of the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation.

**Objective G 3:**
To protect the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation from any unauthorized intrusion onto their territories by people alien to them.

There is currently a lack of supervisory mechanisms and resolution of cases of unauthorized intrusions of third parties that would enable the State to comply with the protection of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation. Mechanisms for the punishment and eviction of those religious missions, companies, settlers and others who invade the territories of the indigenous peoples in isolation are particularly important.
**Action G 3.1:**
To negotiate the immediate withdrawal of the evangelical South American Mission (SAM), loggers and researchers present on the territorial reserves of the indigenous peoples in isolation in Alto Purús and Murunahua, in Ucayali department.

**Action G 3.2:**
To abolish Ministerial Resolution N°0249/2000, which designates areas inhabited by the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, such as the Kugapakori-Nahua and others, as areas of logging and industrial exploitation.

**Action G 3.3:**
To create an inter-institutional commission to implement expeditious procedures for the control and identification of agents or factors threatening the security and lives of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation.

**Action G 3.4:**
To define institutional responsibilities, mechanisms and procedures in order, as far as possible, to provide an immediate solution to and timely care during emergencies that may endanger the security and lives of indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation.

**Action G 3.5:**
To define immediate mechanisms and procedures for the application of sanctions against those who are responsible of threatening the security and lives of the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation.
G. To protect the indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>IMMEDIATE (before 28.7.2001)</th>
<th>MEDIUM-TERM (2001-2006)</th>
<th>BODY RESPONSIBLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action G 1.1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SETAI, Ombudsman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 1.2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>SETAI, MINSA, Ombudsman, PNP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SETAI, INRENA, PETT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 1.4</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SETAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 1.5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SETAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 1.6</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SETAI, INRENA, PETT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 2.1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>PETT, Congress of the Republic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 2.2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>PETT, SETAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 2.3</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>INRENA SETAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 2.4</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SETAI, INRENA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 3.1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>SETAI, Ombudsman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 3.2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>INRENA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 3.3</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SETAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 3.4</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>SETAI, Ombudsman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action G 3.5</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice, SETAI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples

Lima, 10 November 2003

Dr. Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations Organisation

Re: Report on the human rights situation of the indigenous peoples of the Peruvian Amazon

Dear Sir,

I write as President of the Inter-ethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Forest, AIDESEP, an umbrella organisation of the indigenous peoples of the Peruvian Amazon, whose institutional mission is to defend the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly the rights to self-determination, to their ancestral territories, to indigenous jurisdiction, to protection of their collective ancestral knowledge, to prior consultation when actions are planned on indigenous territories, to identity and a quality bilingual intercultural education for future generations. In addition, our objectives relate to promoting development with identity for all peoples of the Amazon.

In accordance with our institutional mission, we have been submitting a series of complaints to the relevant state bodies regarding violations of the fundamental rights of our indigenous peoples. These are being perpetrated by extraction agents and companies, missionaries, researchers, as well as the government itself. However, to date we have received no serious or concrete replies from the institutions responsible for dealing with these issues.

It is in this regard that I am contacting you in order to send you the enclosed report on the human rights situation of the indigenous peoples of the Peruvian Amazon, in particular those peoples affected
by logging or oil/gas activities and those in a situation of voluntary isolation or initial contact. These latter are characterised by their extreme vulnerability to outside illnesses which, if transmitted to them by external agents, primarily loggers, would lead to their death.

I thank you for your attention in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

antonio iviche quique
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation: Mayoruna Remo Unidentified</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Human rights violation</th>
<th>Institutions involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper courses of the Yavari, Tapiche, Blanco and Mirim rivers, Requena province, Loreto region</td>
<td>Illegal loggers, drugs traffickers and illegal hunters have invaded their territories and risk causing clashes and spreading epidemics against which the stated populations have developed no immunological defence. Units of forestry exploitation have been superimposed on the indigenous territories.</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture (INRENA), Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice CONAPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation: Huaorani Arabelaaucas Unidentified</td>
<td>Upper courses of the Napo, Curaray and Arabela rivers, Maynas province, Loreto region</td>
<td>Illegal loggers, drugs traffickers and illegal hunters have invaded their territories and risk causing clashes and spreading epidemics against which the stated populations have developed no immunological defence. Missionaries and anthropologists are attempting to establish contact with these populations, violating their right to autonomy and exposing them to the threat of illness.</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture (INRENA), Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice CONAPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation: Huaorani Unidentified</td>
<td>Upper courses of the Tigre River and tributaries, Loreto province, Loreto region</td>
<td>Illegal loggers, drugs traffickers and illegal hunters have invaded their territories and risk causing clashes and spreading epidemics against which the stated populations have developed no immunological defence.</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture (INRENA), Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice CONAPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, initial or sporadic contact:Nanti, Matsigenka and unidentified</td>
<td>Nahua Kugapakori State Reserve, lower Urubamba, La Convención province, Cusco region</td>
<td>Gas company workers and sub-contractors, missionaries and loggers are forcing contact with these populations, violating their right to autonomy and exposing them to the threat of illness.</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture (INRENA), Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice CONAPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashco Piro State Reserve, upper Purús, Ucayali region</td>
<td>Evangelical missionaries are forcing contact with these peoples, violating their right to autonomy and exposing them to the threat of illness. Loggers and drugs traffickers are triggering clashes with the populations in isolation and constitute a potential source of illness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urubamba river</td>
<td>Gas company Pluspetrol and its sub-contractors are carrying out gas tests that are, in all probability, damaging the population’s health.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apurimac, Ene and Tambo rivers</td>
<td>Regular raids by subversive elements are threatening their lives and creating permanent instability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alto Vinuya, upper Sepahua, Atalaya province, Ucayali region</td>
<td>Forestry Exploitation Units 515 and 516 are superimposed on their territories.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alto Callería, Alto Utuquinía, Ucayali</td>
<td>Permanent timber production forests are superimposed on the State Reserve created for these peoples.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Reserve for indigenous peoples in isolation</td>
<td>Thousands of illegal loggers have invaded the Alto Purús State Reserve and Reserved Zone, triggering a series of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piro, Yora and others unidentified</td>
<td>situation along the upper courses of the Yaco, Tahuamanu, Las Piedras, Los Amigos and Madre de Dios rivers. Alto Purús Reserved Zone, Madre de Dios Region</td>
<td>clashes with indigenous populations in isolation. There are medical and police reports relating to some of these. The presence of loggers in the territories of indigenous peoples in isolation is creating territorial movements and causing demographic pressure on culturally differentiated territories, causing conflict between isolated peoples. Members of religious congregations are attempting to contact isolated populations in the reserve.</td>
<td>and Wildlife Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Murunahua people in a situation of voluntary isolation</td>
<td>State Reserve located on the upper Yurúa, Atalaya province, Úcayali department.</td>
<td>Illegal loggers have invaded the reserve and are affecting this people’s sources of subsistence. INRENA is still not officially rejecting the loggers’ requests to adapt forestry contracts granted within the reserve to the system of concessions established by the new forestry and wildlife law.</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture (INRENA-Forestry and Wildlife Department, PETT) Ministry of the Interior CONAPA Ministry of Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asháninka indigenous communities</td>
<td>Yurúa River and tributaries, Atalaya province, Úcayali department</td>
<td>Permanent Timber Production Forests are superimposed on indigenous territories</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture (INRENA-Forestry and Wildlife Department, PETT) Ministry of the Interior CONAPA Ministry of Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asháninka indigenous communities</td>
<td>San Matías – San Carlos, Cerro de</td>
<td>Settlers have invaded indigenous communal territories</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture (PETT),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cashinahua, Sharanahua, Culina indigenous communities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Purús river, Purús province, Ucayali department</strong></td>
<td><strong>Illegal loggers have invaded the communal territories and are affecting these communities’ sources of subsistence</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conapa</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asháninka Churinashi and Alto Tamaya indigenous communities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Coengua and Tamaya rivers, Coronel Portillo and Atalaya provinces, Ucayali region</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forestry concessions are superimposed on communal territories</strong></td>
<td><strong>INRENA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asháninka Galilea, Huao and Shyamasha indigenous communities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Atalaya province, Ucayali region</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forestry concessions are affecting the ecosystems of indigenous communities through road construction and natural resource extraction.</strong></td>
<td><strong>INRENA</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some concrete cases of violations of the fundamental rights of indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact

Violating the rights to life, health, territory and self-determination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Repeated attacks by loggers on isolated Chitonalhua indigenous groups from the upper Mapuya, Ucayali, causing their displacement towards both sides of the Peru/Brazil border.</td>
<td>Sheppard, 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.10.99</td>
<td>Isolated indigenous, possibly from Peru, invade the “Envira Contact Post” of the National Indian Foundation, on Brazilian territory. FUNAI staff link this incident to movements or exploration work being carried out in the territories of the isolated peoples on the Peruvian side of the border.</td>
<td>Memo 135/GAB/AER RBR. National Indian Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.11.2000</td>
<td>A family of 5 isolated indigenous from the upper Mapuya die following violence caused by loggers who invaded their territory.</td>
<td>Regional Indigenous Organisation of Atalaya – OIRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>FENAMAD informs the Peruvian government of the Brazilian National Indian Foundation’s concern, and its own, at the invasions being suffered by Asháninka populations from the upper Yurúa, on the Brazilian side, due to the advance of Peruvian loggers. According to information from FUNAI itself, the advance of loggers towards this region is causing territorial dislocations on the part of the indigenous peoples in isolation located along the Yurúa, Purús, Tarahuacá, d’Ouro, Envira and Xinani rivers on both sides of the border.</td>
<td>Letter N 013-FENAMAD-01. Native Federation of the Madre de Dios River and Tributaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2001</td>
<td>A clash takes place between isolated indigenous and Sharanahua indigenous from the upper Purús river. Local settlers report the deaths of between 5 and 7 isolated indigenous, in addition to damage to Sharanahua property.</td>
<td>Settlers from the upper Purús; police report N 19-VI-RP-NP-U-JP COMIS.PURUS “B”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2002</td>
<td>Illegal loggers established along the upper Piedras, in Madre de Dios department, Peru, provide information on the appearance of a</td>
<td>Illegal loggers, FENAMAD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2002</td>
<td>A group of isolated indigenous violently raid a Matsigenka house on the upper Manu, causing terror among the population.</td>
<td>Manu National Park administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 June 2003</td>
<td>A serious clash occurs between indigenous in isolation and Asháninka from the Yurúa river. The existence of a direct relationship between changes in the travel routes of isolated indigenous and the invasions of loggers onto their territories is stated.</td>
<td>AIDESEP ORAU FUNAI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2002</td>
<td>Numerous reports of sightings of and attacks between loggers and isolated indigenous in the upper basin of the Los Amigos, Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers, in Madre de Dios.</td>
<td>FENAMAD Huertas, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2003</td>
<td>Members of the Protestant “Pioneer Mission” settle in the upper Purús, and, with the support of five indigenous Yine families from the Urubamba, commence attempts to contact the isolated indigenous populations of the area.</td>
<td>Letter dated 27 February 2001, signed by David L Powell, Director of the Peruvian branch of the South American Mission. Cabeceras Aid Project: <a href="http://www.onr.com/cabeceras/purussec3.html">www.onr.com/cabeceras/purussec3.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2002</td>
<td>Members of the indigenous Matsigenka people, in varying levels of isolation and commonly known as “Kirineri”, provide information on their retreat from the Shiateni stream, a sub-tributary of the Urubamba river, due to the implementation of oil/gas operations on their territories on the part of workers from the consortium operating in plot 88, Camisea</td>
<td>Public statement by the news agency: econewsperu. (<a href="http://www.econewsperu.com">www.econewsperu.com</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Members of the indigenous Nanti, Malanksiari community provide information on the serious decline in wild animals and fish caught for subsistence purposes, due to oil/gas operations in plot 88 “Camisea”.</td>
<td>Ombudsman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information gathered by the Inter-ethnic Association for Development of the Peruvian Forest-AIDESEP, June 2003.
Dr. Hans Flury Royle  
Minister of Energy and Mines

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Inter-ethnic Association for Development of the Peruvian Forest, AIDESEP, I would like to send you kind regards from the indigenous peoples of the Peruvian Amazon, along with our hope that your work in the Ministry of Energy and Mines will contribute to demonstrating that truly sustainable development in our country puts respect for human rights before the economic interests that have – over the last five centuries – caused the violent physical and/or cultural disappearance of our peoples.

In this respect, I am writing to inform you that Peru is one of the few Amazonian countries that is still home to indigenous peoples in a situation of isolation, that is, who reject direct contact with members of national society due to past tragic experiences of contact, largely since the rubber boom and continuing to this very day.

Our sister peoples are highly vulnerable to illnesses transmitted by people alien to their cultures, and these could result in epidemics and mass deaths. They are also exclusively dependent upon their territories and resources for survival.

Recent and ongoing experiences, such as that of the Nahua people, decimated by Shell’s operations and by loggers in the Urubamba River basin during the mid-1980s, and that of the Nanti, Matsigenka-Kirineri and other peoples in isolation, subjected to forced contact and consequent fears of infection during operations of the Pluspetrol consortium, demonstrate that the granting of third-party rights to natural resource exploitation in territories inhabited by indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact represents a serious threat to their physical, cultural and territorial integrity.
It is for this reason that I am requesting that you order the exclusion of the following oil and gas plots, which are superimposed on territories inhabited by peoples in isolation and initial contact:

This request is in accordance with the standards established by ILO Convention 169, ratified by our country in 1993, the Political Constitution and international standards on human rights protection, for which reason our organisation is certain that you will consider it favourably.

May I thank you for your attention and offer our support to your action in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Shapiom Noningo Sesen
AIDESEP Secretary
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aguirre, G.

AIDESEP
1999 Estudio Técnico de Establecimiento y Delimitación Territorial para el Grupo Indígena no Contactado Cashibo Cataibo. Pucallpa.
2003 Estudio Técnico de Delimitación territorial a favor de los pueblos indígenas en aislamiento voluntario de los ríos Tapiche, Blanco, Yaquerana, Chobayacu y afluentes. Iquitos.

AIDESEP and COMARU

Aikman, S.

Alvarez, J.

Alvarez, R. (OPS)

Aquino, T.

Aquino, T., M. P. Iglesias
1995 Os Kaxinawá e os Brabos: Territórios e Deslocamentos Populacionais nas Fronteiras do Acre com o Peru. Río Branco.

Aquino, T., A. Pereira

Arbaiza, S., B. Huertas, C. Aguirre

Beier, Ch., M. Lev

Bernales, A. and A. Zarzar

Bonilla, H.

Cabeceras Aid Project

Cabodevilla, Miguel Angel
2003 El grupo que surgió del caos. Pamplona

Caffrey, P.
2002 An independent environmental and social assessment of the Camisea Gas Project.
Camino, A.  
1977 Trueque, correrías e intercambios entre los Quechuas andinos y los Piro y Machiguenga de la montaña peruana”. In Amazonía Peruana, Volume I (2). CAAAP, Lima.

CEDIA  

Chirif, A. P. García and R. Smith  

Cipriani, C.  

Clousdey, T.  
1989 La búsqueda de petróleo de la Shell y sus efectos sobre los nativos en la selva peruana. Amazonía Peruana, CAAAP. Lima.

Comisión Multisectorial de la Castaña  

Conselho Indigenista Missionario (CIMI)  

Cook, N.  

Coordinadora Agroforestal Indígena y Campesina del Perú  
2002 Desarrollo sostenible y descentralizado de la Amazonía peruana. Lima.
Cueva, N.

Cueva, N and G. Shepard
1995 Informe sobre la visita de las comunidades Machiguenga en el río Sotileja, asociación peruana para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (INRENA).

D’Ans M.

Dávila, G. and V. Montoya

Del Aguila, I. and G. Cogorno

Diario La República, 21 August 2003

Dirección Regional de Salud. Hospital San Martín de Porres – Iberia
2001 Medical report.

Erickson Ph.

Espinosa, R and B. Huertas
2003 Evaluación social del Proyecto Camisea y defensa de los pueblos indígenas autoaíslados. Informe para la Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos, APRODEH, Lima.

Farabee, W.
FENAMAD

Fernández, W.

Flores, J.

Fundação Nacional do Indio. Administração Executiva Regional Rio Branco- Acre
1999 Memo 712/ GAB/AER RBR. Río Branco, 3 December
2000 Memo N° 470/ GAB/AER RBR. Río Branco, 23 June.
2000 Memo N° 666/GAB/AER RBR. Río Branco, 23 August.

Gade, D.

Gallois, D.

García, A.
García Hierro, P.

GEF/UNDP/UNOPS

GESUREMAD

Gonzales del Río

Goodland, R.

Gray, A.
1986 And after the Gold Rush...? Human Rights and Self-Development among the AmarakKERI of South-eastern Peru. IWGIA Document No. 5 Copenhagen.

Hassel, J. von
1907 Informe del Jefe de la Comisión Exploradora del Alto Madre de Dios, Paucartambo i Urubamba por la vía del Cusco. En: Perú - Junta de Vías Fluviales: Ultimas exploraciones ordenadas por la Junta de Vías fluviales a los ríos Ucayali, Madre de Dios, Paucartambo y Urubamba. La Opinión Nacional. Lima

Helberg, H., P. Reynoso

Huertas, B.
2003 The Camisea Project and Indigenous Rights. Indigenous Affairs 3/03, IWGIA, Copenhagen
Huertas, B and A. García

Hurtado, M., H. Kaplan
1987 Estudio comparativo sobre la ecología humana entre nativos del Parque Nacional del Manu. Salt Lake City, Utah.

Iglesias, M.P.

Instituto de Investigaciones de la Amazonía Peruana - Consejo Transitorio de Administración Regional de Madre de Dios

International NGO Delegation
2002 Resultados de la Delegación Internacional de ONG sobre el Proyecto Gas de Camisea, September.

Junta de Vías Fluviales

Larrabure y Correa, C.

La Torre, L.

Lopes da Silva, A. / Grupioni L.
Lyon, P.

Ministry of Health (Peru)– General Office of Epidemiology

Ministry of the Environment

Mobil Exploration and Producing Inc.

Mondina, S.A.

Moore, T.
1985 Informe Preliminar sobre el Impacto de la minería aurífera en las poblaciones indígenas de Madre de Dios, Lima.

Moore, T. and F. Pacuri,
1993 Los conflictos entre el pueblo Arakmbut y los mineros auríferos. Puerto Maldonado, Centro Eori, Ms.

News Camisea

Ombudsman
2002 Informe N°001-2002-RDP/CUS/CCNN/DH
2002 Informe N°004-2002/DP-PCN
2003 Informe N°001-2003/DP-PCN

Organización Indígena Regional de Atalaya, OIRA
2000 Pronunciamiento de la XIX Asamblea General de la Organización. Comunidad Nativa Santa Clara, Urubamba

Pennano, G.
1988 La Economía del caucho. CETA. Iquitos.

Pereira, A.

Proyecto Serjali
2001 Tenencia de tierras y uso de recursos en el Alto Mishagua, sudeste del Perú. Informe Preliminar. Lima.

Revista de las Misiones Dominicas

Ribeiro, D.

Rummenhoeller, K.

Rummenhoeller, K., A. Castillo, W. Maldonado

Rummenhoeller, K. and B. Huertas
2001 Plan de Contingencia. Produced by the Federación Nativa del río Madre de Dios y Afluentes, FENAMAD. Puerto Maldonado.

Servicio de Información Indígena (SERVINDI)

2001c Pueblo Matsigenka realizará Congreso para analizar impactos del proyecto Gas de Camisea. October, Lima.

Shepard, G.

Shepard, G. and C. Izquierdo

Shepard, G. and K. Rummenhoeller

Shepard, G and D. Yu

Schulte – Herbruggen and H. Rossiter
2003 Project Las Piedras. A socio ecological investigation into the impact of illegal logging activity in Las Piedras, Madre de Dios, Peru. Ms

Soria, J. OP

Stoll, D.
Summer Institute of Linguistics
1984 Informe preliminar sobre contactos con el grupo étnico Nahua. Yarinacocha, Pucallpa.

Tello, Julio C.

Tocantins, L.

Townsley, G.

UICN-Netherlands Committee

United Nations Economic and Social Council

Valdez and Lozano, Z.
1944 El verdadero Fitzcarrald ante la historia. Iquitos.

Varese, E.

Wahl, L.

Wise, M.

Zarzar, A.