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Extractivism in Latin America

IMPACT ON WOMEN'S LIVES AND PROPOSALS
FOR THE DEFENSE OF TERRITORY



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Presentation

The Urgent Action Fund of Latin America and the Caribbean, UAF-LA, is a civil-society, feminist organization, committed to the protection and promotion of the human rights of the diversity of women and their organizations throughout the region, by means of rapid response grants, collaborative initiatives, research, and publications.

Based on Rapid Response Grant requests, UAF-LA created the Collaborative Initiative Women, Territory, and the Environment, with the goal of responding to the needs of women, and their organizations, in the region. This Initiative proposes to make visible and strengthen women's struggles for the defense of their territory, drawing support from paradigms such as Healthful Living and Rights of Nature, as well as advances in acknowledging women's environmental rights, all of which confront accelerated expansion of extractive industries, increased attacks, and the criminalization of women defenders.

Within this area, we have facilitated several regional encounters, the first being in Santander, Colombia in February, 2014, and the second in Mindo, Ecuador in October of the same year. It was in these spaces where women could share successful experiences and proposals for the defense of the environment and nature. In addition, they drew up a collective action plan based on three themes: solidarity and reciprocity; networking and communication; and training and spirituality.

In August of 2015, in Fusagasugá, Colombia, in Alliance with CENSAT-Agua Viva, we convened the National Encounter of Women Defenders of Life Confronted by Extractivism. More than 50 Colombian women and international invitees discussed the impacts of the extractivist model on women's lives and designed proposals to strengthen their struggles.

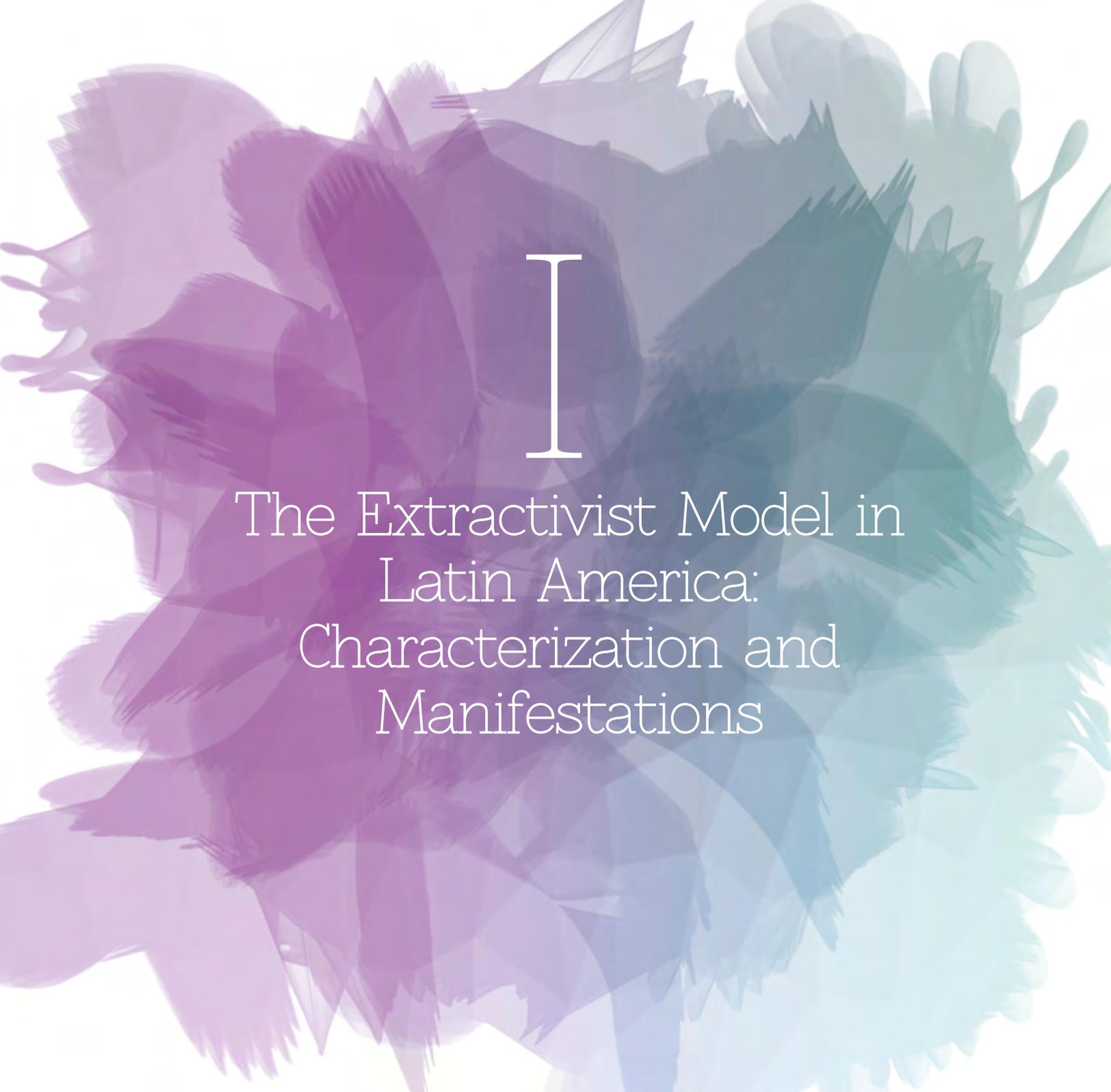
With the participation of different women's organizations and funds from Meso-America and South America concerned about a context of increasing attacks against activists, in October, 2015, we produced a Regional Report and presented it to the IACHR during its First Thematic Session. The document was entitled Patterns of Criminalization and Limitations on the Effective Participation of Women Defenders of Environmental Rights in the Americas.

With the objective of strengthening women's struggles, in 2014 we produced International Standards for Women's Rights as Related to the Environment and Territory, and Women, Territory, and the Environment- State of the Art in Latin America. Based on our commitment to collective knowledge creation, in 2016, we published the book Women Defending Territory. Participatory Experiences in Latin America, the goal being to bring to light women's participation in processes of prior consultation and in free and popular consultations, and to draw attention to the deficiency of effective mechanisms in this regard. This publication brought together the collective efforts of activists from Argentina, Guatemala, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Colombia, who shared their experiences with defending territory.

The present document has been elaborated with the intention of drawing attention to the work of women in the protection and defense of nature, and to warn about worrying tendencies in the region that increase their risks. In the first section, we offer an overview of the current state of the extractive model, including: a general characterization of the model and the resulting social-environmental conflicts; the disturbing militarization of territories; and the main violations of women's rights, including attacks against, and criminalization of, women defenders.

Next, we present proposals for the defense of territory, designed by women, underlining the diversity of approaches, organizational models and wide range of actions women have developed in Latin America.

It is our hope this document contributes to the recognition and promotion of activities in support of women's efforts to defend territory and natural goods in the Americas; that it draws attention to the unsustainability of the current model, as well as the need to move towards a post-extractivist future.



I

The Extractivist Model in
Latin America:
Characterization and
Manifestations



Extractivism is an economic and political model based on the unbridled commodification and exploitation of nature. In Latin America, expansion took place from the 90's onwards, due to price increases of certain minerals on international markets, the depletion of the world's main reserves, and dynamism in the investment flows of extractive industries (Maldonado and Urrea, 2014). Within the region, extractive frontiers have expanded rapidly, generating pressure on several strategic eco-systems such as head-waters, the Amazon Jungle, high-level plateaus, glaciers, and high Andean lakes, among others (OCMAL, 2014).

Extractivism, foundation of the capitalist system, is responsible for an international division of labor that assigns the role of importers of raw materials to be processed to certain countries, and to others, that of exporters; this division of labor is exclusively beneficial to the economic growth of the first, with no thought given to the sustainability of projects, nor to the environmental and social degradation caused in the countries producing the raw materials (Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, et. al, 2013).

The extractivist boom, witnessed in the current context of neoliberalism and globalization, encompasses an unsustainable, violent, and voracious model which constantly finds new ways of commodifying nature (ACOSTA, 2012). In Latin America and the Caribbean, neocolonial appropriation and the violent nature of the extractivist model are evident both in the resulting negative impacts, as well as in the different strategies employed by companies to dominate territory, in cahoots with States where the exploitation is undertaken, and on several occasions, within their home States.

In the first instance, we point to companies' practices of dispossession and occupation of land belonging to indigenous, Afro-descendent, and peasant communities. In the region, alliances are common between companies and legal and illegal armed forces- organized crime groups, armies, and paramilitary groups- that guarantee territorial control and safeguard project installations¹.

Often dispossession is also carried out through supposed legal means; companies influence legislators and justice officers in order to facilitate access to, and permanence in, territories, and to guarantee impunity regarding violations. As we will see in a later section, legislation benefiting industries is geared towards expanding the extractive frontier, the easing of exploitation licenses, and restricting rights to participation, freedom of association and assembly, and peaceful protest. This is worsened when the context is one of institutional fragility, corruption, and democratic instability that characterizes many Latin American States.

Territorial eviction and occupation are responsible for the systematic violation of affected populations' human rights. We witness how extractive activities limit and deprive access to land, water, and other common goods of local communities, impeding the development of other types of production and

“The extractivist boom, witnessed in the current context of neoliberalism and globalization, encompasses an unsustainable, violent, and voracious model”

the exercise of self-determination. The precariousness of their living conditions is so intense that forced displacement, and even the extinction of native peoples, result.

Rights violations are evident not only in affected communities, but also, and in a dramatic way, against defenders of the environment. This permanent aggression, meant to neutralize their struggles, encompasses various criminalization measures, all types of harassment, and on several occasions, the assassination of male and female activists, and femicide.

Besides these marauding and criminalization strategies, the extractivist model takes advantage of a process of naturalization in technocratic discourse that: a) positions economic growth as a supreme good over human rights and the self-determination of peoples; b) underestimates native peoples' world views and negates the existence of ancestral and popular knowledge in relation to nature, and; c) refuses to consider alternatives to the current model and condemns those struggling to do so.

In order to propagate their discourse, extractive companies exert significant influence in the hegemonic mass media (television, public and private radio, digital and print media) which present only their versions of social-environmental conflicts and which gloss over the true negative impacts of

1. These strategies have revealed maximum levels of cruelty in the Central American and Colombian contexts where war has served as a systematic mechanism of community dispossession and extermination. In Colombia, numerous companies have been accused of establishing links and direct payment to paramilitary groups; among them, Coca-Cola, Chiquita Brands, Dole, Del Monte, Nestle, Postobón, and Bavaria. For detailed information about the relationship between paramilitary groups and coal multinationals in Colombia, such as Drummond and Glencore, see the Report: “El Lado Oscuro del Carbón” (The Obscure Side of Coal), published by PAX in 2014.

their operations . On many occasions, mass media outlets explicitly stigmatize the defenders of natural goods, thereby legitimizing violations against these activists.

Finally, we point to a recurrent strategy employed by companies to generate public opinion favorable to their activities, both in local communities as well as in civil society and governments. The companies establish foundations and undertake 'social works' within the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility, the idea being to clean up their image in communities and to present themselves as their benefactors. Frequently, such initiatives are favored by States' lack of guarantees for fundamental rights in distant rural areas² .

2. These foundations, created by the companies to legitimize their actions, get involved in training programs, social housing projects, and maintenance of public health and education facilities, all of which are responsibilities that States abandon.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EXTRACTIVIST MODEL IN LATIN AMERICA

- For the most part, exploitation is undertaken by private, transnational companies, and on occasions, by public-private companies. Such ventures are meant to satisfy global market demand and not the needs of local communities; nearly all profits remain in the hands of the companies (Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, et.al, 2014).
- An enormous supply of energy and water is required, as well as the construction of infrastructure, especially in the case of new deposits in areas of difficult access (Acosta, et.al, 2013)
- Extractivism produces irreversible environmental damage, contaminating air, soil, and water, as well as causing enormous biodiversity losses.
- The affected communities' human rights are violated, destroying their traditional ways of life and economies, and resulting in their dependence³ on foreign markets.
- Job opportunities are touted as one of the projects' main benefits; however, the labor force required is minimal, temporal, precarious, and almost exclusively male.
- Extractivism promotes a return to primary-goods dependence in Latin American economies attracting foreign investment for the extraction and production of raw materials, thereby weakening other economic sectors.
- It leads to high fiscal vulnerability due to resource price volatility on international markets and also worsens foreign debt (Acosta, et.al, 2013)

Neo-Extractivism in Latin America: What is New?

For some years now, so-called progressive or post-neoliberal governments such as those of Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil have modified certain elements of the neoliberal extractivist model, increasing State intervention as a regulator of extractive activities and in the distribution of profits in order to invest in social programming. According to authors like Gudynas, this model called Neo-extractivism⁴ “(...) forms part of a contemporary version of ‘developmentalism’, typical of South America, which maintains the myth of progress and development from a new cultural and political hybrid” (Gudynas quoted in Acosta, 2011; p.166).

Critics of this variation of the ‘conventional model’ point out that governments maintain “key elements of classic extractivism from its colonial roots”, thereby ensuring subordinate and functional insertion into the globalization of transnational capitalism” (Acosta, et.al, 2013). State-promoted exploitation, whether directly or through public-private alliances, does not mitigate environmental and social devastation; on the contrary, imposition of this model, as dogma, has extended the extractive frontier into invaluable eco-systems such as the Amazon jungle region, inhabited by ancestral peoples living in voluntary isolation.

These governments take on authoritarian behaviors, systematically using stigmatization and criminalization to neutralize criticism and acts of civil disobedience, accusing critics of conspiring with the extreme right in order to destabilize the country. For example, in Bolivia, members of the Executive have accused the anti-extractivist left of practicing “imperial environmentalism” financed by mega-corporations from imperialist countries⁵. Such discourse, especially in Bolivia and Ecuador, ridicules the political participation of women defenders of territory, by using gender-based stereotyping⁶.

1. Direct Foreign Investment (DFI) in the Extractive Sector

During the 1990’s, countries of Latin American promoted political and regulatory reforms designed to stimulate private investment in the extractive sector⁷, offering the most lax fiscal requirements in the world. Beginning in 1994, the region became the principal receptor of global investment in mining exploration, reaching more than 5.000 million dollars in 2012, concentrated in Peru, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and Argentina.

While the percentage of world-wide DFI directed to natural resource extraction did not go above 10% in 2013, Latin America captured 30% of international mining investment, due to the return to raw materials, Bolivia, Chile, and Trinidad and Tobago capturing more than 50% (ECLAC, 2015).

3. This model is characterized by scant production diversification and unstable and poorly paid labor. The return to raw materials is “a path that exacerbates depletion of the natural resource base, as well as environmental degradation, causing negative side effects and social-environmental liabilities in territories of resource-extraction origin, in exchange for low income from these exports” (León Rodríguez, 2012; P. 257).

4. As pointed out by Acosta et.al (2013), there is no consensus about this category; authors such as Raúl Zibechi interpret the extractivism of these governments as a new phase of neoliberalism.

5. See: “Vice defiende el extractivismo e inversión extranjera y critica a “izquierda de pasarela (Vice President Defends Extractivism and Foreign Investment and Criticizes the Showcase Left), Los Tiempos Newspaper.

6. See: “Evo Morales: Casi todas las mujeres son inferiores a los hombres” (Almost all Women are Inferior to men), Mira Jerez; and “García Linera le dice a la ministra de Salud que debe casarse antes de tener hijos” (García Linera tells the Health Minister She Should Marry before Having Children”); Página Siete.

7. For more information, see the document from the Observatory of Mining Conflicts in Latin America-OCMAL (acronym in Spanish): “Mining Legislation in Comparative Law”, available at: http://www.conflictosmineros.net/agregar_documento/publicaciones-ocmal/derechocomparadoocmal/detail

In the case of gold and silver, the region plays a very important role in the world, home to 30% and 40% of projects, respectively. At the same time, Latin America dominates the copper sector, world-wide, responsible for more than 50% of projects, noting the predominance of Chile and Peru (ECLAC, 2015).

Between 2014 and 2015, there was a drastic 17% downturn in DFI in the sector, the lowest in the last ten years. This change was due principally to the fall in mineral prices, especially of oil, which in 2014 went down 40% (ECLAC). Currently, budgets for mineral prospecting on a global scale decreased 47% with respect to 2012. However, countries such as Chile and Mexico continue to be on the list of countries with the highest rates of exploration in the world.

Besides the reduction in prices for raw materials, other factors affecting the current juncture of the region's extractive sector include increased operating costs, the termination of investment projects in mining and infrastructure, and lastly certain restrictions in company financing (ECLAC, 2015). It is worrying that the reduction in DFI in the extractive sector was not the result of States taking measures to prevent environmental destruction and human rights violations, but rather for financial reasons.

In the region, it is the mining, hydrocarbon, and forestry sectors that cause the greatest environmental impact; companies have increased green-house gas emissions by two million tons in the last ten years. Given that in the majority of medium and small economies it is only transnational companies that possess

the capacity to develop extractive industries, this impact is undeniably related to DFI. Among other causes of the increasing impact is the intensive use of energy for the exploitation of deposits, the productivity of which decreases in relation to the material extracted (ECLAC, 2015).

CANADIAN MINING INVESTMENT IN LATIN AMERICA

The Canadian mining sector, representing 4% of the country's GNP, concentrates more than 66% of its investments in the Americas. On this continent, of the 1,000 companies operating in the region, 80% are Canadian, concentrated mainly in Mexico, Chile, and the United States. In Latin America, Canada has approximately 80 active mining projects and another 48 under construction, its investments concentrated in Mexico, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia.

The report, *Impact of Canadian Mining in Latin America and Canada's Responsibility*, by the WORKING GROUP ON MINING AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA, documents 22 representative cases in nine countries in the region where the systematic violation of human rights by Canadian mining companies is mentioned. Several mining projects highlighted for this reason include: the Bi-National Pascua-Lama Project, Argentina-Chile, currently shut down and administered by Barrick Gold Corp.; the Bajo de la Alumbrera Project in Argentina, administered by Goldcorp Inc. and Yamana Gold Inc.; and the Frontino Projects (in the department of Antioquia) and Mazamorra (in the department of Nariño) in Colombia, administered by the Gran Colombia Gold Corp..

In its report, the Working Group points to deficient judicial norms, problems with their implementation and application, and non-existent or ineffective legal resources as conditions that favor the negative

impacts of Canadian mining in receiving countries. At the same time, it warns about Canadian Government policies that favor the mining sector, ignoring its responsibility for rights violations in the affected communities. Among such policies:- political support from embassies and parliament and through the Canadian International Development Agency and the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development; financial support through Export Development Canada (a credit agency of the Canadian government) and the Canadian Pension Plan Investment Council; as well as an inadequate legal framework for preventing and sanctioning human rights violations given that extra-territoriality is not recognized.

* Source: WORKING GROUP ON MINING AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA. "The impact of Canadian Mining in Latin America and Canada's Responsibility". Report presented to the Inter- American Commission on Human Rights, s.f.

CHINESE INVESTMENT IN LATIN AMERICA*

Currently, China stands out as one of the major investor heavyweights in the extractive and infrastructure sectors in Latin America. The announcement and granting of project licenses has generated strong resistance among communities and environmental movements due to the magnitude of the foreseeable environmental destruction and because they are located in strategic regions and protected areas in the countries.

Between 2005 and 2014, China provided credits for 119,000 million dollars throughout Latin America, and the prediction is this tendency will increase in the coming years. Currently, there is a commitment to invest more than 50,000 million dollars in projects in the region, mainly in the energy, infrastructure, mining, and high technology sectors; while in the next ten years it is believed this amount will increase to 250,000 million dollars. Besides, the creation of an investment fund of 10,000 million dollars from bilateral cooperation has been announced for such activity in Latin America.

Of Chinese investment in the region, 47% is concentrated in Venezuela with more than 56,000 million dollars destined to oil, copper, and gold exploitation. In Peru, Chinese companies account for 30% of the country's mining investments. Brazil signed 35 cooperation agreements with the Chinese government in 2015 to finance activities in the energy, science, agriculture, and transport sectors, including funding

for Petrobras. At the same time, China has acquired significant percentages of oil companies in Brazil such as GALP and Repsol. In the case of Ecuador, it was the fourth largest recipient of Chinese funds, having received loans for more than 11,000 million dollars, destined to hydroelectric, infrastructure, and oil exploitation.

In terms of large infrastructure projects, China will promote the Transcontinental, Brazil-Peru railway that will connect the Brazilian coast with the Peruvian Pacific. In addition, a Chinese consortium- HKND Group- has obtained the concession to build the Nicaragua Canal, a proposal that has generated resistance from communities and social movements, especially from the National Committee for the Defense of Land, the Lake, and Sovereignty.

* Source. "China a la conquista de Latinoamérica" (China on a Conquest of Latin America); published in Actualidad RT, November 21, 2015. See: <https://actualidad.rt.com/actualidad/192245-china-inversiones-proyectos-america-latina>

2. Regional Patterns of Extractivism and Environmental Conflicts

The EJOLT Project- Environmental Justice Organizations, Liabilities, and Trade⁸ has constructed a world atlas of environmental conflicts which, to date, includes 1,670 reported cases. Of the 1,500 documented cases to June, 2015, 20% have been resolved as victories for environmental justice; in 12% of the cases, conflicts have resulted in the death of one or more environmental defenders, men and women, and in approximately 250 cases, environmental justice movements are led by one or more women defenders (Martínez Alier, 2015).

Up to February, 2016, a total of 516 conflicts, in all categories, were reported in Latin America and the Caribbean, distributed as follows: 390 in South America, 116 in Mesoamerica, and ten in the Caribbean. The countries most affected were Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, and Chile. Of note is the fact that approximately half the conflicts in Latin America involved indigenous populations protecting their territories, in the face of extractivist, frontier expansion. (Martínez Alier, 2015).

Mining

Between 1990 and 2012, the importance of the region in metal production world-wide increased significantly: in the case of gold and copper, production doubled, from 10% to 21%, and from 25% to 45%, respectively. Silver production increased from 34%

to 48%, refined copper from 15% to 20%, and molybdenum from 16% to 24% (ECLAC 2013).

The region plays a very important role in international gold and silver mining, encompassing 30% and 40% of projects, respectively. In the case of copper, the region is dominant world-wide, home to more than 50% of projects, where the significant role of Chile and Peru is apparent (ECLAC, 2015).

The evolution of the sector among different countries in the region is heterogeneous; in 2014, high growth in Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, and Chile was registered, while countries such as Mexico and Peru witnessed a downturn.

Large-scale mining activity is known for its devastating environmental havoc, and as a result, social, women's, and mining victims' organizations insist that 'responsible mining' is not possible, despite company efforts to portray themselves as environmentally sustainable. Among their major impacts, the enormous quantities of water required for operations, plus the contamination of water sources, rendering them unusable for human consumption and for agriculture, are highlighted (Acosta, 2012).

In terms of water consumption, the havoc caused by El Cerrejón, the largest open pit coal mine in the world, located in the La Guajira Peninsula in Colombia,

8. The EJOLT Project - Environmental Justice Organizations, Liabilities, and Trade. See the EJOT Project Atlas on this web site: <https://ejatlas.org/>

is alarming. This coal production complex, involving multinationals BHP Billiton (English-Australian), Glencore Xtrata (Swiss), and Anglo American (South African-English) produces about 32 million tons of coal annually (CINEP, Fuerza de Mujeres [Research and Popular Education Center, Women's Force], 2013); generates 340 million tons of waste; and uses 17 million liters of water daily, while a person in the area subsists with 0.7 liters of water a day (CAJAR, 2014).

In this desert area, death from malnutrition of more than 5.000 Wayuú indigenous boys and girls, due to the company's operations and to corruption, has been registered. Nevertheless, El Cerrejón has insisted in diverting the Ranchería River for the extraction of more than 500 million tons of coal, and now has its eye on the Arroyo Bruno (Bruno Stream)

To date, the Observatory of Mining Conflicts in Latin America, OCMAL (Spanish acronym)⁹, has documented 209 cases in the region, involving 219 mining projects, directly affecting 314 communities, and characterizing six of them as cross-border conflicts. Countries with the greatest number of registered conflicts are Mexico, Peru, Chile, Argentina, and Colombia.

With respect to gold, environmental justice movements have managed to paralyze several projects: Tambogrande and Conga in Peru; Esquel and Famatina in Argentina; Pascual Lama and El Morro in Chile; Crucitas in Costa Rica; and El Dorado in El Salvador (Martínez Alier, 2015).

In November, 2015, Brazil was the scene of one of the worst mining disasters in the world: the rupture of a dam belonging to the Samarco Mine- currently owned by the Brazilian company, Vale, and the Anglo-Australian Billiton- which caused 11 deaths, the disappearance of 12 people, and the destruction of thousands of hectares in the municipality of Mariana, Mina Gerais. Immediately, the toxic mud which destroyed the Doce River basin reached the beaches of the state of Espírito Santo, affecting important areas of coral reefs¹⁰.

9. Atlas of the conflicts available at: http://mapa.conflictosmineros.net/ocmal_db/

10. See: "The toxic mud of Brazil's worst environmental disaster reached the sea": http://www.infobae.com/2015/11/24/1772104_-el-lodo-toxico-del-mayor-desastre-ambiental-brasil-llego-al-mar

Hydrocarbons

After the Middle East, the Latin America and Caribbean region has the second largest oil reserves in the world, concentrating upwards of more than 20% (ECLAC 2013). Despite its recent international price decline, the region's oil frontier continues to expand.

Currently, the decrease in conventional deposits corresponds to global tendencies in the oil sector. Since oil constitutes the base of the global energy matrix, geographic and technological frontiers must be expanded in order to satisfy demand, including the following initiatives: search for new technologies for the exploitation of former deposits; application of hydraulic fracturing or fracking; oil mining; in-situ combustion; exploration in areas of extreme-temperatures; and deep-sea drilling (Roa Avedaño, 2013).

In Latin America, attention should be paid to two situations of extreme concern, in terms of impacts and environmental conflicts, both currently and in the future:

- On the one hand, the Ecuadorean government has veered sharply towards oil exploitation in the Amazon Jungle Region, affecting the Sápara, Shuar, Achuar, Waorani, Taromenane, and Kichwa indigenous peoples. Strong local resistance movements have resulted, as well as increasing national and international social mobilization, related particularly to the protection of the Yasuní Park¹¹. We need to remember that

the world's greatest oil disaster, caused by Texaco-Chevron, happened in Ecuador, which between 1964 and 1992 spilled 17 million gallons of oil into the Amazon jungle area (Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, et.al, 2013).

- On the other hand, we see the 'unsuspecting'¹² initiation of fracking by some governments, a practice which involves injecting millions of liters of water mixed with sand and chemicals- frequently toxic and even carcinogenic- into the earth at great depths in order to extract gas and shale oil. By contaminating water and air, fracking threatens the health of local communities¹³. The negative effects of fracking are much more serious than those produced by the exploitation of conventional deposits, since the increased risk of earthquakes has been proven, in addition to the exorbitant quantities of water, mixed with toxic chemicals, that contaminate underground water sources.

In May, 2016, after arduous debate, EuroLat- the main Latin American-European parliamentary space- approved a report¹⁴ containing strong criticisms of fracking and calling for transition to an energy model not dependent on fossil fuels. Although, in the beginning, this report called for the unlimited use of fracking, debates promoted by more than 200 social organizations on both continents, managed to achieve approval for significant modifications to the original version.

11. For detailed information, see: "El Yasuní: un semillero de creación de nuevas formas de defender la vida" (The Yasuní: a Seedbed for Creating New Forms for Defending Life) by Gabriela Ruales; and "La Vida en el centro y el crudo bajo tierra: El Yasuní en clave feminista" (Life at the Center and Oil in the Ground: The Yasuni from a Feminist Perspective) by the Collective Miradas Críticas al Territorio (The Collective for Critical Approaches to Territory).

12. See, for example: Contagio Radio, "EN COLOMBIA HAY 22 BLOQUES PETROLEROS DESTINADOS PARA FRACKING" (IN COLOMBIA 22 OIL BLOCKS HAVE BEEN SIGNALLED FOR FRACKING), June 8, 2016. Available at: <http://www.aida-america.org/es/blog/una-lucha-panamericana-contra-el-fracking?gclid=COCuysCEmc4CFYVehgod344J4Q>

13. See: AIDA, Una lucha panamericana contra el fracking ("Panamerican Struggle against Fracking"). June 8, 2016. Available at: <http://www.aida-america.org/es/blog/una-lucha-panamericana-contra-el-fracking?gclid=COCuysCEmc4CFYVehgod344J4Q>

14. This report was an initiative of Pílr Ayuso, a European parliamentarian from the right.

As a result, the final text urges governments to respect protected areas and the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities; however, it does not accept the proposal to place a moratorium on fracking, which is promoted by environmental organizations and led, among others, by Friends of the Earth, Europe¹⁵.

Agribusiness and Forestry Plantations

Agribusinesses refer to the totality of operations involved in the production and distribution of agricultural commodities. More specifically, it is a production chain controlled by private investors, based on planting huge tracts of land with the same agricultural crop, which then requires intensive use of energy, water, human labor, and scientific knowledge. This chain increases profits in the areas of industrial transformation and transport, since the delivery of products to consumers is delayed (Yacoub, et.al, 2015). Based on speculation in nutrition and hunger, this model increases financial market value, but does not respond to the world's food needs

For the most part, agribusinesses are dedicated to the production of biofuels such as ethanol and biodiesel, based on single-crop farming of soy, corn, sugar-cane, and African

palm. Although some monocultures are dedicated to food production, their objective is not to solve the problem of hunger in the world, but to enrich a few companies controlling markets. To a great extent, this agro-industrial model has been imposed on indigenous, Afro-descendant, and peasant territories, causing increased instability in communities and generating displacement. The EJOLT Atlas reports 281 environmental conflicts related to the world's biomass.

“ By 2013, Colombia was the second most important exporter of biofuels after Brazil ”

In Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, agribusiness gained prominence in the mid 2000's, extending transgenic soy cultivation mainly. This was due to the confluence of three international tendencies in terms of seeds trading: a) the world-wide push of a technological package that included transgenic seeds, herbicides, and pesticides traded by the same companies; b) companies' promotion of sales policies that allowed farmers to pay for the seeds at the time of harvest, and; c) increase demand in international markets (Seoane, et.al, 2013).

In Colombia, biofuel production, based on palm oil and sugar-cane, began in 2005, although prior to this, laws had been passed to stimulate ethanol production; by 2013, Colombia was the second most important exporter of biofuels after Brazil (Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, et.al, 2014).

15. See: Oil Observatory of the South: "Eurolat Commission Approves Report Critical of Fracking". May 18, 2016.

Among monoculture crops destined to uses other than biofuel production, one finds forestry plantations of species not native to the region, such as eucalyptus, pine, and teak, for making cellulose. It is here where conflicts generated by companies like Smurffit Kappa¹⁶ and ARGOS S.A. in Colombia come to the fore. In the case of the latter, the association between forestry teak plantations, the carbon emissions market, and the legalization of territorial dispossession exercised by paramilitary groups can be witnessed¹⁷.

In Chile, the study entitled “Pueblo mapuche y recursos forestales en Chile: Devastación y conservación en un contexto de globalización económica” (Mapuche People and Forestry Resources in Chile: Devastation and Conservation in a Context of Economic Globalization), produced by the Citizens’ Observatory and the International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IGWIA), reveals how, ever since the 70’s, the forestry model, promoted by the Chilean State with huge sums of money, has generated dispossession of the Mapuche Peoples’ ancestral lands. These events can be witnessed in the emblematic case of the Lumaco Commune¹⁸ in the region of Araucanía¹⁹.

In Latin America, agribusiness and forestry plantations reveal the following devastating traits:

- Concentration and usurpation of enormous tracts of land.
- Contamination and extinction of water sources due to the demand for water

- Contamination and deterioration of soil and air due to the use of agro-toxins
- Loss of biodiversity and agrobiodiversity through deforestation and the introduction of genetically modified crops
- Loss of original crops and substitution by other crops not suitable for food consumption
- For these reasons, monocultures are known as green deserts since soils become infertile and lacking in biodiversity.

All lead to a decline in food sovereignty and violation of the human rights of local populations and salaried plantation workers²⁰. In countries, such as Colombia, the African palm plantations are closely related to land usurpation by paramilitary groups.

Although, per se, agribusiness and green deserts are not usually considered extractive activities, they are included in this document because they are based on a concept of nature as commodity, and they embody all characteristics attributable to the extractivist model, especially as related to subordinated economic insertion into global markets. At the same time, it has generated numerous conflicts in the region and involves a specific relationship to women, given their protagonist role in their peoples’ food sovereignty.

16. See: Diego Cardona: “Desiertos verdes del suroccidente colombiano” (Green Desserts in Colombia’s South West), published in GRAIN, July 24th, 2009

17. To know more about with the ARGOS case in Colombia, see: Moritz Tenthoff- Corporation for Community Consultation and Training- COSPACC-; “ARGOS S. A. en los Montes de María: La lucha contra el cambio climático como herramienta para la legalización del despojo, el control territorial y la imposición de megaproyectos agroindustriales” (ARGOS, S.A. in the Montes de Maria Region: The Struggle against Climate Change as a Tool for Legalizing Dispossession, Territorial Control, and the Imposition of Agro-industrial Megaprojects), 2011.

18. This case has been detailed by the Observatory of Environmental Conflicts in Latin America, OLCA (Spanish acronym) in its report: “La invasión de las plantaciones forestales en Chile: Efectos de la actividad forestal en la población indígena mapuche” (The Invasion of Forestry Plantations in Chile: Effects of Forestry Activity on the Mapuche Indigenous Population), 2003.

19. Complete text is available at <http://www.iwgia.org/>

20. In terms of labor rights, the case of cane-cutters in Cauca, Colombia is an emblematic case.

Dams

In Latin America, 51% of electricity is generated from hydropower. Until 2013, the region used 22% of its potential for hydroelectric generation, the Southern Cone and Brazil leading the way with 33% and 32%, respectively; while the Andean region, which has the greatest potential, only used 12% (ECLAC, 2013). Although the movement to suspend the most harmful dams expands in Europe, currently, there are plans to construct 450 barriers in the basins of the Amazon (Americas region), Congo (Africa), and Mekong (Asia) Rivers, which means that one third of the world's river fish would be at risk of disappearing²¹.

Far from responding to local energy requirements or water management, hydroelectric projects come into being to satisfy demands from transnational business consortiums. These initiatives attempt to gain legitimacy as alternatives to the energy and environmental crisis caused by dependence on fossil fuels. However, “energy projects promoted as «clean development» or as alternatives for «green economies» have been seriously questioned, since they promote no substantial change to the energy model, nor to modes of production and consumption” (Yacoub, et.al, 2015, P.199). On the contrary, they have been criticized for producing devastating environmental and social effects.

The hydro-energy model, based on the privatization of rivers, deepens social inequalities, since impacts and benefits are distributed unequally²² (Yacoub, et.al, 2015). Besides destroying local forms of river life²³, dams cause repercussions at the national and continental levels since they alter the course of rivers; while at the global level, they contribute to climate change due to the

The Belo Monte Dam, developed by the Norte Energía Company on the Xingú River in the Brazilian Amazon, represents an emblematic case of human rights violations in the hydro-energy context. In December, 2015, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights acknowledged a petition presented against Brazil in 2011 by civil society organizations. The Brazilian State is accused of granting the operating license and allowing the dam to be flooded even though the company had not satisfied environmental requirements; and in addition, for failing to comply with collective protection measures granted by the same international entity to the indigenous population affected by the project²⁴.

21. See: El País. “450 presas amenazan a un tercio de los peces de río del mundo” (450 dams threaten one third of the world's river fish). January 8, 2016.

22. For example, it has been shown that communities close to dams tend to pay higher electricity rates than the national average.

23. In the south-western part of Colombia, the EPSA Company, responsible for the Bajo Anchicayá project, caused the spilling of 500.000 cubic meters of toxic muds over the river communities. For a detailed analysis of the damage caused by dam construction in Colombia, see: “Hidroeléctrica: Conflictos ecológicos distributivos” (Hydro-electric Projects: Distributive Environmental Conflicts) by Soler, Duarte and Roa Avendaño, 2013.

24. See: AIDA, “Inicia caso contra Brasil en la CIDH por violaciones de derechos humanos relacionados con la represa Belo Monte” (IACHR Initiates Proceedings against Brazil due to Human Rights Violations in the Belo Monte Dam Case), January 7, 2015.

emission of green-house gases from the decomposition of tons of organic material lying beneath the dams.

This pattern, observed in Brazil, reflects a regional tendency. In countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Ecuador, and Mexico, hydro-electric projects are undertaken in indigenous and peasant territories, violating their right to participation, life, a healthy environment, and to water, among others.

Among the most significant movements for the defense of rivers in Latin America we find the Dos Atingidos Movement for Barrangens- MAB (Portuguese acronym) - in Brazil; the Mexican Movement of People Affected by Dams and in Defense of Mexico's Rivers, and the Living Rivers Movement in Colombia; plus the Latin American Network against Dams-REDLAR (Spanish acronym). Peasant communities and indigenous peoples have engaged in important struggles to detain the privatization of rivers, among them, the Lenca People in Honduras, the Mapuche in Chile, the Ngäbe Buglé in Panama, the Emberá in Colombia, and indigenous communities in Guatemala. Communities and movements have been criminalized, and their members have suffered harassment, persecution, and arbitrary detention in the context of peaceful social protest, as well as assassination.

3. Legal Frameworks Favorable to Extractive Activities

In his recent report concerning extractive activities, the United Nations Special Rapporteur for the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, Maina Kiai, noted that “States tend to elaborate legal frameworks and practices in ways that push investors to exploit natural resources. International competition to attract investments is ferocious, and due to the nature of companies, they tend to prefer the least regulated environments possible in order to maximize profits. As a result, among States, competition exists to weaken standards as far as the creation of a favorable environment for companies is concerned” (A/HRC/29/25, 2015, paragraph 31).

The report, “El impacto de la minería canadiense en América Latina y la responsabilidad de Canadá” (The Impact of Canadian Mining in Latin America and Canada's Responsibility), presented to the IACHR by the Working Group on Mining and Human Rights in Latin America, identifies four main traits in the region's legal frameworks, which promote the installation of companies and the perpetration of human rights violations:

- Constitutional and legal gaps concerning the protection of rights
- Absence of adequate mining legislation or incompatibilities among legal frameworks

- Legislative processes influenced by Canadian interference- direct political and even financial support - guaranteeing benefits to mining activity; and
- Absence of mitigation measures and reparation of environmental damages and a lack of requirements for the same by the competent authorities (Working Group on Mining and Human Rights in Latin America, s.f)

In order to facilitate extractive activities, legislation is designed to limit access to information and citizen participation, and for this reason has always been established outside the demands of affected populations. Obligatory instruments, such as ILO Convention 169, which obliges States to guarantee the right to prior, free, and informed consultation for indigenous and tribal peoples faced with any measure affecting their territories, are therefore contravened.

Legislative and administrative measures are frequently adopted to facilitate the processing of environmental licenses for exploration and exploitation by reducing company requirements for environmental impact studies.

Law No. 30230 in Peru and Bill 5807/2013, currently under discussion in Brazil, follow a similar course, with proven interference from mining companies: nearly the entire parliamentary body discussing the project has received donations from the companies for their electoral campaigns (Chammas and Bossi, 2015). Both Laws intend to simplify authorization procedures for licenses and allow exploitation in formerly-protected areas.

Besides Laws that diminish protected areas such as high-level plateaus, as well as ecological, forestry, and archeological reserves, other initiatives promoting land concentration to the benefit of agribusiness and the extractive sector, are also of great concern.

In Colombia, the third most unequal country in Latin America and fourteenth in the world in terms of land distribution inequality, President Santos sanctioned the ZIDRE Law (Areas of Rural, Economic, and Social Development Interest) in

In Bolivia, the Mining and Metallurgy Law, approved in 2014, reduces rights in this area, eliminating consultation during prospecting and exploration phases; while in the exploitation phase, it is restricted to three public hearings with final decisions remaining in State hands (CASA Collective, 2015).

January, 2016²⁵. This Law “would legalize the irregular accumulation of land holdings- historically under State control- by national and foreign companies, causing further negative land concentration and expropriation” (OXFAM, 2015).

In Chile, the Organic Constitutional Law on Mining Concessions- created during the Pinochet dictatorship- is designed to totally privatize deposits, since they become the property of whoever exploits them until depleted, leaving only a minimal margin for State intervention. This Law allows concessions to take priority over the dominion of lands belonging to any population group, violating, in the extreme, the self-determination of indigenous peoples. To this, the privatization of water must be factored in, as sanctioned by Article 19 of the 1981 Constitution, which leaves water sources in the hands of whoever has the means to buy them (OLCA, 2015).

In Honduras, after the 2009 Coup, several pieces of legislation have facilitated the installation of extractive projects and the privatization of water. Among them, the Law ZEDE (Zones of Development and Employment), the General Law on Water, Law for the Promotion and Generation of Electrical Energy through Renewable Resources, the New Mining Law, and the Law of Public Order Military Police, approved to safeguard company interests (CEHPROODEC, 2015), are noteworthy. Currently, it is estimated that 35% of the country has been granted in concession to transnational companies for the exploitation of minerals and for hydro-electric projects²⁶.

In Colombia, Decree 2041 of 2014, popularly known as the ‘Decree of Express Licensing’, which, among other things, diminished Ministry of the Environment competencies and stipulated extremely short time-frames for the authorization of projects²⁷; it also limited local authorities’ autonomy to convene popular consultations and at the same time provided free reign to the Ministry of Mines and companies to initiate projects. This Decree was suspended by the Council of State as a response to pressure from communities and social organizations²⁸; however, threats of this nature persist since the impulse for large-scale mining continues to be one of the current government’s priorities.

25. See: “CERCA DE 19 EMPRESAS SON LAS QUE HAN ACAPARADO MÁS TIERRAS EN COLOMBIA” (NEARLY 19 COMPANIES ARE THOSE HOARDING MOST LAND IN COLOMBIA). Available at: <http://www.contagio-radio.com/cerca-de-19-empresas-son-las-que-han-acaparado-mas-tierras-en-colombia-articulo-19980/>

26. Radio Mundo Real: “Entrevista con coordinador del COPINH ante un nuevo feminicidio político” (Interview with the coordinator of COPINH, faced with a new political feminicide), July 7, 2016.

27. See: “Comunicado a la opinión pública. El Ambientalismo radical es la defensa de la vida, de la paz y de la naturaleza” (Public Opinion Comunicué. Radical Environmentalism is the Defense of Life, Peace, and Nature). Available at: <http://censat.org/es/noticias/comunicado-a-la-opinion-publica-el-ambientalismo-radical-es-la-defensa-de-la-vida-de-la-paz-y-de-la-naturaleza>

28. See: Catalina Caro and Danilo Urrea: “Minera en Colombia 2015: De las ventajas corporativas a las zonas de sacrificio minero” (Mining in Colombia, 2015: From Corporate Advantage to Areas of Mining Sacrifice), CENSAT- Agua Viva, June 22, 2016.

In Ecuador, the 2008 Constitution denotes the pluri-national nature of the Republic; recognizes Nature as a subject of rights; and includes the Sumak Kawsay, or Healthful Living, as a new paradigm. However, these principles are totally incompatible with pro-extractivist government policies and the systematic persecution of the defenders of Nature²⁹.

In contrast to the regional tendency, Costa Rica stands out as an exception, the first country in Latin America to have declared itself free of mining. In November, 2010, as a result of persevering civil society mobilization- 90% of which was against such activity- the Law prohibiting open-pit mining, the use of cyanide and mercury, and extinguishing all procedures for licenses awaiting approval was unanimously passed. In another case, El Salvador finds itself in a legal limbo in terms of mining activity, given that although not prohibited, a de facto moratorium has been declared and as a result there are no active exploration and exploitation projects (Mira, 2015).

In both countries, companies have applied strategies to reverse these decisions: in Costa Rica, Ascot Mining lodged a complaint challenging the constitutionality of the law of prohibition³⁰. In El Salvador, the Oceana Gold mining company questioned the State and strengthened

social media campaigns to promote social benefits that mining would bring to the communities, mainly through the creation of the El Dorado Foundation (Mira, 2015).

Often, companies avail themselves of State commitments enshrined in Free Trade Agreements in order to pressure for the reversal of legislation designed to protect territories. The Canadian company, Eco Oro Minerals Corp., which planned to exploit gold in the Santurbán high plateau in Colombia, announced its intention to denounce the Colombian State before international bodies, arguing its interests had been negatively affected and demanding monetary compensation, given the Constitutional Court Decree to prohibit mining in high-altitude plateaus³¹.

Finally, we mention recent norms that reduce space for social action and criminalize the work of defenders of territory through the creation of vague criminal edicts and ‘antiterrorist’ laws. In this regard, the regional report³² on the role of companies and States in violations against defenders, presented by 38 organizations, including UAF-LA, before the IACHR in 2015, highlights the following:

“ In Honduras currently, it is estimated that 35% of the country has been granted in concession to transnational companies for the exploitation of minerals and for Hydroelectric projects ”

29. See: “Demanda al Decreto Ejecutivo 16” (Challenge to Executive Decree 16); <http://www.flacsoandes.edu.ec/observatoriodiscriminacion/index.php/notas/343-demanda-al-decreto-ejecutivo-16>; “EL Decreto 16 y sus riesgos” (Decree 16 and its Risks) <http://decreto16.com/>

30. See: Carlos Salazar. Mining company confronts law prohibiting open-pit metal mining. http://kioscosambientales.ucr.ac.cr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1441:empresa-minera-la-emprende-contra-ley-que-prohibe-mineria-metalica-a-cielo-abierto&catid=40:noticias-ambientales&Itemid=60

31. See: Contagio Radio: “Empresa canadiense demandaría a Colombia por fallo que protege páramo de Santurbán” (“Canadian Company to Accuse Colombia for Decision to protect the Santurbán High Altitude Plateau”); March 16, 2016.

32. Available at: <http://www.ishr.ch/sites/default/files/article/files/informecoalicioneempresastierraishr.pdf>

COUNTRY	INSTRUMENT	IMPLICATIONS
Colombia	Law 1453 of 2011	Creates the crime of ‘obstruction of public thoroughfares that affect public order’, opening the way for prosecution of public protest.
Bolivia	Law 357 of 2013	Against ‘intimidation of miners’: penalizes those who prevent the exploitation of deposits with up to 8 years in jail.
	Law on Mining and Metallurgy of 2014	Penalizes collective and individual actions that impede mining activity.
Paraguay	2009	Escalates the criminalization of peasant protest, increasing sentences from two to five years for the crime of invasion of another’s property.
Guatemala	Law of Public Order (Decree 7-1965)	Allows for the declaration of a State of Prevention/Siege/Exception.
	‘Law of Burial Sites’ of 2014	Proposes the prohibition of peaceful protest, especially of indigenous people against mining.
México	Four Laws passed in 2014	Reduces the rights to freedom of expression and assembly, and to social protest; grants extraordinary powers to authorities to prohibit and repress demonstrations.
Perú	Law 30151	Absolves the Armed Forces for physical attacks and fatalities in contexts of social protest.

4. Militarization: A Strategy for the Dispossession of Territories

Militarization of territories where extractive projects are in force becomes government policy, and is repeated in several countries throughout the region. Far from limiting the deployment of repressive forces to contain peaceful demonstrations, it turns into a complex strategy incorporating such phenomena as corruption, criminalization, and the creation of special military units that frequently act alongside paramilitary groups. In all cases, human rights violations, especially against women, are incurred.

In Peru, the province of Islay rose up against the Tía María mining project implemented by a company affiliated to the Grupo México (Mexico Group). Seven civilian deaths were registered between 2011 and 2015 in the context of a State of Exception. In May, 2105, faced with a 48-hour solidarity strike with agriculturalists affected by the project, the Ollanta Humala government ordered the militarization of eight regions in the country. In addition to the death of three people in less than a week, there were massive detentions of demonstrators as permitted by the suspension of constitutional guarantees³³.

As Senator Iván Cepeda documented in a recent report³⁴, there is a worrying and expanding phenomenon of ‘the

In the Ecuadorean Amazon, the Huaorani women of Sarayaku, faced with oil exploitation by the CGC Company and the tendering of petroleum block 74, have been leaders in the defense of their territory. The company pressured in many ways to have the area militarized and even threatened the population, insisting it had been mined; so “the Sarayaky women decided to walk along these paths to ensure none of their children would lose their lives. They initiated their reconnaissance under the heavy threat of imminent death, ending their circuit with relief at having recovered their right, and that of their children, to move freely about their territory” (Martínez, 2012. P. 33)

33. See: “Humala militariza 8 regiones ante las protestas contra proyecto minero de Grupo México” (Faced with protests against the Grupo Mexico’s mining project, Humala militarizes 8 regions); May, 2015. Observatory of Mining Conflicts in Latin America.

34. Presentation given during debates of the Commission II of the Colombian Senate, November 3, 2015.

privatization of security forces' in Colombia, justified by the State as a counter-terrorist strategy within the context of the armed conflict. The existence of multiple agreements between mining-energy companies and security forces to safeguard projects' infrastructure has been denounced. Currently in the country, there are twenty Special Energy and Highway Battalions, nine Special Operational Centers for the Protection of Critical State Infrastructure, and 1,229 signed agreements. The Mining-Energy Battalions have 80,000 members, representing almost 30% of the Armed Forces (GISBERT and PINTO, 2014).

Empresas Públicas de Medellín (Medellin Public Sector Enterprises), in the case of the Ituango Dam; Drummond and Prodeco in the coal mines in Cesar which financed paramilitary groups between 1996 and 2006; are among companies signing these agreements; as well as ECOPEL, PACIFIC RUBIALES, and METAPETROLEUM, GLENCORE and COLOMBIA AMERISUR EXPLORATIONS. Many companies hire functionaries with open legal processes for serious crimes; while at the same time, they frequently sign agreements with military battalions registering the greatest number of extrajudicial assassinations. In the framework of these agreements, the following infringements of peoples' rights, and particularly of defenders of human rights and nature, can be found:

- Legal persecution and criminalization of men and women leaders.
- Illegal and massive detentions during which sexual violence against women detainees occurs.
- Violent dispossession of land with no guarantees for local people.
- Threats, pursuits, and attacks against activists and armed harassment of civilians.
- Violation of the right to protest and freedom of expression.
- Restriction of movement.
- Violation of citizens and workers' right to assembly and association
- Forced disappearance and massacres.
- Bullying and all types of sexual violence against community women and activists.



II

Impact on Women's
Lives and Rights



As we have pointed out in previous sections, extractivism brings environmental devastation and a worsening of living condition for affected populations, violating rights to life, health, dignified housing, property, food, work, and the enjoyment of a healthy environment. In addition, the right to participation, protest, freedom of expression, assembly, and association are undermined.

In such contexts, it is important to recognize that extractivism, in its different forms, functions through pillage and neo-colonial expropriation (ACOSTA, 2012) and affects women's lives in specific ways, especially indigenous and Afro-descendant women. Therefore, on the one hand, there is an underlying central dichotomy of colonial modernity: the dichotic hierarchy between the human and non-human, imposed on the colonized at the service of the west (Lugones: 2010, 106). It is rooted in structural racism found in the dispossession of ancestral territories, and in the negation of native peoples' cultural practices and forms of caring for the environment. This has also meant denial of their rights to land, territory, self-determination, and participation, as enshrined in the ILO Convention 169.

On the other hand, it is based in patriarchal culture. As some feminist theorists have affirmed, there are cultural, historic, and symbolic parallels between women and nature, since they share patterns of domination. The mechanism used in both cases of domination is that of control and exploitation (Weinstock, 2014). However, the similarity between women and nature does not evolve from an essentialist relationship between them; rather the roots are to be found in binary thought structures, typical of western logic, both colonial and modern, that

establishes hierarchic dichotomies between society/nature, production/reproduction, public/private, reason/emotion, and masculine/feminine, where the second category of the pairing is devalued (Sevilla and Zuluaga, 2009).

In addition, in current contexts of mining and oil exploitation and hydro-electric dam construction, a ‘masculinization’ of territories occurs (Solano Ortiz, 2015; García Torres, 2014; *Miradas Críticas al Territorio desde el Feminismo* (Critical Approaches to Territory from a Feminist Perspective), 2013, in which community spaces and daily life are reconfigured around the desires and values of hegemonic masculinity³⁵ .

Based on testimonies and documentation from women’s organization working to defend territory, it is clear that practices of dispossession and the contamination of territory are expressed simultaneously with the worsening of patriarchal violence against women and girls and the exacerbation of gender inequality (Record of the First Encounter of the Collaborative Initiative Women, Territory, and the Environment, UAF-LA, 2014). The former touches all aspects of their lives and is expressed in the following ways:

“Extractivism, in its different forms, functions through pillage and neo-colonial expropriation and affects women’s lives in specific ways, especially indigenous and Afro-descendant”

Increasing Insecurity in the Work of Care

Extractivist activities cause dislocation in local economies and a rupture in “the previous forms of social reproduction of life, these being re-directed to serve the companies’ centralizing presence. The installation of a highly masculinized productive economy in the communities ensues, accentuating the sexual division of labor” (Gartor, 2014), and resulting in the undervaluing of the work of care, historically done by women.

The privatization of water and other common goods- whether due to limited access or the contamination of existing sources-generates an overload in women’s work (for example, they must travel much further to fetch water) and exposes them to deteriorating health. In addition, women have to look after people who get sick due to environmental contamination, receiving no remuneration, nor release from other habitual chores.

Loss of Economic Autonomy

The impossibility of accessing goods for survival due to their contamination or disappearance, as well as incompatibility between extractive and other productive activities, causes a drastic loss in women’s economic autonomy. For example, in the context of the construction of the Hidrosogamoso dam in

35. The reference is to hegemonic masculinity, based in patterns of colonization and colonial thinking. In this regard, we distance ourselves from a universal or essentialist understanding of masculinity, realizing communities’ and peoples’ social and gender relations are diverse.

Colombia, women lost significant income they had previously received from the sale of fish, due to their dying off and limited access to the river.

The lack of self-managed income increases women's vulnerability when confronted by violence, and this affects their health, considering that "with the scarcity of resources, women are obliged to reduce their intake of food or access to essential services in order to maintain their families³⁶".

Violation of the Right to Food and Loss of Food Sovereignty

The contamination of land, air, and water dramatically influences the loss of biodiversity and agrobiodiversity, as well as limiting access to inputs that ensure food sovereignty. This is especially serious for women since they usually assume responsibility for food production for home consumption and play a major role in the protection of native seeds. The loss of community autonomy and forced immersion into capitalist economies eliminates this role, rendering their ancestral and popular knowledge and practices, in terms of food provision, invisible. In many cases, men's health and well-being is the priority, and together with the idea that "they work harder", the custom that they eat first and better is perpetuated, leaving only small amounts of food for women and children and contributing to a differentiated worsening of health conditions.

Intrafamily Violence

The increase in inter-family conflicts and in intra-family violence is linked to the following factors: a) incompatibility between men's and women's perspectives on extractive activities: men are more inclined to hold favorable opinions due mainly to their interest in getting a job (reduced, part-time, and precarious work), while women maintain positions of definite rejection (CASA Collective, 2014); b) the worsening of family economies resulting in tensions and ruptures; and c) the increase in alcohol consumption, frequently related to high rates of violence.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is exercised by both public and private actors: private security companies, military and paramilitary groups and police. It includes harassment and verbal aggression of a sexual nature, tracking, and rape, even collective rape. It is recurrent in contexts of violent dispossession and repression of peaceful protest, and is used as a form of criminalization against women defenders.

36. Report of the Independent Expert on the Effects of Foreign Debt and other Related International Financial Obligations of States on the Full Enjoyment of all Human Rights, Particularly Economic, Social and Cultural rights. A/67/304 of 2012, paragraph 40.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF MILITARIZATION OF TERRITORIES IN GUATEMALA

In Guatemala, sexual violence is used to ensure dispossession of territories, with joint action between public security forces and private agents being highlighted. In 2007, Maya-Q'eqchis indigenous women from the Lote Ocho community suffered multiple sexual violations in a context of violent eviction realized by the Police and private security forces pertaining to the Guatemala Nickel Company, subsidiary of the Canadian transnational HudBay Minerals (Solano Ortiz, 2015).

Here, as well, the Pérez Molina government imposed a State of Siege in the departments of Huehuetenango (Santa Cruz Barillas) in 2012, and in Jalapa and Santa Rosa in 2013, as a strategy for neutralizing broad-based anti-extractive and anti-mining resistance, especially related to projects developed by the Spanish Hidro-Santacruz and the Canadian Tahoe Resources and Goldcorp³⁷. Women's organizations, such as AMISMMAXAJ, denounced soldiers and police for their abuse of power and different types of attacks, harassment, and sexual violence during the State of Siege, and even the arrival of babies resulting from rape (Cabnal, 2015).

37, On repeated occasions, under the pretext of national security, high crime levels, or disturbance of the peace, the Guatemalan State has turned to the use of the Public Order Law to dissolve and repress public demonstrations and social protests. Over a period of four years (2008-2012), "67 states of exception or their extension were recorded, for an average of 16.75 per year": Repression and Criminalization of Social Protest in Guatemala, Report prepared for the IACHR to draw attention to the repression and criminalization of social protest in Guatemala, at the 149th sessional period, October 17th, 2013, par. 87.

Violation of the Right to Health

As the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities affirms, there are “millions of women world-wide who suffer extremely deficient living and housing conditions, including serious contamination, over-crowding, water contamination, and insufficient basic sanitation services, all of which cause serious mental and physical health problems, and result in the death of thousands of women or a permanent state of poor health” (Resolution 1998/15).

For the most part, resource extraction projects are developed in isolated rural areas where, even before the arrival of the companies, peoples’ right to health was never guaranteed. With the initiation of activities, new respiratory, skin, hearing and other diseases, related to mining and oil operations and to the fumigation of monoculture crops, increase or make their appearance. Besides, the rate of sexually-transmitted diseases, miscarriages, at-risk pregnancies, and fetal malformations increase (Escuela Mujer y Minería [School on Women and Mining], 2100.

As was mentioned above, women are more vulnerable to illnesses due to contact, mainly, with contaminated water. In Ecuador, according to studies undertaken by Acción Ecológico (Ecological Action), in oil-producing areas, cancer constitutes 32% of the causes of death, three times higher than the national average and affecting a higher percentage of women (Martínez, 2012).

From the perspective of Sustainable Activism, UAF-LA’s political-ethical commitment, we have identified risks to,

and physical and emotional consequences for, the health of women defenders of the land, as a result of exhaustion, internal organizational conflicts, fear of the magnitude of the challenges, and permanent insecurity regarding their families’ and communities’ futures; this added to the overload in organizational work and the work of family care. Often, such factors are underestimated by organizations and by the activists themselves, and tend not to be documented.

Violation of the Right to Participation in Issues Related to the Environment³⁸

According to international human rights standards related to citizen participation in environmental affairs³⁹, States are obliged to guarantee this right without discrimination; however, the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, Maina Kiai, warns in his 2015 report that “citizen engagement in the natural resources sector is notoriously difficult, with some sectors, such as oil, gas and mining, presenting heightened risks of human rights abuses because they are especially lucrative”. (A/HRC/29/25, paragraph 9).

He states that restrictions on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association means that “authenticity questions automatically arise as to how genuine consultation processes or decisions are taken and how valid is the expression of free, prior and informed consent of affected parties”. (A/HRC/29/25, paragraph 11).

38. A detailed exposé on the topic can be found in the collaborative research undertaken by the Urgent Action Fund of Latin America, together with activists, in the publication *Mujeres defendiendo el Territorio. Experiencias de participación en América Latina* (Women Defending Territory. Experiences in Participation in Latin America. Available at: <http://www.fondoaccionurgente.org/>)

39. The right of all people to participate in public affairs is based in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights. The requisite nature of participation in affairs related to the environment is laid out in diverse international instruments such as the 1992 Rio Declaration (principle 10), United Nations 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development, Stockholm 2001 Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations 1992 Convention on the Struggle against Desertification (articles 3 and 5), the United Nations 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Aarhus 1998 Convention A/HRC/25/53, 2013).

In October, 2015, United Nations experts issued a Declaration related to negotiating an ECLAC regional instrument on environmental democracy, indicating its “strong support for government efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean to achieve agreement on a regional instrument to guarantee the right to access to information, participation, and justice in environmental affairs”.

The document emphasizes the need to adopt a legally binding treaty guaranteeing the effective implementation of Principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration, which focuses on access to information and citizen participation in environmental decision-making and stresses the need to move ahead with “the protection of environmental defenders, including indigenous activists and leaders and women defenders, who confront high risk of harassment and even death in many countries”. It also mentions that the effectiveness and justice of policies in a framework of environmental democracy depend on the full exercise of these rights, particularly by indigenous peoples and women⁴⁰.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights makes a similar claim in its latest report on indigenous and Afro-descendant populations and extractivist activity, pointing out “it is crucial that in decision-making spaces, States and indigenous peoples promote women’s participation through coordinated action.

In this regard, the IACHR has identified the role of indigenous women in diverse aspects of the defense of indigenous territories” (OEA/Ser.L/V/ II. Doc. 47/15 31 December 2015 IACHR, Recommendations, Numeral B).

However, in Latin America, systematic violation of this right is evident; mechanisms of participation and consultation are weak, non-binding, contrary to the legitimate interests of organizations and social movements, and frequently face legal or administrative impediments (Observatory of Mining Conflicts in Latin America- OCMAL [Spanish acronym] 2015). Despite the multiple dispositions and international instruments guaranteeing women’s participation in issues related to the environment and the importance of women’s activities in the sphere of environmental defense, their work does not translate into equitable participation in decision-making (Aliaga and Cuenca, 2015).

Throughout the region, the absolute non-existence of specific mechanisms for this purpose is evident, as is the absence of a gender perspective in existing participation mechanisms. Often, these spaces are racist and patriarchal, determined by a logic of domination over nature and over the men and women to be exploited in the territories; in these cases, State and private company representatives negotiate with male community members ‘as equals’ (Ruales, 2015). The following chart shows the main barriers in this regard.

40. The declaration is available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/SP/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16630&LangID=S#sthash.79GjcEVE.dpuf>

BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN ISSUES RELATED TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Internal barriers in community contexts

- Psychological and physical violence within homes, exacerbated by alcoholism and the precarious nature of family incomes, typical of contexts of extractive economies.
- Overload in the work of care: generally, women must work more than men and in non-paid labor, meaning they have less disposable time to participate in decision-making spaces.
- Lack of recognition of their organizational work.
- Exclusion and silencing. Since women's voices question and challenge naturalized practice, the fact that they speak up and express themselves generates tensions in their communities and organizations (ECLAC, 2014). For this reason, they tend to be excluded and segregated. Historic discrimination in access to formal education, and even community-designed education, generates insecurity in women and diminishes their capacity to assume leadership positions in their organizations.
- Stigmatization of feminine leadership as witnessed in slander, accusations, and harassment.

External Barriers by Public and Private Actors

- Absence of a gender perspective in legal procedures and implementation manuals related to prior consultation, and more generally, in regard to citizens' participation in environmental issues. Similarly, the non-existence of this perspective in the realization of environmental impact studies is underscored.
- Difficulties with Spanish-language communication. With respect to the lack of culturally appropriate information and communication, women are more affected, since a larger percentage, with respect to men, speak only their native language and do not speak Spanish (Raico, 2011).
- Cooptation and negotiation with male leaders. In many cases, it has been shown that community affairs regarding territory move to the sphere of the private, a masculine negotiating space that generally negates the interests of communities and peoples, and especially women's demands. On several occasions, these spaces are mediated through alcohol that facilitate 'man-to-man' pacts governing the future of peoples.
- Armed territorial control by public and private, legal and illegal, agents that increases women's vulnerability and weakens their capacity to influence decision-making spaces.
- Criminalization and political violence used by public and private agents that worsen when indigenous women are involved, since they connect with manifestations of racism. (ECLAC, 2014).

Creation of Prostitution Networks and Increase in Sexual Slavery

As denounced in a declaration from the Escuela de Mujer y Minería de Colombia (School on Women and Mining in Colombia), the demand for sexual services by functionaries and workers from the mining-energy sector is permanent:- servitude, human trafficking, female migration, as well as stigmatization of women who undertake sexual work, which is promoted by this type of economic activity (Escuela Mujer y Minería, [School on Women and Mining], 2011). The situation in the department of Cesar in Colombia is a case in point, where Drummond, among other multinationals, is developing open-pit mining. Here, the existence of networks, which attract many young women and girls from other regions of the country for sex work in the camps located close to the mines, has been documented (Solano Ortiz, 2015).

“The companies- with the complicity of States- evict women from the land they own, and from the collective lands of indigenous and Afro-descendants’ communities on which they live”

constructed on the basis of gender, race, and class. The companies- with the complicity of States- evict women from the land they own, and from the collective lands of indigenous and Afro-descendants’ communities on which they live. At the same time, the extractivist model ignores women as beneficiaries of agrarian reform, criminalizing their struggles

Violation of the Right to Land and Property

As the Special Rapporteur for the Right to Food affirms, for women, land is more than an economic asset; “it is also a means of empowerment, as the greater economic independence that results from land ownership enhances the woman’s role in decision-making and allows her to garner more social, family and community support” (A/HRC/22/50, 2012, Paragraph 31). However, around land access, women are subjected to many forms of discrimination: according to the FAO, peasant women produce up to 90% of the food required by marginalized populations in rural areas and yet they own only 1% of the land in the world (La Vía Campesina, 2009).

Extractivism deepens social inequalities and land distribution structural inequity in Latin America, inequities historically

demanding the right to land, and disallowing their participation in decision-making spaces⁴¹.

After territorial eviction, women are even more vulnerable. Despite some progress in national legislation and international standards to eradicate discrimination in this regard, resettlement and compensation policies lack a gender focus that ensure women are included as autonomous subjects. They are left adrift in a sea of patriarchal customary norms.

Loss of Cultural Identity and Weakening of Women's Community and Ancestral Roles

With extractive industries, “there is an assault on the cultural and spiritual identity of native peoples’ and peasant communities’ territories, ripping social fabric apart, and destroying family, organizational, and community ties”. (Escuela Mujer y Minería; [School on Women and Mining], 2011). This rupture, added to displacement and territorial subjugation, undermines the survival and transmission of ancestral and popular knowledge in areas like medicine, gastronomy, and collective memory, in which women play an indispensable role.

The testimony of a Wayuú indigenous woman, affected by the exploitation of the El Cerrejón mine in Colombia, is an excellent example: “I am a woman”... a spiritual guide, but I no longer have land or sleep; my medicinal plants have

ceased speaking, because I am a lost women in my own culture (...) many patients come here to see me, but I no longer recognize their illnesses (...) because I no longer have contact with our waters or our yujas, which we use to produce our own food...” (Wayuú spiritual leader, interviewed by Fuerza de Mujeres Wayuú [Force of Wayuú Women], 2014).

Attacks and Criminalization of Women Defenders of Territory and Nature

Due to the magnitude of the interests and investments at play with extractive industries, defenders of land tend to be exposed to multiple attacks, perpetrated with the goal of neutralizing their work. In its Annual 2014-2015 Report, Amnesty International assured that in Latin America “people who struggle against impunity, those who work for women’s rights, or those who concentrate on human rights related to land, territory and natural resources continued to be especially targeted” (Amnesty International, 2015).

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights affirms that targeting this group of defenders worsens “in contexts where there are serious tensions between sectors that support certain industrial activities, like the extractive industry, which have enormous economic interests at

41. As an example of such a strategy, the emblematic case of women from peasant organizations and landless women, prosecuted in the context of the Curuguaty massacre in Paraguay, can be consulted. This case has been documented in the Update of the Report “Patterns of Criminalization and Limitations on the Effective Participation of Women Defenders of Environmental Rights, Territories, and Nature in the Americas”, published in June, 2016 by the Urgent Action Fund of Latin America.

stake, and those sectors that resist the implementation of such projects⁴². The countries at greatest risk have been found to be Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Ecuador, Panama, and Peru.

Currently, Brazil continues to be “the country with the greatest absolute number of assassinated defenders, Honduras being the country with the highest rate per capita” (ISHR- International Service for Human Rights, 2015, Page 27). During 2015, 20 assassinations of defenders of land occurred in the region: two in Guatemala, one in Honduras, one in Brazil, and 16 in Colombia (ISHR, 2015).

Women defenders’ struggles are intense, since they must confront an economic model based on inequality, militarization, racism, and a patriarchal culture. As a result, they are exposed to physical and verbal attacks, threats of death and of sexual abuse, assassination attempts, and femicide (Urgent Action Fund of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2015). We have found⁴³ that the majority of such attacks against women defenders happens during violent forced evictions. Defenders are physically and sexually assaulted by Special Police Forces, or by paramilitary groups contracted by the companies and acting under the auspices of the State.

In October, 2015, together with women’s organizations and funds from Latin America, we made a presentation to the first thematic regional audience on “Patterns of Criminalization and Limitations on the Effective

42. Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR); Second Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas; December, 2011. Par. 312.

43. Findings from the Encounter on Criminalization of Human Rights Defenders in Latin America, convened by the UAF-LA in Lima, in December, 2015.

Women Defenders of Land in Latin America Attacked and Assassinated

According to the Mesoamerican Registry of Attacks against Woman Human Rights Defenders⁴⁴, between 2012 and 204, defenders of land, territory, and natural resources were the human rights defenders most attacked, suffering 525 incidents, which represented 31% of the total of 1,688 attacks against women defenders.

In Latin America, between 1994 and 2014, the assassination of the following sister strugglers was registered:

MÉXICO

- 2010 Apr  **Betty Cariño**
Member of the Mexican Network of People Affected by Mining
- 2012 Jun  **Fabiola Osorio Bernáldez**
Environmental activist
- Oct  **Manuela Martha Solís**
The leader of Chihuahua Barzón
- Nov  **Juventina Villa Mojica**
Leader of the Organization of Peasant Ecologists of the Sierra de Petatlan and Coyuca de Catalan .

EL SALVADOR

- 2009 Dec  **Dora Alicia Sorto**
Member of the Environmental Committee of Cabañas (CAC) .

COSTA RICA

- 1994 Dec  **María del Mar Cordero**
Member of the Costa Rican Ecological Association (AECO)
- 2011 Feb  **Kimberley Blackwell**
Canadian conservationist based in Costa Rica

HONDURAS

- 1995** Feb  **Jeannette Kawas**
Founder of PROLANSATE
- 2010** Aug  **María Teresa Flores**
Member of the Coordinating Council of Peasant Organizations of Honduras (COCOCH)
- 2013** Aug  **María Enriqueta Matute**
Defender of the Tolupán territory
- 2014** Mar  **Uva Herlinda Castellanos**
Member of the Peasant Associative Production Company Bellavista
- Mar  **Alma Yaneth Díaz Ortega**
Member of the Peasant Associative Production Company Bellavista
- Aug  **Margarita Murillo**
Leader and member of the National Popular Resistance Front
- 2016** Mar  **Bertha Cáceres**
Feminist, indigenous leader of the Lenca people , member of the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras , COPINH and Goldman Prize 2015. He led the defense of River Gualcarque against the construction of the dam Agua Zarca , in White River .

COLOMBIA

- 2011** Feb  **Sandra Viviana Cuéllar**
Environmentalist locking towards the protection of watersheds and wetlands
- 2013** Sep  **Adelinda Gómez Gaviria**
Farmer and leader of the Maciceñas Women Local Process
- 2014** Aug  **Edith del Consuelo Santos**
President Direct Influence Area Boards Corporation

GUATEMALA

- 2011** Jun  **MARIA MARGARITA CHUB CHÉ**
Community leader Parana, Panzos , Alta Verapaz
- 2012** Jan  **Sandra Saguil Nájera**
President of the Community Development Council (COCODE) of the village of El Filo Hecate , Huité , Zacapa
- 2014** Apr  **Marilyn Topacio Reynoso**
Young community and anti- mining activist leader

BRASIL

- 2011** May  **Maria do Espírito Santo**
Defender of the territory against tree felling in the agroextractivist Project (Paex) Praiaalta Piranheira
- 2016** Jun  **Nilce de Souza Magalhães**
Member of the Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens (MAB) in Rondonia , who was missing since January of the same year. Nilce , better known as ‘ Nicinha‘, had been denouncing human rights violations committed by the company Sustainable Energy of Brazil, responsible for the construction of Jirau dam⁴⁵.

CONVENTIONS



Murdered



Disappeared

44. The Registry of Aggressions against Women Human Rights Defenders of the Mesoamerican Women Human Rights Defenders Initiative gathers statistics on aggressions against women defenders in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Mexico.

45 See: “MILITANTE DO MAB DESAPARECE EM RONDÔNIA”, Terra sem Males. Available at: <http://www.terrasem males.com.br/militante-do-mab-desaparece-em-rondonia/>

Participation of Women Defenders of Environmental Rights, Territory, and Nature in the Americas, during Period 156 of Sessions of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights⁴⁶. In June, 2015, we published an update on this report, following up on cases that had been documented and on extractive projects involved in criminalization processes.

Based on documentation and case study analysis from Chile, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, Honduras, and Paraguay, we identified the following patterns of criminalization: a) as a legal phenomenon, in other words, prosecution; b) as public display by means of stigmatization and; c) based on different forms of harassment (Urgent Action Fund of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2015).

In the majority of cases, these criminalization patterns do not happen in an isolated manner, rather they are mutually reinforcing; it is common for prosecuted defenders to have been previously harassed, stigmatized, and victims of surveillance, interceptions, and other forms of persecution. At the same time, after being freed, their vulnerability in the face of new legal framing or other aggressions does not end.

46. Complete report available at www.fondoaccionurgente.org.co



DEFENDERS

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III

Latin American Women's Proposals for the Defense of Territory

In Latin America, struggles for the defense of life against environmental devastation and dispossession can be witnessed in collective action and demands to de-commodify common goods, in order to ensure the survival of peoples' cultural identities. These struggles have placed the protection of water, of land and territory, of minerals and biodiversity, at center stage, and have resisted the privatization of the management of said goods, which burst onto the scene as an expression of neoliberalism in the decade of the 90's (Seamone, et.al, 2012).

Along this route, critical points of view have appeared, given the frenetic exploitation of nature from capitalist logic. There have been disputes around the meaning of the public and of democracy itself, thereby contributing to the construction of alternative forms of production, management, and organization, based on communal action.

Through invaluable activities of mobilization and resistance, based in daily practices, women have been part of these historic struggles, and are currently gaining in strength and visibility every day. At the same time, their vulnerability increases, given the magnitude of destabilizing political and economic interests.

Besides being at the forefront, and exposing their bodies to prevent the expropriation and destruction of their territories, they have elaborated critical understandings of the patriarchal and racist nature of extractivism, and the particular ways it affects them, based on information exchanges and collective constructions. They have reflected about their lives as defenders and activists and questioned sexist practices within their organizations and social movements, bringing to light the violence and discrimination exercised against them.

By politicizing the spaces of everyday life, women have transgressed traditionally-assigned gender stereotypes and roles and have created autonomous spaces where they can implement more democratic dynamics within organizations that are grounded in solidarity and collective caring.

Anti-patriarchal, Anti-racist, and Anti-capitalist

Understanding that oppressive systems shore each other up⁴⁷, Latin American women assume defense of their territories as a unified struggle in order to simultaneously combat threats they have named anti-patriarchal, anti-racist, and anti-capitalist. We remember the words of Berta Cáceres:

“I believe that when we understand that not only do we need to confront capitalism and racism, but that we also have to de-structure patriarchy, is really when we understand how we are doing in organizational development and when we are on the road to human dignity, because I believe that if we do not conceptualize and understand this, it is impossible to understand how we can develop human dignity on this planet.

We talk about women’s dignity, whether indigenous or not; we need to change all economic, cultural, environmental, and political injustice, as well as all this

aggression, violence, and domination of women. They cannot be separated, this is the point I believe we need to understand: they cannot be separated; all the elements of triple domination are in place at the same time; we cannot separate racism on the one hand and postpone patriarchy; or say that justice for women comes after X wins power. If all these elements of triple domination- racism, patriarchy, and classism- are not taken into consideration, then we are going to once again repeat the history of domination we want to get rid of”.

(Berta Cáceres, en Gargallo, 2013, Page 77).

47. Women’s perspectives in this sense are nourished not only by exchanges with conceptual proposals from Latin American feminisms- such as decolonization-, but also from their own experiences of struggle. As Berta Cáceres commented: “one case in point is the struggle we have led in COPINH (...), which from its founding, was committed to working for the defense of women’s rights, although we had never participated in a workshop on feminist theory, never read a book, nothing...It grew out of our own need within the group, a mixed group”. (interview with Berta Cáceres in Gargallo, 2013, p. 77).

In Ecuador, women’s organizations such as the Frente de Defensoras de la Pachamama (Front of Women Defenders of the Pachamama)⁴⁸; and eco-feminist proposals from Acción Ecológica (Ecological Action) and the Miradas Críticas al territorio desde el Feminismo (Feminist Critical Approaches to Territory) Collective; as well as organizations such as Colectivo de Acciones Socioambientales (Collective for Socio-Environmental Actions), CASA (Spanish acronym) from Bolivia, have produced critiques of the patriarchal, classist, and racial nature of the extractivist model implemented by progressive governments, showing how their discourse and practice worsen violence and dispossession against indigenous peoples and women, as well as continuity within the capitalist development paradigm.

“If Our Blood is Involved, So Is Our Land; If Our Land Is Involved, So Is Our Blood”⁴⁹

The inseparability of the struggle for defense of territory and for women’s dignity has also been suggested by Guatemalan grassroots feminists. Based on their experience in expelling mining from their lands and confronting discrimination within their organizations and indigenous communities, they have contributed the political category of ‘body-land territory’, in order to highlight the connection between the commodification of women’s bodies and the exploitation of land. They insist it is impossible to struggle for the self determination of peoples, if internally, women are assaulted

(Cabnal, 2015). In this way, the concept of body as the first territory to be recovered and defended broadens the dimensions of sovereignty (food, economic, energy) claimed by Latin American social movements (Flórez, 2012).

Astrid Ulloa has named diverse experiences and processes of environmental defense by women in Colombia and Latin America as “feminisms of territory”. These feminisms are based on the affirmation of life’s continuity, on a non-fragmented concept of human and non-human life, and their sustainability. For example, the connection between the human and the non-human; between territory-land and territory-body, is expressed in women’s struggles for food sovereignty, which simultaneously supports caring for health through consumption of healthy and culturally appropriate food, as well as the defense of the necessary common goods for autonomous and agro-ecological production, such as native seeds, land, and water.

Grounded in their experiences in defending territory, women are committed to transformation that is based on caring for life in its multiple forms. As Svampa affirms (2015), “in the context of current resistance to extractivism, women’s language of what is valuable, grounded in a culture of care, tends to express a pro-communal, potentially radical, ethos. It conceives of social relationships from another logic and rationality, questioning capitalism on the basis of recognizing eco-dependence and the value of reproductive work in the social sphere” (Svampa, 2015. Page 131). Often, these commitments are related to a broad vision and experience of care that integrates the care of common goods, care of other, and care of oneself.

48. See, for example, Resolutions from the recent Encounter of Women from the Countryside and the City in Ecuador, convened by the Front of Women Defenders of the Pachamama, along with other organizations, and available at: <http://defensoraspachamama.blogspot.com.co/2016/07/resoluciones-del-encuentro-de-mujeres.html>, July 5, 2016.

49. Slogan from Mayan grassroots feminists- Xinka of Guatemala.

Integrated and Spiritual Protection

At the same time, the comprehensiveness of care is reflected in how women's and native peoples' organizations think about protection:- protection of women defenders of human rights and nature is necessarily interlaced with protection of territory. In this regard, organizations propose collective measures and practices of protection and healing, which take into account indigenous, Afro-descendant and garífuna spirituality. Such is the case of Mamá Maquín and Mujeres Aq'ab'al in Guatemala and OFRANEH and COPINH in Honduras, to mention only a few.

In Cajamarca, Peru, where the Yanacocha Mining Company is extracting gold from high altitude mountains and razing sacred lakes, native communities have constituted Rondas Campesinas (Peasant Patrols) to protect their territory and defenders from attacks and criminalization. In the Colombian south-west, the Nasa People have consolidated the Guardia Indígena (Indigenous Guard), establishing a line of protection in their territories where encounters, assemblies, and activities of peaceful resistance against extractivism take place. This Guard, in which both men and women participate, has gained extensive national legitimacy and has expanded to include activities of articulation and mobilization of broad-based social sectors.

“We Women Speak of Defending Mother Earth, Not Because It Belongs to Us, But Because We Are Part of It”

This phrase, used by Aura Lolita Chávez, a Mayan K'che' leader, defender of human rights and territory in Guatemala, expresses the constituent concepts of nature that underlie women's struggles in Latin America. These visions, diverse and dynamic, share in denouncing the idea of nature as object, separated from society, and susceptible to domination and commodification.

Nourished by a multiplicity of native peoples', Afro-descendant, garífuna, gypsy, and peasant knowledge systems, and through exchanges with academic knowledge, as well as that produced by environmental and feminist organizations, these concepts are counterpoised to a technocratic vision of territory, one that supposes the rationalization of 'natural resources' and which, along the way, instrumentalizes women's and native peoples' knowledge and contributions. This commitment implies a transformative focus which does not presuppose the application of environmental and technological norms directed to conservation and sustainable development, and the equal participation of women in the management of resources⁵⁰, but rather to an ethical-political re-definition of 'women' and 'nature' (Sevilla and Zuluaga, s.f.) and of the relationship between the human and non-human.

50. These visions take precedence in international organizations and governmental institutions, and form part of the current of liberal ecofeminism (Sevilla and Zuluaga, s.f.).

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS FOR THE DEFENSE OF LIFE

In Latin America, women's struggles assume heterogeneous forms, depending on local and national contexts and the nature of threats faced in their territories. Not all women's leadership, nor their organizations, incorporate a gender focus, nor do they assume feminism; neither do all of them express an explicit commitment to the promotion and protection of women's rights.

- National-level, sectoral, women's associations
- Autonomous women's organizations, for the most part locally-based, the central axis of which is environmental defense.
- Regional-level articulations and networks of women's organizations, whose major thrust is the defense of territory, or which include this aspect in their work plans, due to its particular relevance for women human rights defenders.
- Associations, movements, and community resistance processes; mixed organizations of a local, national or regional nature, membership being persons affected by specific extractive projects.
- Ethnic organizations: local or national organizations of indigenous peoples or Afro descendants.
- Mixed, inter-ethnic, and multisector women's articulations: coordinations, confederations, and associations of distinct interest and ethnic groups
- Non-governmental organizations and environmental collectives that develop an area of specific intervention on the issue

REPERTOIRES FOR ACTION

In the context of their work in caring for and defense of the environment and nature, women develop diverse activities that have allowed their particular demands and perspectives to be put on agendas, and on several occasions, they have managed to stop or temporarily paralyze extractive interventions that threaten their territories. At the same time, significant transformations at the personal and collective levels have resulted, constructing new practices directed towards integral forms of protection and security (Sustainable Activism).

- Creation of spaces for articulation and exchange of experiences related to defense, at the national and regional levels. The Escuela Mujer y Minería (Women and Mining School), convened by CENSAT Agua-Viva from 2011, has brought Colombian defenders and activists together and includes the participation of activists from other countries in the region.
- Construction of regional networks which contribute to visibility, accompaniment, and strengthening of local resistance nodes. Among these, we note: Red Unión Latinoamericana de Mujeres (Network of the Latin American Women's Union), ULAM (Spanish acronym), and the Red Latinoamericana de Mujeres Defensoras de Derechos Ambientales (Latin American Network of Women Defenders of Environmental Rights).
- Mobilization and concrete actions to prevent the advance of extractive activities, and to recover land: sit-ins, marches, permanent territorial occupations to block companies' installations. In these settings, women act as spokespeople, coordinators, and are also responsible for the logistics required for sustainability over time of such activities.
- Activities demanding protection mechanisms at national and international levels.
- Advocacy initiatives with local and national authorities, and international human rights organisms.
- Documentation and denouncement of attacks and criminalization of defenders
- Elaboration of communication strategies to bring to light environmental conflicts, the particular impacts on their lives, and their defense actions. These are useful as a protection mechanism in cases of attacks and criminalization.
- Local and national-level training centers that promote inter-generational exchanges and organizational strengthening processes.
- Support for popular and autonomous consultations so communities can express their wishes concerning decisions and activities that affect them, as well as the demand for prior consultation in accordance with international standards.
- Daily practices of resistance related to food sovereignty- preservation of native seeds and their traditional uses, agro-ecological practices- and the popular economy of solidarity.
- Practices and reflection regarding self-care and the care of others, as well as strategies for personal and collective healing.

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