

# Vanishing Footprints:

The Race to Protect  
Isolated Indigenous  
Peoples in the Amazon's  
Yavari-Tapiche Corridor

Earth  
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AIDSESP



ORPIO

Organización Regional de  
Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente



COIAB

# TABLE OF CONTENT

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## THE LAND OF BRAVE MEN 04

## KEY FINDINGS 05

## THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE 05

## THE LONG ROAD TO A CORRIDOR 06

## THREATS: MAPPED 09

Oil Threats: Poison in the Water 09

Infrastructure: The Fishbone Effect 10

Mining and Logging: Felling the Amazon 12

## THE ENCROACHING MENACE: UNMAPPED THREATS 15

The Deadly Vector of Illegal Mining 15

Bullets, Beef, and Bibles 16

## INDIGENOUS STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS 18

## A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY 20

## The Land Of Brave Men



Illegal logging camp in Alto Tamaya, Peru, where unauthorized extraction is driving deforestation and encroaching on Indigenous territories. Image credit: Courtesy of ORPIO

One of the largest contiguous, intact forests in the Amazon, the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor is home to the world's highest concentration of Indigenous Peoples living in isolation and initial contact (often shortened to the Spanish acronym, PIACI).<sup>1</sup> In this "Land of Brave Men," as it is called by some Indigenous groups, carbon-dense forests and headwaters sustain globally significant biodiversity, which includes at least 150 mammal species, more than 530 bird species, and 500 species of fish.<sup>2</sup>

The Corridor covers more than 16 million hectares, or twice the size of Panama,<sup>3</sup> along Brazil's western border states of Amazonas and Acre with Peru's Loreto and Ucayali departments in the Amazon River's southern basin. Most of the Corridor's forests (66%) are in Brazil where 90% are under some protected status. Brazil recognizes at least 17 isolated Indigenous groups who live inside the Corridor, mostly in the Vale do Javari Indigenous Territory.<sup>4</sup>

On the Peru side, the Corridor is a puzzle of national parks and protected areas that overlap with Indigenous reserves.<sup>5</sup>

While Peru has recognized PIACI peoples,<sup>6</sup> including the Matsés, Isconahua, Remo, Kapanawa, Mayoruna, Matis, Korubo, Marubo, Kulina - Pano, Flecheiro (Tavakina), the process to approve all the lands for the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor has been mired in bureaucracy for decades.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time oil, gas, logging, and mining, along with road and highway projects, and criminal networks that use

illegal hunting, fishing, and gold mining to launder drug money, pose existential threats to the region's ecosystems and those who depend on them.<sup>8</sup>

Indigenous organizations have worked toward the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor as a defense strategy, particularly for PIACI peoples, whom they consider family. Without a Corridor of protection, forced contact increases the risk of infections to which they have no resistance, conflict, and the loss of species essential to their survival.<sup>9</sup>

**"They say 'we are going to have development,' but it will be for the big companies, big agriculture, for cars and gas - they will have it. We'll deal with disease, sexual exploitation, narcotics, and crime - that's what we'll get."**

**- Leo Chuma Teca Beso, President of the Matsés Native Community in Loreto, Peru<sup>10</sup>**

## Key Findings

This spatial analysis is the result of a collaboration among the Regional Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the East (ORPIO), the Coordination of the Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB), the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDSEP), and Earth Insight to document the threats to the communities and ecosystems within the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor, along with the promise of this Indigenous-led solution against biocultural extinction and the climate crisis.

### These Key Findings include:

- Oil and gas blocks overlap 10% of the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor.
- Oil and gas blocks overlap 1.7 million hectares of intact tropical moist forest in the Corridor.
- Oil and gas blocks overlap 713,000 hectares of Protected Areas in the Corridor and 907,000 hectares of Key Biodiversity Areas.
- Logging concessions overlap 669,000 hectares of Key Biodiversity Areas.
- Logging concessions overlap 500,000 hectares of the Peruvian side of the Corridor and intact tropical moist forest.
- 13 mining concessions overlap with the Corridor.
- Proposed roads overlap 190 kilometers of the Corridor.
- Protected Areas make up 75% of the Corridor and 88% of PIACI reserves within it.
- Key Biodiversity Areas make up 19% of the corridor and 16% of PIACI reserves within it.

## The First Line of Defense

The Matsés people, along with other Indigenous communities who live within and in the buffer zones of the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor, are considered the “first line of defense” for their isolated relatives. Since the early 2000s, they have played a pivotal role in the development of a binational corridor that links Indigenous territorial governance, no-go zones for extractives, with the protection of isolated peoples.

For centuries, despite fleeting encounters (some peaceful, most violent) with missionaries, armies, extractive industries, and poachers, the Matsés people in both Brazil and Peru avoided direct contact until 1969. While the word “Matsés” also means “kin,”<sup>12</sup> Leo Chuma Teca Beso, President of the Matsés Native Community in

Loreto, Peru, has direct PIACI family ties. His grandparents lived in isolation somewhere near Loreto, Peru. Similar to earlier histories of Indigenous Peoples in the Corridor, President Leo Chuma Teca Beso’s parents live in a remote village while other Matsés live deep in forests to avoid contact.<sup>13</sup>

The Matsés (also called the Mayuruna in Brazil) are renowned hunters and warriors with an intimate knowledge of ancestral forest paths that crisscross the Corridor. In some Matsés stories, they learned agriculture from the curassow bird, their names from the water people, and forest remedies from those who live downstream.<sup>14</sup>

Researchers relied on Matsés’ knowledge of more than 100 different rainforest habitats used by mammals alone,<sup>15</sup> to confirm that the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor region holds the highest primate diversity in the world.<sup>16</sup>

**“The government often says there are so many obstacles to creating a territorial reserve. But we protect territories with or without the state. We don’t know what is going to happen, but we are here now, defending the territory.”**

**–Leo Chuma Teca Beso, President of the Matsés Native Community<sup>11</sup>**



Leo Chuma Teca Beso, President of the Matsés Native Community, an Indigenous leader advocating for the protection of ancestral territories and the rights of peoples in voluntary isolation. Image credit: Courtesy of ORPIO



Aerial view of Amazon rainforest sheltering Indigenous communities whose ancestral homes and ways of life depend on the protection of these intact forests. Image credit: Courtesy of ORPIO

Officially, Matsés territory extends from Vale do Javari Indigenous territory in Brazil to the Matsés Native Community in Loreto, Peru. However, they also consider the Matsés National Reserve and the eastern region of the Sierra del Divisor National Park their ancestral territory.<sup>17</sup> As President Leo Chum Teca Beso noted, **“Native land titles in the Amazon – they give us these little pieces of land, but in reality we walk for kilometers. Our territory exists independently of the state.”**

Over the last sixty years or so, contact has been a mixed blessing. President Leo Chum Teca Beso believes the younger generations are losing their ancestral knowledge. It might be a sign of the times that while elders and PIACI Matsés mark forest paths by gently bending plants, young Matsés slash their way with machetes.<sup>18</sup>

Yet, it might also be a testament to a different concept of time when President Leo Teca Chum Beso says that PIACI people and Matsés territory exist regardless of outsiders’ “recognition.” He echoes Raymond Mean Mayuruna, who in 2014 as president of the historic binational Matsés organization, the Organización General Mayuruna (OGM) declared, **“We are the Matsés people. We are not separated by countries. We live in neither Brazil nor Peru. We live in our land.”**<sup>19</sup>

A year earlier, hundreds of Matsés people had met on the Peru/Brazil border to stop oil exploration on their ancestral land, which posed an existential threat to their isolated relatives.<sup>20</sup> In a rare moment of victory, in 2017 the oil company pulled out of oil block 135.

## The Long Road to a Corridor

The Matsés' most recent history of resistance was integral to the strategy for the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor. For example, evidence of the footprints of PIACI people collected near Lot 135 in 2012 was presented in support of the Yavari-Tapiche Indigenous reserve years later.<sup>21</sup>

The long road to a binational PIACI territorial corridor along the Brazil-Peru border began with an invitation from the Regional Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the East (ORPIO) to Indigenous organizations in both countries as a defense strategy against similar threats. Key players, including ORPIO, AIDSESP, Federation of Native Communities of the Tapiche and Blanco Rivers, the Matsés Native Community, the General Organization of the Mayuruna (OGM) and the Union of Indigenous Peoples of the Javari Valley (UNIVAJA), with the support of Centro de Trabalho Indigenista (CTI) and other civil society allies, spearheaded a movement against oil exploration in the Yavari-Tapiche region.<sup>22</sup>

By 2003, Indigenous organizations in Peru initiated the long bureaucratic process for the government to recognize Indigenous reserves to protect PIACI peoples.<sup>23-24</sup> Over the next decade or so, they painstakingly documented evidence of the existence of PIACI peoples and their territories, as the basis for advocacy campaigns at both national and international levels.<sup>25</sup>

The data enabled ten Indigenous organizations in both countries to build the legal, anthropological and environmental rationale for a territorial corridor.<sup>26</sup> By 2006, Peru's Law No. 28736 established the right of PIACI communities to autonomy, territorial protection, health safeguards, and non-contact. It also mandated the creation of PIACI Reserves by Supreme Decree. By 2022, ORPIO and four of its base community organizations and federations from Loreto and Ucayali had formed the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor Political Platform, which advocated for the government to implement measures under the Strategic Plan for the Protection of the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor.

Twenty years after ORPIO proposed the first PIACI reserves in Loreto, the Isconahua reserve was finally approved in 2016 (despite an initial creation in 1998), followed by the Yavari-Tapiche reserve in 2021 and the Sierra del Divisor Occidental (Kapanawa) reserve in 2024. (In 2023 there was even progress toward the Tamaya-Abujao reserve in the southern end of the Corridor.)<sup>27</sup> However, 2025 delivered a setback when a government commission refused to approve the Yavari Mirim Reserve despite 113 new anthropological records presented in a study that unequivocally proved that Matsés, Matis, Korubo, Kulina-Pano, and Flecheiro (Tavakina) PIACI peoples live there.<sup>28</sup>



Deforestation along the upper Shesha River within the Isconahua Indigenous Reserve and Sierra del Divisor National Park. Image credit: Courtesy of ORPIO

## Threats: Mapped

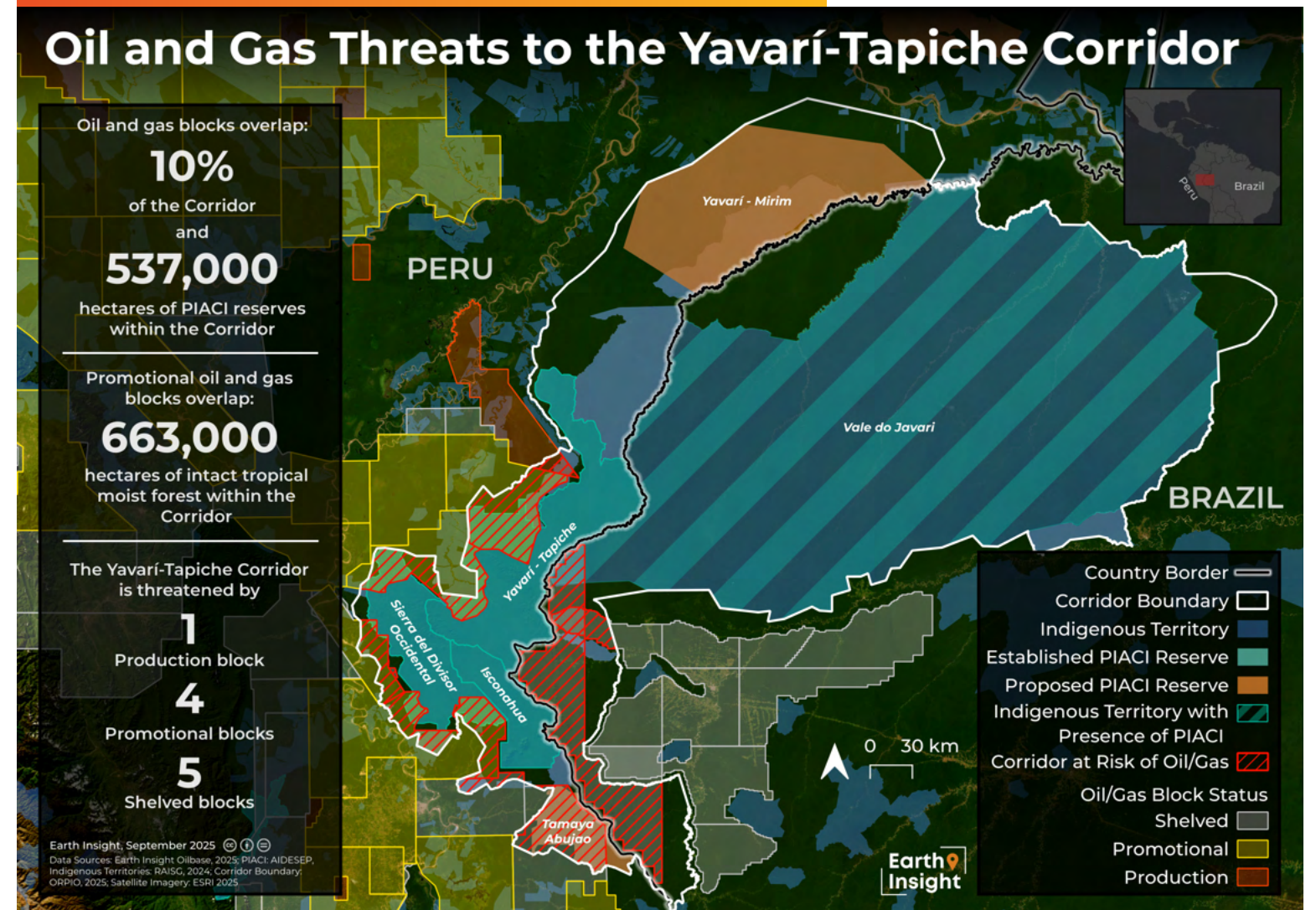
"We are affected by oil block 95, where oil companies left pollution that has never been remediated. As part of the [Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor Political] Platform we want to make sure that this never happens to communities in other river basins." -Luis Pérez Silvano, Cocama/Cocamilla leader of the Federation of Native Communities of the Ucayali and Juanete River region (FECONARUJ).

In 2024, an oil barge collision near block 95 spilled crude into the Puinahua River near the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve. Indigenous communities whose lives depend on the river could no longer drink or use the water. Since they had to stop fishing, they lost their main income. The compensation offered by the oil company never covered their losses.<sup>29</sup>

Before Peru recognized the Yavari-Tapiche reserve, seismic test documents for oil block 135 (which covered 81% of its forests) noted "a great number of incidents involving Indigenous Peoples in isolation and initial contact [during the tests] that have remained confidential because of the implications this would have for exploration."<sup>30</sup> This is just one example of reported efforts to minimize, dispute, or disregard evidence of PIACI peoples in areas of commercial interest within the Corridor.

## Oil threats: Poison in the Water

### Oil and Gas Threats to the Yavari-Tapiche Corridor



This analysis shows that oil and gas blocks in Peru still overlap with 10% of the territorial corridor, 12% of PIACI territories under application, 11% of Indigenous territories, and close to a third (29%) of key biodiversity areas.

There are oil and gas blocks on offer in the Yavari-Tapiche and Sierra de Divisor Occidental Kapanawa PIACI reserves, as well as shelved blocks in the solicited Tamaya Abujao PIACI reserve. Oil spills would carry these threats downstream to Indigenous and PIACI communities whose diets and lives rely on the Amazon river basin.<sup>31</sup> In 2025, a petition submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights by the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDSEP) on the threat oil and gas pose to PIACI and Indigenous communities in the region, **referenced more than 800 oil spills into rivers.**<sup>32</sup>



Pygmy marmoset (*Callithrix pygmaea*) in the Amazon rainforest. Image credit: Wikimedia Commons, Malene Thyssen

Roads in the rainforest can trigger deforestation up to 10km away.<sup>33</sup> Infrastructure expansion, such as roads and highways, can spread unofficial roads into forests, increasing risk of deforestation and creating what is known as the “fishbone effect”<sup>34</sup> as seen in the map insert. **For every kilometre of legal road, there are an estimated 3 kilometres of illegal road that penetrate deep into forests.**<sup>35</sup> Loggers, goldminers, unauthorized land settlements, and criminal networks build out from official roads, which opens intact forests to deforestation and a higher risk of fires.

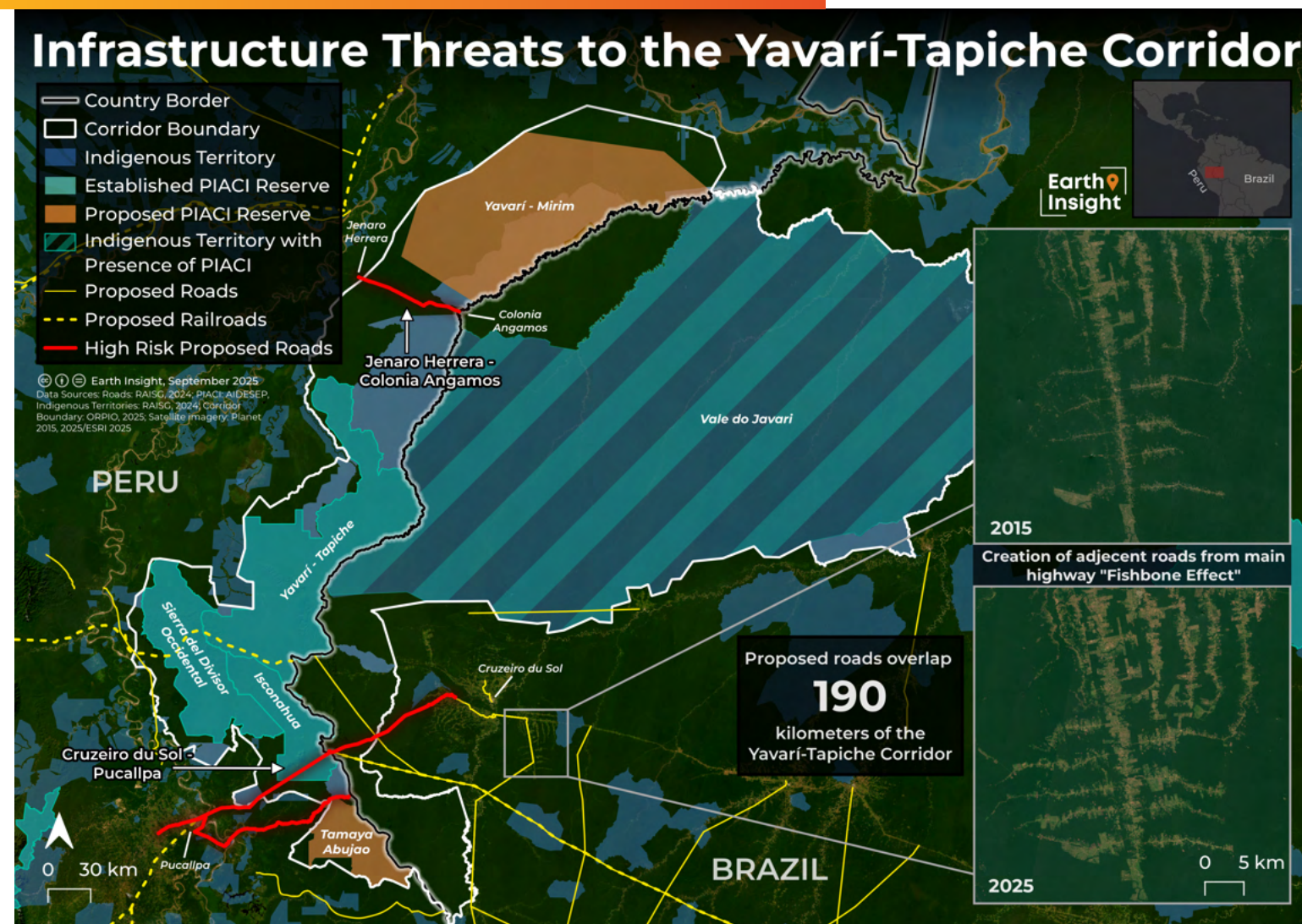
Two proposed highways overlap 190km of the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor.<sup>36</sup> The first, which connects Cruzeiro do Sul in Brazil with Pucallpa in Peru, threatens PIACI communities in the Isconahua Indigenous reserve. It also affects a transboundary conservation corridor on either side of Serra do Divisor mountain range, the habitat of more than 2,800 plant and animal species documented so far.<sup>37</sup>

The second highway would connect Jenaro Herrera in Loreto, Peru to Colonia Angamos, near Brazil in the Yavari River basin. In 2021, the Office of the Ombudsman had called for a halt to its construction pending technical and environmental compliance.<sup>38</sup> As one 2025 report noted, such projects ignore “the connection between highway infrastructure and the expansion of illicit economies” in this frontier region rife with narcotrafficking, illegal mining, and contraband.<sup>39</sup>



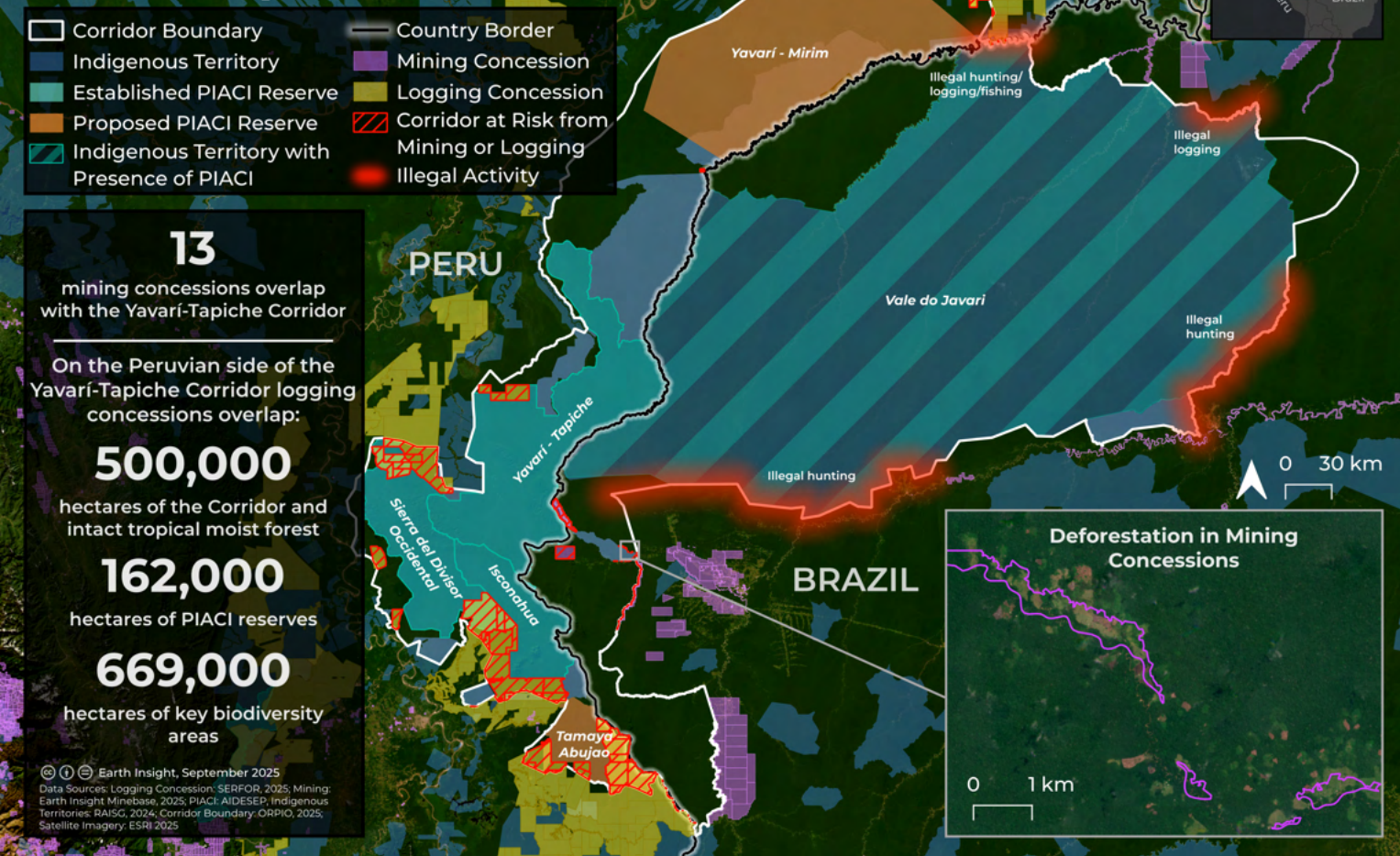
Aerial view of an illegal forest road in the upper Yucanya River area, where unauthorized access is driving deforestation and encroachment into intact Amazon forest. Image credit: Courtesy of ORPIO

## Infrastructure: The Fishbone Effect



## Mining and Logging: *Felling the Amazon*

### Mining and Logging Threats to the Yavari-Tapiche Corridor



Between 2001 and 2023, extractive activities were responsible for half of the more than 3 million hectares of forest lost in Peru's Amazon. Two departments partially included in the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor, **Loreto and Ucayalli, lost more than 500,000 hectares each.**<sup>40</sup>



## The Peak Carbon of the Yavari-Tapiche Corridor

### Carbon Density in the Yavari-Tapiche Corridor



As a High Forest, Low Deforestation (HFLD) national jurisdiction,<sup>41</sup> Loreto (where most of the Yavari-Tapiche corridor is located in Peru) contains more than half of the country's above-ground carbon stock, with particularly high carbon densities ( $98.8 \pm 29.4 \text{ Mg C ha}^{-1}$ ).<sup>42</sup> Ucayali, which also forms part of the corridor, holds the second largest regional carbon stocks. As deforestation accelerates across the Amazon, Indigenous management of such intact, high-density forests grows more critical to sustain this peak carbon region as an effective strategy to meet nationally determined carbon targets. For example, **Peru would need to retire its entire vehicle fleet to compensate for even a 50% drop in the sequestration services provided by Indigenous-managed forests.**<sup>43</sup>

In Loreto, in a single year, 43 logging concessions were illegally granted on nearly 300,000 hectares of PIACI lands.<sup>44</sup> In 2018, ORPIO won a landmark court ruling that ordered authorities not to grant, reactivate, or establish forest concessions in areas designated for Indigenous Peoples in isolation.<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, in September 2025, Peru's National Forest and Wildlife Service (SERFOR) defended forest concession contracts within the proposed Yavari Mirim reserve. There are also four active logging concessions in the Isconahua Indigenous reserve, despite a legal ban.<sup>46</sup> Logging concessions also overlap the Sierra del Divisor Occidental Kapanawa Indigenous reserve in Loreto and Ucayali, as well as the solicited Tamaya Abujao PIACI reserve in Ucayali.

**“We need to monitor our community lands with technology to monitor since we are on the border of the corridor. We hope that we can receive drones like other communities have used so we can control illegal logging.”**

**–Carlos Pacaya Rodriguez, leader of The Association of Indigenous Conservation in the Peruvian Amazon (ASICONCEP)**

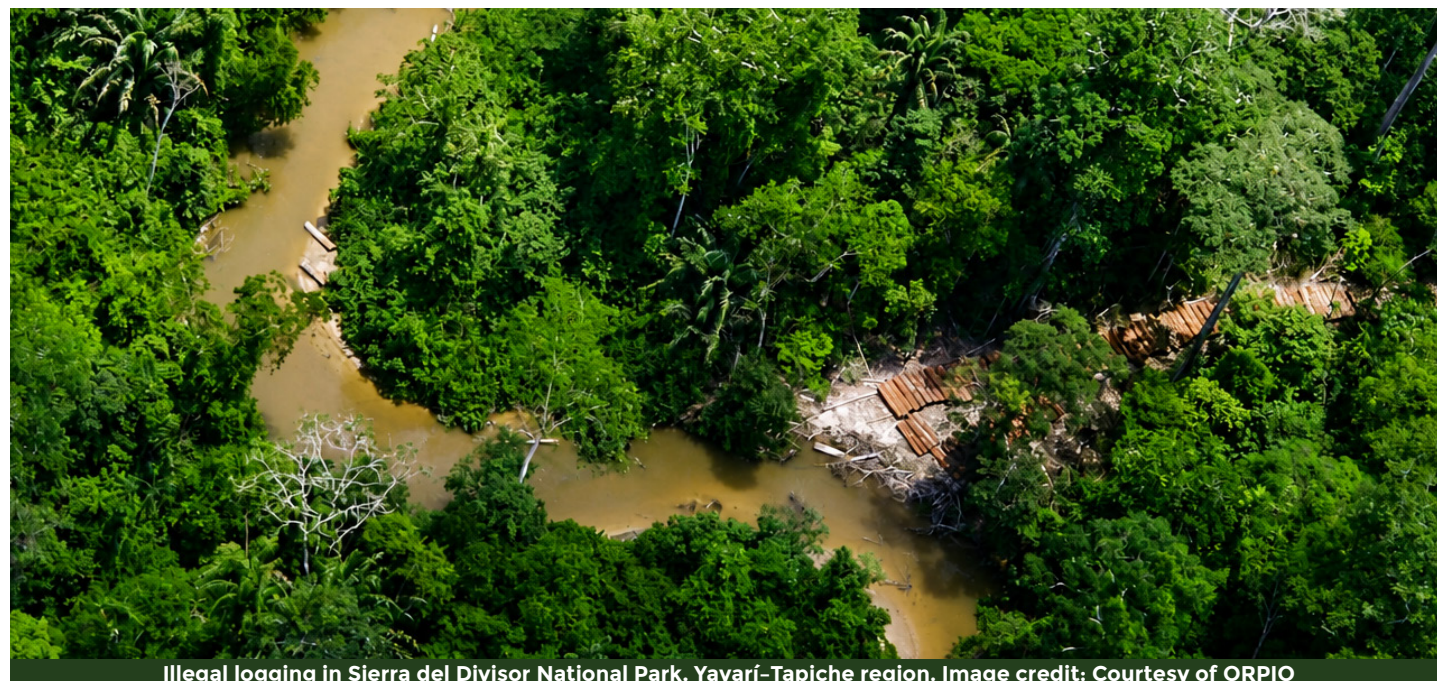
Missionary groups, such as the Evangelical Association Israelite Mission of the New Universal Pact (AEMINPU), preach that forests should be cut for farming, which likewise contributes to high deforestation rates in the lower Amazonas-Yavari region of the territorial Corridor.<sup>47</sup>

Widespread illegal logging in Peru also impacts Brazilian forests close to the border, with Brazilian logs sold as timber from Peruvian concessions. Legal documents for these concessions are used to launder illegal timber taken from other protected areas in both countries.<sup>48</sup>

There is scant documentation about the 13 mining concessions within the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor, although

initial satellite imagery reveals related deforestation for those that appear operational. The Yavari-Tapiche reserve contains a concession for the critical mineral cassiterite, a tin ore linked to the growth of illegal mining and criminal networks in Brazil.<sup>49</sup> In Yanomami Territory, for example, cassiterite mining financed rampant illegal gold mining that created a public health crisis from mercury poisoning.<sup>50</sup>

Communities up to 100km downstream from mining activities are at risk of more than 90% of metal contaminants from mining transported through sediments, stored along river channels and in floodplains, where they persist for centuries.<sup>51</sup>



Illegal logging in Sierra del Divisor National Park, Yavari-Tapiche region. Image credit: Courtesy of ORPIO

## **The Encroaching Menace: Unmapped Threats Risks of Contact**

In Brazil, of the 16 isolated Indigenous reserves recognized by Funai within the Vale do Javari Indigenous Territory, 13 are at risk of contact and conflict with invading fishermen and hunters.<sup>52</sup> Attempts to force contact with the isolated Indigenous groups that inhabit the territorial corridor have been constantly made by evangelical missionary groups.<sup>53</sup>



Indigenous “Warriors of the Forest” patrol the Javari Valley, where invading fishermen and hunters increase the risk of contact and conflict with Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation. Image credit: SIEGFRIED / AFP via Getty Images

### **The Deadly Vector of Illegal Mining**

Illegal mining exposes PIACI peoples to lethal threats, including pathogens to which they have no immunity, mercury contamination, and violence from armed gangs. In 2024, for example, illegal mining brought an infection that quickly spread among one of the largest isolated Indigenous groups in the Vale do Javari. More than 100 members of a tiny Korubo community of 121 fell ill. Of the 22 cases that grew into pneumonia, many were children under nine.<sup>54-55</sup>

Mercury contamination from illegal gold mining threatens both Indigenous communities and PIACI peoples in the Amazon whose lives depend on rivers and wildlife. One study, for example, found songbirds near mining areas had mercury levels in their bodies 12 times higher than those farther away.<sup>56</sup>

Organized criminal activity operating from the tri-border region of Colombia, Peru, and Brazil (the “Three Frontiers”) has expanded into areas overlapping with Indigenous and PIACI territories. These groups use illegal logging, gold mining, and fishing as fronts to launder drug profits.<sup>57-58</sup> In Brazil, the Indigenous umbrella organization UNIVAJA requested the state to protect their communities from armed loggers, miners, fishers, and farmers.<sup>59</sup> Illegal fishing and poaching threaten the food security of Indigenous and PIACI communities. **In a single day, for example, illegal fishers in the Javari Indigenous territory captured half a tonne of pirarucu fish and 700 turtles – both of which are Indigenous food staples.**<sup>60</sup>

## Mortal Threats

In 2017, reports indicated that a group of illegal gold dredgers, known as garimpeiros, operating in the Javari Indigenous Territory (home to approximately a fifth of Brazil's uncontacted peoples) boasted in a bar that they had killed 10 members of an uncontacted community and threw their bodies in a river.<sup>61</sup> They showed off a small traditional food bag and carved canoe paddle. Overhead flights later found charred remnants of malocas (shelters typically used by uncontacted people who often burn them after a death in their group).<sup>62</sup> In the end, the investigation was inconclusive and no charges were filed.



Gold mining operations along the Madre de Dios River in the Peruvian Amazon, where extractive activities drive deforestation and pollution in critical forest ecosystems. Image credit: Alamy, Gabbro

In March 2026, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights granted precautionary measures for PIACI peoples living in the Kakataibo Norte y Sur Indigenous Reserve, in Peru's departments of Ucayali, Huánuco, and Loreto. According to the 2023 petition from AIDSESEP with the Regional Organization of AIDSESEP-Ucayali (ORAU) and the Native Federation of Kakataibo Communities (FENACOKA), large-scale incursions by loggers, hunters, and armed drug traffickers, along with overlapping forest concessions, led to deforestation, illegal coca cultivation and cattle ranching, unauthorized forest roads, and clandestine airstrips in the reserve.<sup>63</sup>

## Bullets, Beef, and Bibles

In both Peru and Brazil, political forces have organized against the territorial rights of Indigenous communities for years. In Brazil, a conservative coalition of ranchers, agribusiness, and mining interests, along with evangelical churches (often called the "Bullets, Beef, and Bible" caucus)<sup>64</sup> regularly proposes laws to limit Indigenous territories.<sup>65-66</sup> The controversial law, based on a "time frame thesis" that creates a cutoff point for claiming Indigenous ancestral lands, would have limited territories and ultimately opens them to mining and infrastructure projects.

In Peru, legislation (dubbed 'genocide bills' by Indigenous groups) is regularly introduced to undermine protection of PIACI territories.<sup>67</sup> Last year, two proposals would have allowed oil and gas activity in PIACI territories and given the congress authority to modify or even nullify the territories.<sup>68-70</sup>

In 2025, a global brief from the UN High Commission on Human Rights singled out virulent anti-PIACI propaganda in Loreto, noting that "since 2022 in Loreto (Peru), various local groups have mobilized and developed a campaign through television advertisements and social media with the aim of discrediting the presence of the IPI" (or Indigenous Peoples in Isolation).<sup>71</sup>

Loreto is a major recipient of international climate finance, including the multi-million dollar Joint Declaration of Intent on Climate and Forests with German, Norwegian, and UK development agencies, which was renewed this year. Indigenous federations, including AIDSESEP, CONAP, and ORPIO's Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor Political Platform, called out this "obvious double standard" - in which those who receive financing under international climate agreements are those who violate the human rights of the planet's most vulnerable and isolated peoples.<sup>72</sup>



ORPIO participates in a gathering of Indigenous environmental agents and a TechCamp focused on technology for territorial protection in the Amazon. Image credit: Courtesy of ORPIO and Rainforest Foundation US

## Fake News Deep in the Amazon

In September 2025, with all the technical and legal information complete and overwhelming evidence of PIACI peoples, after 20 years in the labyrinth of Peru's bureaucracy, there was a sense of optimism that the Yavari Mirim reserve, one of the last to complete the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor, would finally be approved. However, investigations have since revealed that politicians with clear interests in extractive industries were waging a strident campaign to stop it at all costs. Well-known anti-PIACI politicians made public statements that denied the existence of PIACI people. Defamation campaigns against organizations that support the reserve were spread by what one media report called, "the fake news machine."<sup>73</sup>

In the end, with the notable absences of the ministries of environment, health, and education on the day of the vote, and the visible presence of those who opposed the reserve, the proposal was rejected in a decision that Indigenous organizations and advocates described as a serious violation of PIACI and Indigenous human rights.

Following the vote to deny the presence of isolated Indigenous Peoples living in the reserve, President Leo Chum Teca Beso said, "I'm a witness. When we go to the area, we see footprints, and we hear them shouting. I don't think these footprints are from the devil or something else. They are from people."<sup>74</sup>

## Recommendations

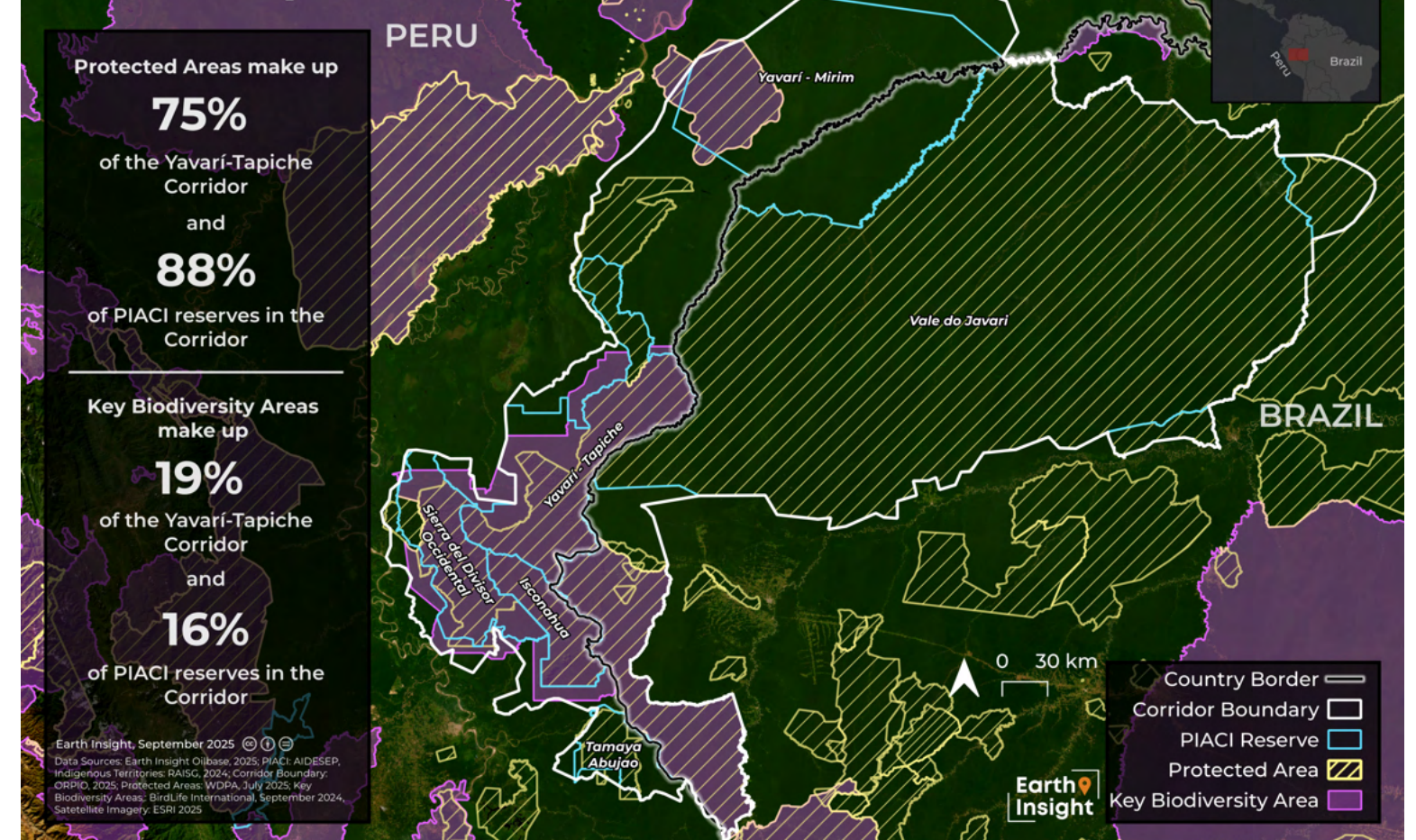
**As a Cost-effective Climate Strategy:** As the Amazon approaches the tipping point<sup>75</sup> toward becoming a net carbon source,<sup>76</sup> protecting PIACI territories becomes a critical climate strategy. Direct funding to Indigenous organizations that manage and defend the Corridor for long-term stewardship of these high-carbon ecosystems.

**As a Cost-effective Biodiversity Strategy:** As one of the largest contiguous forests in the Amazon, the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor would provide substantial contributions to international climate and biodiversity targets, including Target 3 (30x30) of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the UNFCCC.

- **Strengthen Indigenous governance systems** to ensure self-determination and effective territorial management.
- **Provide logistical and security support** to dismantle criminal extraction networks operating in Indigenous and PIACI lands.
- **Expand Indigenous monitoring stations** and integrate them directly into state response mechanisms and agencies for health, education, and social services. Support Indigenous-led monitoring systems, including community-based surveillance, early warning systems, and the integration of geospatial technologies with traditional knowledge, linked to rapid response mechanisms at the national level.
- **Invest in Indigenous-led economies** such as socio-bioeconomic approaches and other sustainable models, to replace extractive and large-scale industries and foster a sustainable Amazonian future.
- **Invest in enabling infrastructure**, such as electricity, digital connectivity, and appropriate technologies and equipment, that supports Indigenous Peoples in territorial monitoring, protection, and the development of sustainable, self-determined economies.
- **Coordinate bicultural, binational services**, particularly for intercultural models of health care and education.
- **Create cross-border Indigenous policies** to facilitate Indigenous organizations to form more formal networks to share information, such as knowledge about territorial protection and management.
- **Align national legal and policy frameworks** to formally recognize and secure PIACI and Indigenous territories, including the creation and full implementation of territorial reserves and corridors, and the explicit exclusion of oil, gas, mining, and large-scale infrastructure from these areas.
- **Remove concessions; establish and implement “no-go zones”/“zonas de vida”** for extractive and large-scale industrial activities within Indigenous territories and PIACI territories.

## Protect the Yavari-Tapiche Corridor:

### Protected Areas and Key Biodiversity Areas in the Yavari-Tapiche Corridor



- **Scale direct, flexible, and long-term financing to Indigenous Peoples and their organizations**, including dedicated funding, climate and biodiversity finance mechanisms, and result-based finance aligned with territorial protected outcomes and ecosystems services.
- **Strengthen transboundary cooperation** between Peru and Brazil to enable coordinated protection, monitoring, and enforcement across the full extent of the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor.
- **Promote accountability of corporate and financial actors** by strengthening due diligence requirements, transparency of concessions and investments, and alignment with international human rights and environmental standards, including Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC).
- **Adopt and enforce strict no-contact and precautionary policies for PIACI peoples**, ensuring that all development, infrastructure, and activities avoid areas with confirmed or potential presence of people in isolation.

## Methodology

### Report Creation, Consultation, and Validation

This report would not have been possible without the partnership of the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest (AIDSEP), Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (APIB), the Center for Indigenous Work (CTI), and the Regional Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the East (ORPIO).

### Approach

The territorial threat analysis in this report is an effort and opportunity to highlight the current and future extractive threats to Indigenous Territories and Indigenous Peoples in Isolation and Initial Contact (PIACI) within the proposed Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor, as well as the range of ways that communities and the Indigenous movement have responded to these threats to effectively steward their territories. The content of this report was informed by interviews conducted over Zoom, or where necessary over email, and supplemented with desk research. Analysis and findings were reviewed and validated by partners.

### Spatial Analysis Methodology

#### Data Disclaimer:

The geospatial analyses in this report are an attempt to capture potential extractive threats to IPs and PIACI lands using the most recently available and most accurate and precise data and methods available. As such, the results of these analyses may change between reports as data and/or methods are updated. The World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas (WDKBA) releases regular updates based on national assessment processes. The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) has known data inconsistencies due to national government data reporting. We have accounted for these inconsistencies wherever possible.

Earth Insight takes a precautionary approach to estimating the potential area under oil, gas, mining, and logging threats. Oil and gas data used in the analyses in this report include active production blocks and areas under multiple stages of exploration and permitting. This approach provides the most expansive view of areas under threat of extractive industries.

### Extractive Threat Analysis

#### Layer processing

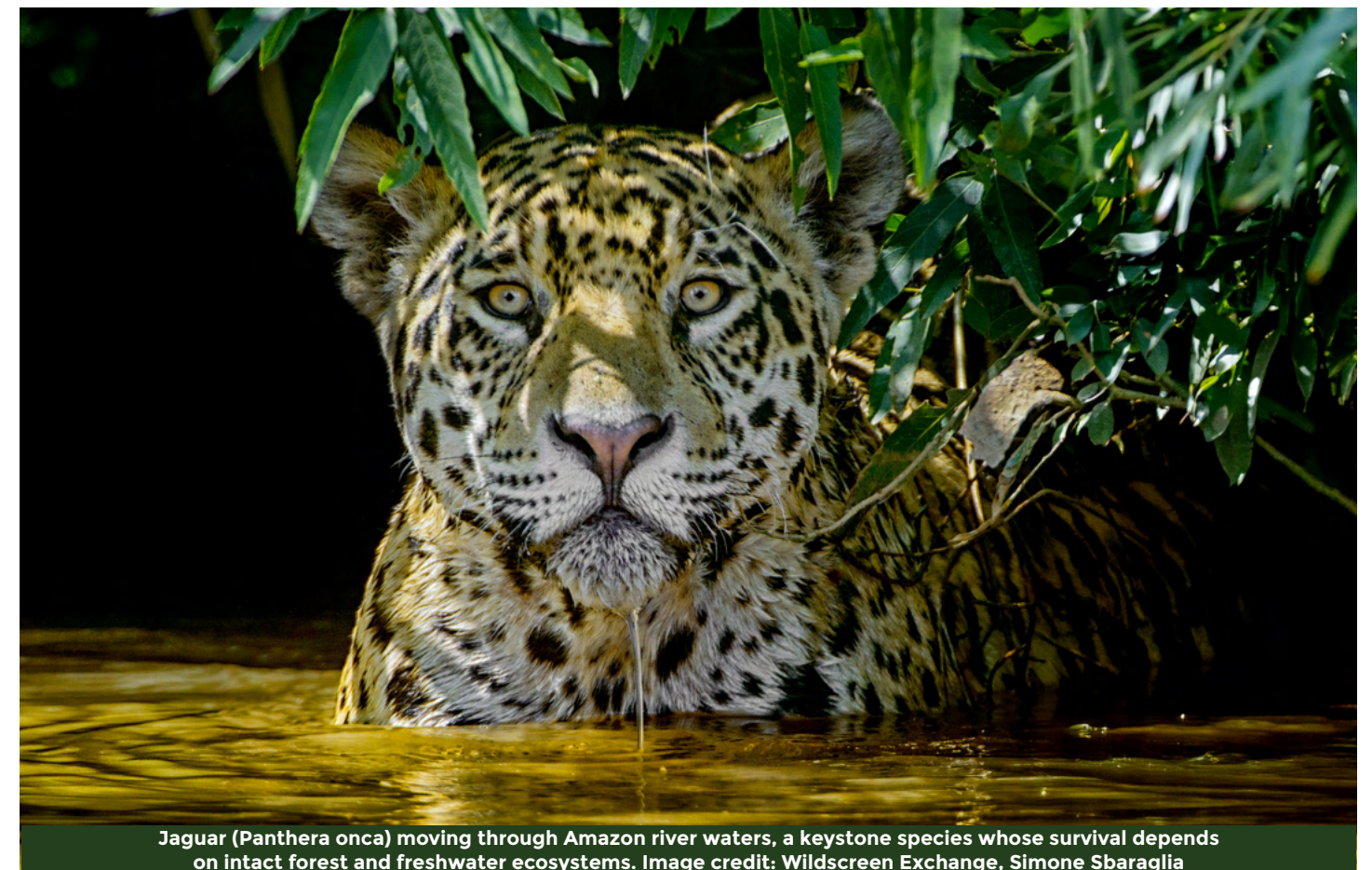
Prior to calculating the areas of PIACI reserves, Indigenous territories, Protected Areas, Key Biodiversity Areas, oil and gas blocks, mining concessions, and logging concessions, duplicate and overlapping features were removed.

### Threats to the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor

The boundary of the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor was provided by ORPIO and serves as the study area for this analysis. PIACI reserves were provided by AIDSEP, based on data from the Peruvian Ministry of Culture. The Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor and PIACI reserves were intersected with oil and gas blocks, mining concessions, and logging concessions, and summed to calculate the areas under risk of extractive areas. Intact tropical moist forest under threat of oil and gas blocks and logging concessions within the corridor was calculated by intersecting the JRC Tropical Moist Forest (TMF) cover product (Vancutsem et al., 2021) with the extractive layers using Zonal Histogram, and then summarizing the number of pixels. These maps have been created in consultation with ORPIO, AIDSEP, and CTI.

### Aboveground Biomass Carbon

The volume of carbon stored in aboveground biomass (AGB) in the Amazon and the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor was estimated using the Spawn and Gibbs (2020) Global Aboveground Biomass Carbon Density map for 2010. Aboveground biomass carbon includes carbon stored in living plants, but importantly does not include leaf litter or woody debris that is no longer living. The AGB carbon raster is 300m resolution, scaled, and measured as carbon density (MgC/ha). To estimate the total AGB carbon, the raster was first reprojected using an equal area projection (South America Albers Equal Area Conic). Raster Calculator was used to correct the scaling (0.1) and to convert carbon density from MgC/ha to MgC/pixel. Zonal Statistics were then run to find the sum of AGB carbon in the Amazon, using the RAISG Amazon boundary, and the Yavari-Tapiche Territorial Corridor boundary.



Jaguar (*Panthera onca*) moving through Amazon river waters, a keystone species whose survival depends on intact forest and freshwater ecosystems. Image credit: Wildscreen Exchange, Simone Sbaraglia

## Data Sources

**Aboveground Biomass Carbon:** Spawn, S. A., & Gibbs, H. K. (2020). Global Aboveground and Belowground Biomass Carbon Density Maps for the Year 2010 (Version 1). ORNL Distributed Active Archive Center. <https://doi.org/10.3334/ORNLDAAC/1763> Date Accessed: 2026-04-03

**Country Borders:** Natural Earth (2024).

**Illegal Activity:** Centro de Trabalho Indigenista, 2025.

**Indigenous Territories:** RAISG, 2024

**Key Biodiversity Areas:** BirdLife International (2024) World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas. Developed by the KBA Partnership: BirdLife International, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, American Bird Conservancy, Amphibian Survival Alliance, Conservation International, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Global Environment Facility, Re:Wild (formerly Global Wildlife Conservation), NatureServe, Rainforest Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Wildlife Conservation Society, iq and World Wildlife Fund. September 2024 version. Available at <http://keybiodiversityareas.org/kba-data/request>

**Logging Concessions:** Brazil: Ministério do Meio Ambiente e Mudança do Clima; Peru: Servicio Nacional Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre.

**Mining Concessions:** Minebase (2025), Earth Insight; Brazil: Agência Nacional de Mineração; Peru: Instituto Geológico, Minero y Metalurgo.

**Oil and Gas Blocks:** Oilbase (2025), Earth Insight; Brazil: Brazilian National Agency of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Biofuels; Peru: PetroPeru.

**PIACI Reserves:** AIDSESEP, 2025.

**Proposed Roads and Railroads:** RAISG (Red Amazónica de Información Socioambiental Georreferenciada). Roads, 2024. Available at: <https://raisg.socioambiental.org/>

**Protected Areas:** UNEP-WCMC and IUCN (2025), Protected Planet: The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) [Online], April 2025, Cambridge, UK: UNEP-WCMC and IUCN. Available at: [www.protectedplanet.net](http://www.protectedplanet.net).

**Satellite Imagery:** Basemap: Esri. "World Imagery" basemap. Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community. Inset maps: Image © 2015/2025 Planet Labs PBC

**Tropical Moist Forest:** C. Vancutsem, F. Achard, J.-F. Pekel, G. Vieilledent, S. Carboni, D. Simonetti, J. Gallego, L.E.O.C. Aragão, R. Nasi. [Long-term \(1990-2019\) monitoring of forest cover changes in the humid tropics](#). Science Advances 2021

**Yavari-Tapiche Boundary:** ORPIO (Organización Regional de los Pueblos Indígenas del Oriente), 2025

## Endnotes

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Malocas (traditional communal homes) of Indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation in the Amazon, situated within remote forest territories that depend on strict protection. Image credit: Courtesy of ORPIO

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