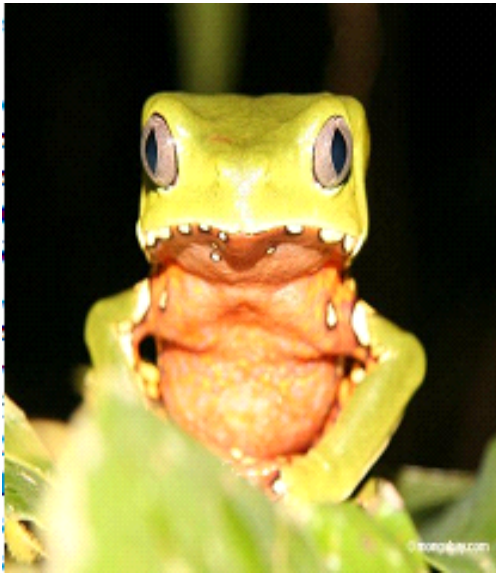


# Peru's Forests and Indigenous People Are Under Attack

## Repeal the Peru Free Trade Agreement

### Peru: An Ecological Treasure



Peru is one of only twelve countries in the world that possess biological megadiversity. It boasts nearly 25,000 species of plants (10% of the world total), of which 30% are endemic (found only in Peru). Peru has the world's greatest diversity of fish (2,000 species, 10% of the world total), birds (1816 species, including the condor), butterflies, second greatest diversity of primate (35, including the endemic yellow-tailed woolly monkey), and has the third most species of amphibians (379 species), and mammals (462 species, including the black bear and the otorongo). Peru is also home to thousands of species of mollusks, echinoderms, arachnids and insects of all kinds.

### Extractive Industries: Destroying Eden

The Peruvian Amazon and Andes are already under attack by oil, gas, timber, mining, and corporate agribusiness. Peru's President Alan Garcia has gone on record that he sees the Amazon rainforest merely as a resource to be exploited and that to refuse to fully exploit it would be foolish and that people who do not wish to fully exploit the land should have no right to it. Peru has an ugly history of allowing corporate polluters to ravage the Amazon and the Andes and damage the health of forest-dwelling indigenous peoples.

The Peru Free Trade Agreement, ratified by US Congress in December 2007, contains pro-corporate rules on "investment" that grant foreign investors the power to undermine domestic environmental safeguards. Under the agreement, individual foreign investors are granted the right to sue Peru for cash damages before secretive, three-judge trade panels. If a local, state, or federal public-interest law is found to be in violation, the federal government must pay compensation or change the law. If regional or local law is found to be in violation, the Peruvian government could force that region or locality to bring its law into compliance, even if doing so would weaken community safeguards. This will embolden corporations to do even more damage and undermine efforts to hold polluters accountable.

### Resistance and Repression

Members of the US Congress voted for the Agreement despite warnings that its passage would bring violence and instability to Peru and that the Peruvian government fundamentally disrespected the rights of indigenous people. Within days of the US Congress vote, Peru's Congress agreed to a request by President Garcia's administration to issue unilateral legislative decrees to facilitate implementation of the free trade agreement. Garcia abused this power, authoring 99 legislative decrees going far beyond the scope of the Free Trade Agreement -- deregulating polluting industries, opening 64% of the forests of Peru for sale to translational corporations, and changing the number of votes required to sell communal lands (just three votes could place community land up for sale-- Garcia's goal).



In April 2009, Peru's indigenous people responded with a national nonviolent direct action uprising, blockading roads, ports and oil pipelines and calling for the repeal of the Free Trade Agreement and the legislative decrees. In response, on May 10, 2009 the government decreed a State of Emergency in five regions of the country where road blocks and blockages of ports and oil pipelines were taking place. On June 5, 2009, Peru's police forces began a massacre of Peruvian indigenous peoples engaged in a nonviolent blockade of a road outside of Bagua, in a remote area of the northern Peruvian Amazon. Several thousand indigenous people were forcibly dispersed by tear gas and real bullets shot and up to 40 died.

### Take Action!

Arrange a lobby visit with your Senators and House Rep to urge them to sponsor legislation to repeal the Peru Free Trade Agreement. Visit <http://contactingthecongress.org> for your elected officials' contact information. Global Justice for Animals and the Environment can provide you with resources for your Congressional visit and actions upon request.



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