



ESPECIAL REPORT

LATIN AMERICAN CARAVAN

FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE INTEGRAL ECOLOGY IN EXTRACTIVE TIMES





COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY MINING IN LATIN AMERICA

DIALOGUES AND ACTIONS FROM THE GLOBAL NORTH.

"In the name of God, I want to ask the large extractive corporations - mining, oil, forestry, real estate, agribusiness - to stop destroying forests, swamps and mountains, to stop polluting rivers and seas, to stop poisoning people and food"

Pope Francis to the Social Movements.

INTRODUCTION

Latin American communities martyred by mining travel to Europe to denounce their situation and discuss the care of the Common Home.

Communities affected by mining in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador y Honduras, travel to Europe to amplify their voices and continue listening to both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor (LS 49). The Churches and Mining Network and its Divest in Mining Campaign promote this space, as a space, together with Catholic organizations in Europe that accompany experiences of defense of the Common Home, such as CIDSE, COMECE, Misereor, DKA (Austria), Networks in Spain and many others, articulate an advocacy agenda, in the desire to act from a new dream of fraternity and social friendship. This Latin American Caravan is made up of community and religious leaders representing realities martyred by the mega-mining industry.

This Caravan will cross more than 5 countries, with the desire to reinforce the globalization of hope and North-South co-responsibility. The meetings take place to build and reinforce agendas on the implications of extractive economies in the territories from the urgency of a post-extractivist economic-energy transition that considers the peoples and territories as the first interlocutors. Thus, in the search for an integral ecological conversion and a Samaritan economy only possible in a global co-responsibility. In this sense, we seek to reflect on the responsibility of European banks and investors towards extractive companies that violate human and environmental rights in Latin America; the urgency of a binding treaty on business and human rights; European legislation, strong in terms of Due Diligence, and corporate responsibility and other issues.

The cry resounding in communities martyred by extractive economies and the historic violation of the Common House by mining activities call for an urgent ecological conversion. The Social Doctrine of the Church, together with the presence of Christian communities that accompany the realities wounded by this economic model, offer a prophetic look to “eliminate the structural causes of the dysfunctions of the world economy and correct the growth models that seem incapable of guaranteeing respect for the environment” (LS 6). Pope Francis in the “Encyclical Laudato Si” echoes the cry for an integral ecology that requires “a personal, social and ecological conversion (LS 210)”.

In line with the appeal of Pope Francis, with the bishops gathered at the Synod of Amazonas, communities affected by mining in Latin America unite for peace, justice and conservation of creation. In the key moments that our Church is living, of ecclesial conversion, of affirmation of new ways of synodality, we also seek that the communities of faith coming from Latin America dialogue and seek ways together with the Christian communities of the North.



PIQUIÁ DE BAIXO

Imagine, for a brief moment, that around your house there are five mineral smelting companies that start working with their extremely high temperature furnaces and spew gases, fumes and toxic ashes. Your house fills with dust, the air becomes unbreathable, the water is polluted, your plants die, your pets languish, your children get sick and you despair....

This could seem like part of a science fiction film, but it is a reality that the community of Piquiá de Baixo has been living for more than 30 years.





Piquiá de Baixo is one of the first neighborhoods of Açailândia, Maranhão in Brazil, formed in the 1970s. The occupation of the area was the result of a double movement: on the one hand, it was the result of the federal government's encouragement to move the landless populations from the northeast to the Amazon - mainly due to the opening of highways - on the other hand, the spontaneous movement of peasants in search of good land in the region. For many years, about 320 families lived in Piquiá de Baixo, with an estimated population of about 1,200 people. Today, the group has been reduced, due to heavy pollution.

At the end of the 1980s, five steel companies operating fourteen blast furnaces were installed in front of this neighborhood. Since the arrival of the steel industry in 1987, the community has suffered the impacts of the five mills operating along the BR 222 highway, very close to the houses. The Grande Carajás Program was designed to implement a logistics complex initially aimed at exporting 35 million tons of iron ore from the Carajás region. This complex consists of an open pit mine, a railroad approximately 890 km long and a deep

water port in São Luís, capital of Maranhão. All were operated by Companhia Vale do Rio Doce since 1985, with an initial investment of US\$ 2.9 billion. A new cycle of threats was added to these impacts when the Carajás Railway (EFC), controlled by the Vale mining company, was built.

Before the arrival of mining, the community survived off the fields. Now, there is nowhere else to plant. The railroad has exacerbated migratory movement and land speculation, aggravating conflicts, without the government or Vale itself having taken measures to mitigate the negative impacts of the project. In addition to the health problems linked to contamination, families have suffered losses in plantations and small animal farms for their own consumption and small-scale commercialization.

In this context, steel companies linked to Vale (buyers of the ore and users of the rail transport of goods) began to buy land and build the blast furnaces, enhancing land problems and catalyzing social and environmental impacts in Piquiá de Baixo, one of the central problems the right to housing. "The possession of housing has much to do with the dignity of persons and

with the development of families. It is a central question of human ecology,” reminds Pope Francis in the encyclical *Laudato Si*, on the care of the common home.”

It was at that moment of opening that Vale (then a state-owned company and under the name *Companhia Vale do Rio Doce - CVRD*), would become the main protagonist in the course of events throughout the eastern Amazon. CVRD, which has always had its history linked to the “imperative” of obtaining international currency for the country, would do there what it had already been doing in the State of Minas Gerais. It began the exploitation of minerals aimed at foreign markets, generating few jobs and mostly of poor quality, returning little income to the affected municipalities. The Vale company has assumed a position of power above the local political arena, inducing the emergence of coal plantations that are as or more impactful to the environment than the mining activity itself.

The transformation of Piquiá de Baixo into an industrial district caused the State to act selectively in the territory. Since 2004, residents have reported excessive pollution, an extremely precarious urban cleaning system and difficult access to health services. On the other hand, there was State intervention in tax incentives for companies, with tax reductions. As the exhortation *Dear Amazonia* denounces, “the actions of companies thirsty for easy profits work to appropriate the lands of peoples and communities”. Pope Francis calls attention to the authorities who give free entry to logging companies, mining or oil projects and other activities that devastate the forests and pollute the environment, unduly transform economic relations and become an instrument that kills (QA 14).

Faced with the current exploitative energy model, Pope Francis launches an urgent appeal for a new mentality based on a radical and integral change. “Humanity is called to become aware

of the need to make changes in lifestyles, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or, at least, the human causes that produce or accentuate it,” he invites in the exhortation *Laudato Si* (23). Global warming, which mainly affects the poorest populations, is “especially enhanced by the pattern of development based on the intensive use of fossil fuels, which is at the heart of the world’s energy system” (cf LS 23).

Pollution and the right to health

Açailândia is one of the territories where most rights violations by Vale have been reported in Brazil since the 1980s. The Piquiá de Baixo neighborhood constitutes a “Sacrifice Zone”, a name given to areas, almost always located in urban peripheries or in isolated regions, where there is a large overlap of deprivation of rights, based on extraction or production models that benefit others, outside these territories. Since the late 1980s, the population living in the industrial district indicates that their state of health has been seriously affected by environmental changes caused by the high emission of pollutants from steel companies. In another village in the same municipality, coal factories linked to steel production and located very close to the houses have been polluting people’s lives for many years. The incessant pollution, the continuous damage to water resources, together with the extreme precariousness of the urban cleaning system have had repercussions on the living conditions of the inhabitants, as well as on their plantations, affecting their way of life and increasing the precariousness and poverty of the communities, in violation of everyone’s right to an adequate standard of living.

In Piquiá, air, water and soil pollution have brought breathing, eyesight and skin problems, and several other diseases. In addition, difficulties in accessing health services have been observed, which violates the right of every person to enjoy the highest attainable standard of

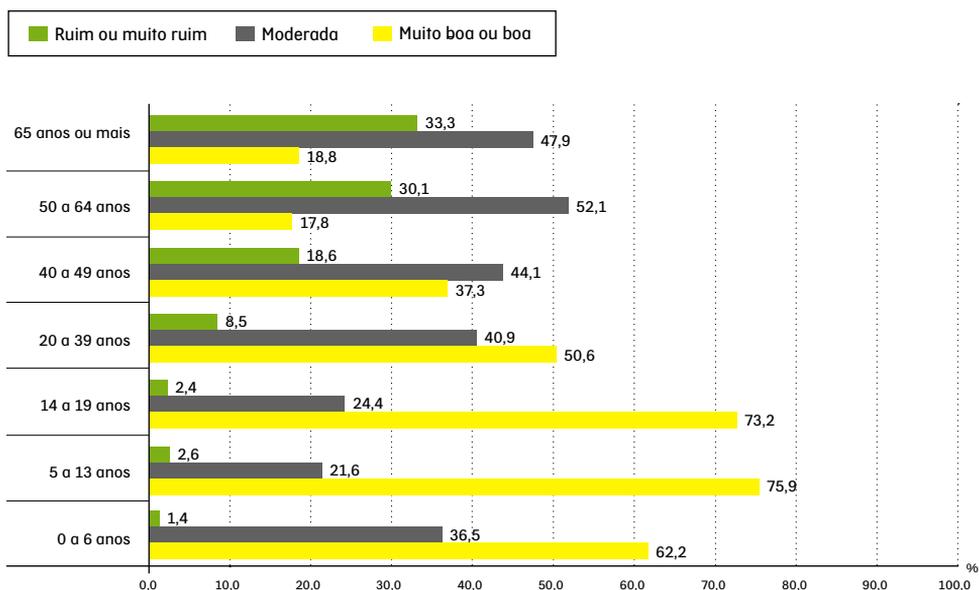
physical and mental health. Pope Francis calls attention to the millions of premature deaths caused by pollution. “Exposure to atmospheric pollutants produces a wide spectrum of health effects, especially for the poorest” (cf. LS 20). The Pope also criticizes the predatory extractive model and its negative impacts. “Groundwater in many places is threatened by the pollution produced by some extractive, agricultural and industrial activities, especially in countries where there is insufficient regulation and controls” (LS 29).

The proximity of fine tailings and pig iron production to populated areas has also led to accidents, with severe and fatal burns. Slag and wedge, two distinct solid wastes from the pig iron production process, have been disposed of in the environment for years and can generate poisoning of plants, animals and people. Several residents report that the wind stirs up so-called “balloon dust”. This dust is a leftover

from production piled up in piles next to houses and often, for several years, was blown into the wind by the shredder itself, one of the machines that served to reduce the “leftover” into particles.

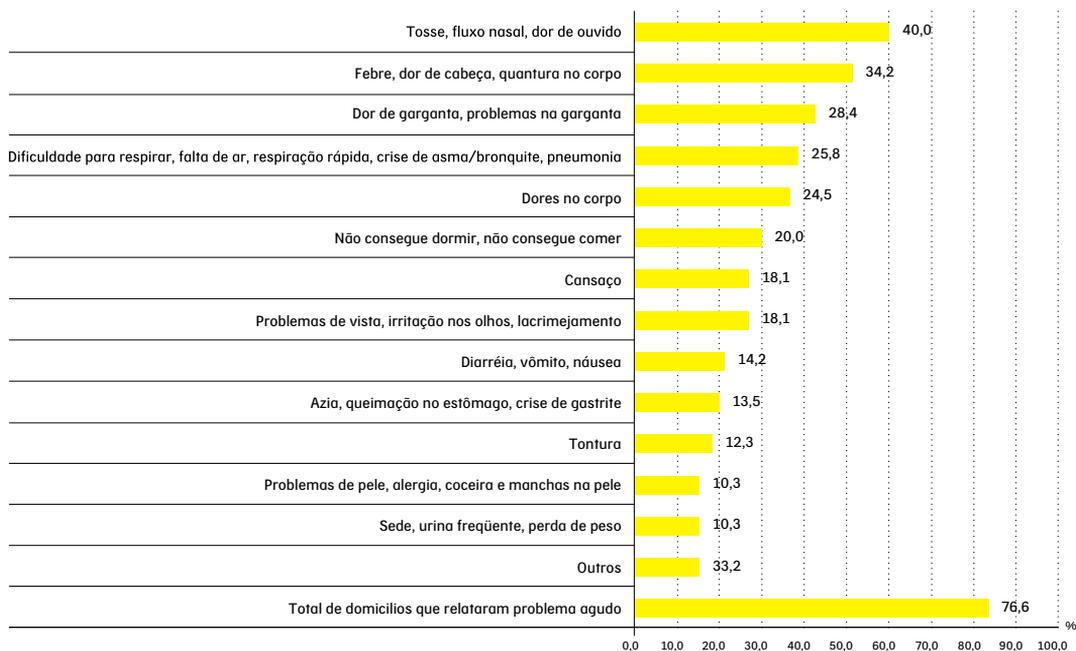
In Piquiá de Baixo, the majority of the population had their health status reported as ‘bad or very bad’ in the study conducted by the organizations International Federation of Human Rights, Justiça nos Trilhos and Justiça Global in 2011. Only 12.4% of the households visited had their health status assessed as ‘good or very good’, the rest (31.1% of the households visited) had their health status perceived as ‘moderate’. The community recorded symptoms that included upper respiratory tract conditions such as sore or irritated throat, corresponding to 65.2% of the households visited; nasal discharge or earache in 63.6% of the households visited; eye irritation or tearing in 41.3% of the households interviewed.

Quadro F. População residente segundo faixa etária e avaliação do estado de saúde. Califórnia, 2010.

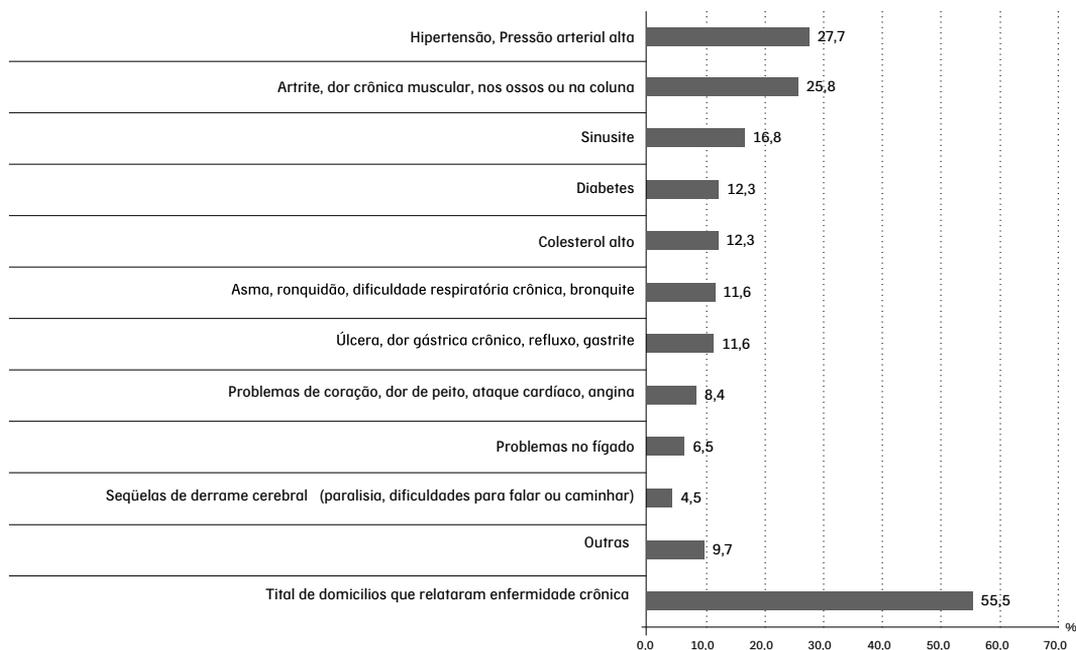


Fonte: Elaboração própria a partir dos dados levantados pela equipe da presente pesquisa

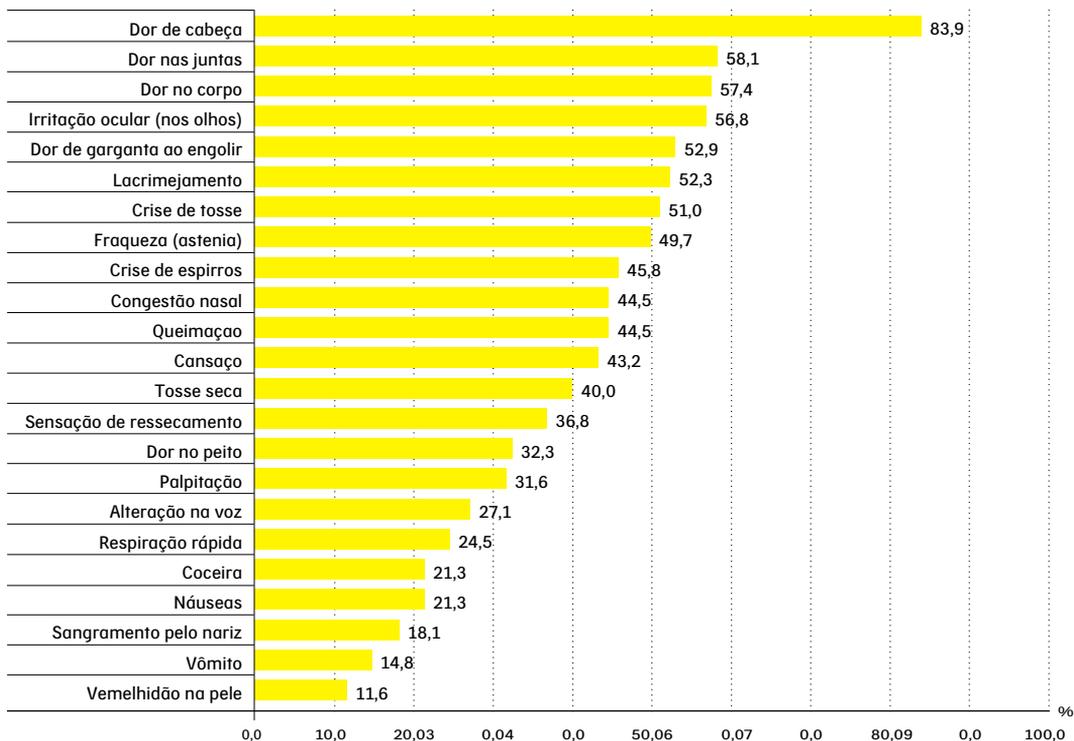
Quadro G. Distribuição dos domicílios segundo sintomas/problemas associados ao episódio de doença aguda relatado. Califórnia, 2010.



Quadro H. Distribuição dos domicílios segundo enfermidade crônica relatada. Califórnia, 2010.



Quadro I. Distribuição dos domicílios segundo problemas de saúde mais comuns/ frequentes nos residentes. Califórnia, 2010.



MINING, STEEL AND SLAVE LABOR

An investigation by the Maranhão Public Ministry of Labor (MPT-MA) reveals that from 2003 to 2017 more than 8,000 Maranhão citizens were rescued from a situation

analogous to slavery in other states of the federation. These data place Maranhão in the first place in the national ranking of slave labor supply. In Açailândia, 456 people were rescued from slavery between 2003 and 2018.

The steel sector in the Carajás corridor is denounced for being closely related to slave labor in the coal production areas. The activity generates few proper jobs, while more indirect jobs are generated, especially in the coal supply stage, which is done in a pulverized manner (by so-called “independent producers”). However, this sector is characterized by degrading practices in multiple aspects. In Brazil, according to data from the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT), between 2013 and 2019, 536 workers were rescued from slavery in coal production, one of the activities partially related to mining.

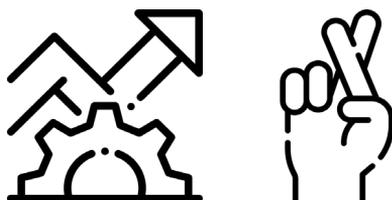
As reported in studies, slave-like labor was structurally used as a way to maintain the “competitiveness” of these companies, committed to the production of a cheap commodity highly dependent on the moods of the international commodity market. According to reports, there are complaints about working conditions ranging from deprivation of liberty, lack of access to doctors and hospitals, to summary executions by sentries autho-

riized to kill those who try to escape.

There are numerous notifications from the Public Ministry of Labor (MPT) and denunciations of commercial relations with coal factories that used slave labor. Vale admitted that the company only closed a contract with a few pig iron producers in 2007 after they were fined by the MPT for the existence of slave labor.

In Chapter IV of the Encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis proposes a view that takes into account all aspects of the global crisis, considering different elements of an integral ecology that clearly includes the human and social dimensions (cf. LS 137). In the ecology of daily life, Pope Francis affirms that for authentic progress to take place, it is necessary to create an overall improvement in the quality of human life. These principles contrast with the chaotic life imposed by certain realities, whether in the city or in the countryside, a model of life “where essential services do not reach, and there are workers reduced to situations of slavery, without rights or expectations of a more dignified life” (LS 154).





THE MYTH OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

The social, cultural and environmental impacts of mining and steel company operations on local communities and the environment are widely known. This picture is aggravated in cases such as Açailândia and many others, where on the one hand there is a situation of poverty and inequality, lack of public policies on housing, health and basic sanitation, and on the other, companies with strong economic power.

Some Brazilian press agencies called Açailândia “the metropolis of the future”, due to its outstanding “economic growth”. In front of the houses of the inhabitants of the city, the train transports every day to the gross correspondent, in iron ore, about 50 million reais. However, the living conditions of the inhabitants do not reflect this wealth. The contradiction present in Açailândia is characterized as a municipality with immense social inequality. Despite the high profits announced by the companies, its population is mostly poor.

R\$2 billion, which represents 2.3% of Maranhão’s GDP, ranking fourth among the state’s 217 cities and 414th among Brazil’s 5,570 municipalities. It is 508.8% higher than the other cities in the state and 177.7% higher than the national average for cities. However, the contradiction is that 31.2% of Açailândia’s population is in poverty or extreme poverty.

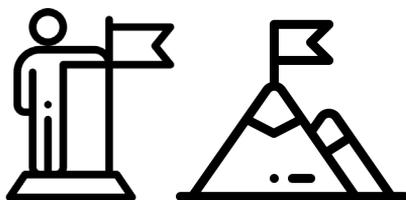
The Human Development Index (HDI) of Açailândia indicated that the average per capita income of Açailândia is R\$ 438.56 in 2010, where the minimum wage was R\$ 510.00 (approximately 200 euros per month, in the value of the currency in the respective year). The proportion of poor people, with per capita family income below R\$ 140.00 (€ 21.80), was 25.17% in 2010. Add to this a more regrettable scenario: 10.12% of the population is in extreme poverty (per capita family income equal to or less than R\$ 70.00 per month, or € 10.90). Of the employed persons aged 18 years or older in the municipality, 1.26% of the population was employed in the extractive industry.

The city’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is

In a comparative analysis of GDP with HDI,

the fallacy of mining as the engine of the local economy is pointed out. Açailândia is among the five hundred cities with the highest gross domestic product in Brazil. Proof that this profitability does not reverse the city's population is its position in the literacy rate: 3,390 out of 5,565 in Brazil. Considering the municipal population aged 25 and over, 23.67% were illiterate, 39.33% had completed elementary school, 23.98% had completed high school and 4.68% had completed higher education.

Pope Francis calls attention to the current development model that distorts the concept of economy because it is based on the principle of maximum profit. "Only behavior in which "the economic and social costs arising from the use of common environmental resources are recognized in a transparent manner and borne entirely by those who benefit, and not by others or by future generations" (cf. LS 195) could be considered ethical" (cf. LS 195).



FROM "PIQUIÁ DE BAIXO" TO "PIQUIÁ DA CONQUISTA"

After many years of struggle for the reparation of damages, the community has managed to get the Brazilian state and Vale to recognize in some way the damages caused and to accept a form of reparation, which consists of supporting the relocation of the community to a place free of contamination. However, this struggle still has a lot of uncertainty and many elements of fragility, so the community is not yet certain that it will achieve its dream. Also, the comprehensive reparation must provide for the interruption of the companies' pollution, accountability for the damages committed and other measures of compensation and non-repetition.

At the end of 2018, on November 23, the works that will give life to a new human settlement, which by community decision will be called "Piquiá da Conquista", began. This new neighborhood will be located about 8 kilometers from the current location.

The re-settlement has been achieved as a measure to compensate for the damages caused by the mining company Vale and the steel companies, which have systematically violated the human right to a dignified life, the right to housing, to health and to a healthy environment. As we have seen, the companies acted with impunity in this community, causing serious damages, mainly due to the presence of furnaces for metallurgical activity and the sadly known Carajás Railroad, which runs more than 800 km impacting different communities and indigenous lands and has already claimed many lives.

In this hard struggle for the conquest of their violated rights, the organization of the Community Association of the Inhabitants of Piquiá, the support of the network "Justiça nos Trilhos" and of the Comboni missionaries working in that locality have been fundamental. A painful struggle, but one that shows us that it is possible to enforce community rights.



“

We have already cried too much for the losses, but the struggle of Piquiá de Baixo gives us a very strong feeling of love. This struggle gives us courage in moments of weakness, it teaches us to be wise in moments when they try to torture us in some way, it enlightens us when we look at our conquests, it makes us cry with joy to see that even being violated and suffering, people unite and do not give up, we get up when we fall on the ground. Piquiá de Baixo today is inspiration, and this is what also drives us to move forward, to stay and not to weaken, this leaves us with a strong learning of love and union that makes us cry with each achievement. We are very grateful to each ally who shares their feeling of love, respect and who is dedicated to always help communities like Piquiá de Baixo to fight for a dignified life and the environment.

”

(Antonia Flavia Nascimento , 26 years old, young leader of Piquiá de Baixo)



BRUMADINHO

TOXIC SLUDGE OODING, IMPUNITY AND POLLUTION

3 YEARS AFTER THE VALE CRIME

On January 25, 2019, Vale S. A.'s tailings dam in Brumadinho, a city in southeastern Brazil, burst. This dam buried lives, fauna, flora, crops, homes, contaminating the entire Paraopeba River basin and Três Marias Lake. Most of the victims were the mining company's own workers. 272 people died and 6 are still missing.

The dam collapsed and released 10 million cubic meters of toxic sludge and thus a wave of debris and tons of mud that overwhelmed the homes, businesses and residents it encountered in its path. It was one of the most terrible mining accidents in Brazil's history. In a New York Times investigation of the dam collapse, experts agree that it was a tragedy but not a surprise. Although all the elements for a possible catastrophe existed, warning signs were ignored for years.

The structure, owned by Brazilian mining giant Vale S. A., was not properly a "dam": rather, it was a huge deposit of mine tailings

that were held back by little more than walls of sand and silt. There was no concrete or metal to help contain these materials. Company representatives were confident that the mud lake was going to remain solid enough to hold the tailings.

For those far away, it may seem like the past, but the consequences and impacts of this disaster are still with us. This can be seen in the increased rate of suicide attempts, increased use of anxiolytics and antidepressants, increased alcohol consumption, the outbreak of respiratory illnesses, and the psychological problems that plague the city's residents.



TOXIC MUD AND FLOODING

The floods that occurred between January 8 and 13, 2022 in Brumadinho and region, further aggravate the impacts and pollution situation in all municipalities throughout the Paraopeba basin. Before the repair is completed and before those responsible for the dam breach are brought to justice, the toxic sludge has returned to our homes, spreading heavy metal residues throughout our city. We don't know if we are wearing the mask because of the covid-19 pandemic or if it is because it is difficult to walk around the city, with so much ore dust scattered everywhere.

Currently, we are cleaning our houses, trying to remove the toxic sludge, remnants of the flooding that was aggravated by the rupture that occurred in 2019. Many will say that the flooding is a natural phenomenon, that Vale does

not control the Paraopeba River or the rains, and therefore is not to blame. But we know that this situation is a consequence of the lack of planning in the use, occupation and management of the land. It is also a consequence of the destruction of nature caused by mining, deforestation, burning and pollution.

We are used to dealing with floods and we know our Paraopeba River. Therefore, we are aware that the dam breakage is mainly responsible for the silting up of our river in recent years. We have already seen the river enter our homes in other floods, but never with this smell. It is the smell of death and pollution. It is the same smell we felt after the catastrophe of 2019. The noise of the helicopter that flew over our city during the days of the flood, for us, is not the noise of rescue, it



is the noise of transporting segments of bodies inside black bags.

This drawing was made by Willian, from the Córrego do Feijão Community. The boy portrays the search operation carried out by the firefighters, who until today are still searching for the bodies and segments of the victims of the Vale crime in Brumadinho. There are still 6 bodies to be found.

There is still no one formally charged for the death of the 272 people. An impasse between the Justice of the State of Minas Gerais and the Federal Court paralyzes the progress of the process, diminishing every day the confidence of the relatives in the punishment of the crime. It is a maneuver to hinder the process and to gain time.

On the one hand, the Public Prosecutor's Office (MP) of Minas struggles to keep the trial at the state level, in an action that was already underway in the District of Brumadinho. On the other hand, the Supreme Court of Justice has decided that the case should be the case should be tried at the federal level.

At the federal level, there is also an investigation concluded by the Federal Police Federal Police, which accused the company Vale company, the company Tüv Süd (based in Munich) and 19 people. This was handed over to the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, which has not yet filed charges.

The European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR) filed criminal charges against TÜV Süd, a German company, which

provided (millionaire) services to the project, before the Munich public prosecutor, arguing that the company certified that the dam was safe, when it was not. They want the consulting firm to be held responsible for what happened thousands of kilometers away. The arguments of the defenders of human rights and corporate responsibility in Germany argue that it is urgent to act against companies, based in Europe and other regions, that are aware of the damages and impacts and still certify them, and that if they do not seek to hold these companies and the system accountable.

The agreement signed between Vale and the State of Minas Gerais in 2021 ended up generating in society a misguided feeling of reparation. Vale, for its part, ended up washing its hands, as if it had already fulfilled all its responsibilities and obligations towards the affected communities.

Vale, the State of Minas Gerais and the legal institutions celebrated the agreement as a great victory. The problem is that we, the affected people, have not participated in the process of building the agreement. We have close knowledge of the damages and impacts, but we were not considered sufficiently relevant actors to build the reparation process. There was no social participation of those affected in the reparation process. The state government and the company signed an agreement worth 37 billion reais.

We are waiting for the State of Minas Gerais to present the technical reports and studies on the risk to human and animal health of the fami-

lies whose homes were invaded by Vale's mud. We expect those responsible to take care of our health with the same celerity with which they took care of the signing of the multi-million dollar agreement that put a price on our pain.

We never heard a word of apology to this day, nor an apology and an acceptance of guilt.

We know that no money will pay, but we want to make it very clear to everyone and especially to Vale: we will not give up any rights. This means that we will continue to fight for justice, for the criminal responsibility of those involved, for the integral reparation of the entire Paraopeba basin and so that crimes like those of Mariana and Brumadinho are never repeated.





SOUTHWESTERN ANTIOQUIA

AND THE THREAT OF MEGA MINING

Southwestern Antioquia is located in the tropical Andes, the area with the highest concentration of high-risk biodiversity in the world (Hotspot). The biological richness and biodiversity is manifested in water ecosystems, soils, mountains, trees, abundance and diversity of birds, some of them endemic as well as species of mammals, insects, amphibians and microorganisms. Its beautiful mountains, the diversity of climatic floors ranging from 600 to 3,000 meters above sea level, the abundance of rivers, streams, waterfalls, the conservation of important areas of native forests of enormous biodiversity, are part of the Tropical Andes Hotspot, one of the 35 biodiversity hotspots on the planet.

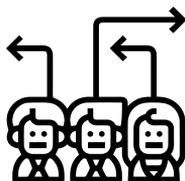


E Southwestern Antioquia has 373,000 inhabitants located in 23 municipalities in the Department of Antioquia, Colombia. Most of these towns were founded around the middle of the 19th century in a territory that had been virgin forest until then. Gradually they were opened to establish cattle ranches and food plantations. At the beginning of the 20th century, the region was the main coffee producer in the country, its urban centers have since then functional public institutions, schools and colleges, food self-sufficiency, handicraft and commercial activity.

This natural wealth of the territory is linked to an agricultural vocation from its beginnings, which is currently joined by a tourist vocation together with the declaration of the municipalities of Jericó and Jardín as national cultural heritage. The institutional stability, the low crime rate, the healthy coexistence of its inhabitants, the acceptable coverage of public services and, in general, a higher standard of living than many of the more than

1123 Colombian municipalities, in particular, much higher than the municipalities dedicated to the exploitation of metal mines. It has honest family businesses that sow love for their territory; artisans who preserve traditions; old guardians of memory; Embera Chamí Indians; culture and environmental wisdom; petroglyphs and archeology, legacies of other times, sacred awareness of the land and the unanimous declaration of sacred territories for life.

In defense of this social, cultural, economic, landscape, environmental and cultural fabric, the inhabitants of the Southwest, their social organizations and public institutions, have demonstrated in open opposition to the implementation of metallic mega mining projects and against mining concession contracts signed by the national government with multinational companies such as AngloGold Ashanti, B2Gold, Continental Gold, Miranda Gold, Gran Colombia Gold, among others. The response of the Colombian State has been to offer and reserve more than 90% of the territory of the 23 municipalities of the Southwest for mining exploitation.



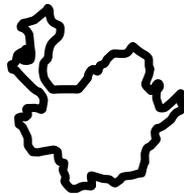
ANGLOGOLD ASHANTI'S STRATEGY: TO DIVIDE THE COMMUNITIES AND CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF POLARIZATION AMONG THOSE WHO LIVED IN FRATERNITY AND HEALTHY COEXISTENCE.

D Since 2003 AngloGold Ashanti (AGA) acquired, through private parties, five mining titles and concessions in the municipalities of Jericó and Támesis with an extension of 7,600 ha. that are part of the water star that supplies rural aqueducts of the two municipalities, including numerous

peasant families that sustain diverse crops and the forests that protect biodiversity and water sources. Part of this area belongs to the environmental management district (Distrito de Manejo Integrado Regional Cuchilla Jardín - Támesis) administered by the authority under the Ministry of the Environment.

In 2007 AGA formally initiated the mining exploration stage of the Quebradona project, which comprises the exploitation of five world-class metallic deposits with high copper, gold, silver and molybdenum content. In 2019 the company submitted the environmental license application to exploit the first of the five deposits located in Jericó, and was admitted in January 2020 for evaluation by the National Environmental Licensing Authority, ANLA, which subsequently made 174 additional

information requirements to the Study. Simultaneously, AGA submitted to the mining authority the Work and Works Plan, PTO, to which the mining authority made 545 requirements. The company responded to the environmental and mining requirements with multiple shortcomings and inaccuracies, which led the ANLA to return the studies and file the license application in November 2021, which means that the company will be able to submit a new mining application in the future.



SOUTHWEST ANTIOQUIA, A DISPUTED TERRITORY

The situation of insecurity experienced by the inhabitants of southwestern Antioquia is not at all encouraging. It is a fact that the urban armed conflict between criminal gangs in Medellín has moved to the southwest, bringing death, anxiety and fear. The most recent case was recorded in a rural area of the municipality of Titiribí where five families totaling approximately thirty people had to leave their homes and flee after threats from criminal groups.

Since 2020, the Southwest has been registering an increasing homicide rate and has, together with the sub-region of Bajo Cauca, the highest homicide rate in the Department of Antioquia. According to the Governor's Office, in 2020 there were 312 cases, which dropped to 300 in 2021 (-3.8%); in 2022 as of January 17 there are 6 (4 in Salgar, 1 in Concordia and another in Andes), while last year at the same time there were 23; and although a report of tranquility is issued for the decrease according to the percentage procedures of the statistics, the facts are more convincing and say that many people are being killed here.

What is the reason? A dispute for territorial control between criminal groups that for several years have been engaged in a war for the control and distribution of illicit drugs, as confirmed by Luis Fernando Suarez, who is in charge of the Sectorial Secretariat of Human Security of the Governor's Office, who said that in the sub-region persists "a dispute between organizations for the drug market, which is enhanced by the coffee activity".

Security measures such as the increase in the number of troops, which is almost always the way in which the authorities respond to this war between illegal groups, are insufficient, as the communities are once again submerged in fear and anguish.

However, the appropriation and control of space and of the human groups that inhabit a given territory are and have been a constant in history, and the Southwest as a sub-region knows about it. Since the Paisa colonization, the famous "Concessions" made to settlers regardless of the fact that other first settlers, the indigenous people, were the-



re as their inhabitants and owners, large tracts of land were granted to men who with axe in hand, chopped down trees and everything that came in their way in the task of founding towns and settling people.

And now, in the 21st century, the neo-colonialist mode of appropriation of the territory, of its permanent or temporary control, which has been experienced for several years in some municipalities with the extractivist mega-mining projects that are the business of multinationals.

In effect, based on national regulations, the Constitution and the Mining Code, tailored to the interests of large capital, almost always foreign, the Colombian State cedes to these companies the territories, not only the subsoil, for the exploitation of minerals, regardless of what the inhabitants of these territories think and the irreparable

damage to the natural and cultural heritage that the human relationship has configured in the territorial space.

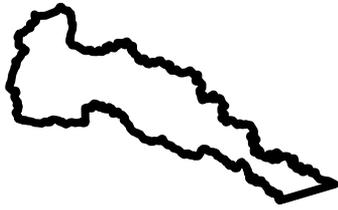
Thanks to the organization and social mobilization of resistance that has been taking shape in the Southwest, on behalf of environmental collectives, peasants and organizations for the defense of human rights, a first victory was obtained and that is that the National Environmental Licensing Agency (ANLA) temporarily shelved the process of granting the environmental license to AngloGoldAshanti for the Quebradona mining project, located in the village of the same name in the municipality of Jericó. It should be noted that this project would only be the first of those that would make up what has been called the Southwest Mining District. If this project were to be consolidated, it would have dire consequences for our region.



MINING THREAT

IN THE AMAZONIAN PIEDMONT – PUTUMAYENSE

The Colombian Amazon comprises 483,164 km², administratively the departments of Guainía; Vaupés; Amazonas; Caquetá; Guaviare; and Putumayo. And the southern part of the departments of Vichada and Meta.



DEPARTMENT OF PUTUMAYO

Located in the south-west of the country with an area of 24,885 km², it is part of the Colombian Amazon basin. It is bordered to the north by Caquetá; to the east by the Amazon; to the south by the Republics of Ecuador and Peru (with multiple border crossings); and to the west by the departments of Cauca and Nariño. The department is surrounded by the Caquetá, Putumayo and San Miguel rivers.

Much of the territory is considered of high environmental and cultural value. It highlights the National Natural Park of La Paya; Serranía de los Churumbelos Park; Ingi Ande Flora and Medicinal Plants Sanctuary; Doña Juana Volcanic Complex National Natural Park; Protective Forest Reserve of the Upper Basin of the Mocoa River - RFPCARM and more than fifty Environmental Reserves of conservation of civil society. It houses diverse ecosystems that make up the Pan-Amazonian biocultural interrelationship, due to the fact that geomorphologically it is the closest region of the entire American continent between the Pacific - Andes and the Amazon.

Putumayo administratively has 13 municipalities: The Piedemonte putumayense, integrated by the municipalities of Santiago, Colón, Sibundoy; San Francisco; Mocoa the capital of the department, Villagarzón; Puerto Guzmán; Puerto Asís; Puerto Caicedo and Orito. Its temperature goes from the cold Andean zone, transition space of the Pacific winds until crossing the bifurcation of the Andes mountain range (where the Colombian fluvial star is born) where the temperature increases between 18°C and 26°C.

This territory has an important presence of indigenous communities families of 15 peoples: Ingas,



Camëntsa, Siona, Cofan, Quichua, Murui, Pastos, by forced displacement came to inhabit: Nasa, Pijao, Awa, Embera Chami, Yanacona. In addition, Afro-descendants, peasants and people who come from different corners of the country in search of other life options converge socially. The ancestral Amazonian peoples have a wealth of wisdom about the ecosystems and the benefits of this region that they share on a daily basis.

But on the other hand, the department of Putumayo, in recent decades has been the epicenter of violence and armed conflict with serious human and environmental costs, due, among others, to the extractive economies implemented. In this region of the country since the 1960s, the government sold the large ancestral territory of the Siona and Cofán peoples to U.S. oil companies, dispossessing these communities of their lands. In the midst of the development of violent armed operations and Plan Colombia, oil extractivism spread, and currently hydrocarbons are being exploited in nine of the 13 municipalities, with US and Canadian companies and the state-owned Ecopetrol involved in this process.

In addition to these problems, since the 1980s, coca monoculture and its transformation into hydrochloride began. As a result, the department became the world's leading cocaine producer.

These extractive economies have major environmental, social, political and cultural impacts. The magnitude and impact on the territory, among others, are related to the conjugation of factors and actors guerrillas,

paramilitaries and members of the public forces; they make violence their means of territorial control in a region that for decades has had an absent social State, delegating functions to other institutions such as the church at the beginning of the century and in the last decades to the military. The human costs have been of great magnitude municipalities; by spatial distribution this territory is subdivided into three eco-regions: High Andean; Piedemonte and Amazonian Plain.

AMAZONIAN PIEDMONT REGION

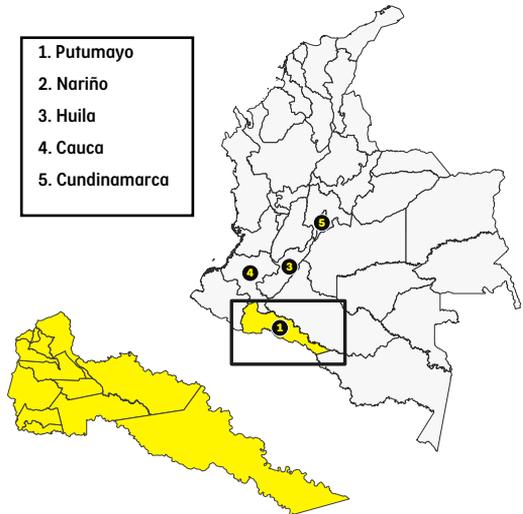
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This territory has an important presence of indigenous communities families of 15 peoples: Ingas, Camëntsa, Siona, Cofan, Quichua, Murui, Pastos, by forced displacement came to inhabit: Nasa, Pijao, Awa, Embera Chami, Yanacona. In addition, Afro-descendants, peasants and people who come from different corners of the country in search of other life options converge socially. The ancestral Amazonian peoples have a wealth of wisdom about the ecosystems and the benefits of this region that they share on a daily basis.

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CURRENT ISSUES

Libero Copper¹, a Canadian company, wants to extract 4.6 billion pounds of copper and 511 million pounds of molybdenum in Mocoa, a city located in the Amazonian piedmont, capital of the department of Putumayo.

The Ministry of Mines and Energy, through Decree 626 of April 1, 1976, declared the copper (Cu) and molybdenum (Mo) deposit located 10 km from Mocoa as a special reserve. In the middle of the Amazonian piedmont, in the northern area of the city of Mocoa. Between 2006 and 2008 the nation signed concession contracts with the British company Anglo American for five (5) titles with an extension of approximately 11,391 hectares, the term of these titles is between 2037 and 2040. In this same area there are two titles under evaluation with Anglogold

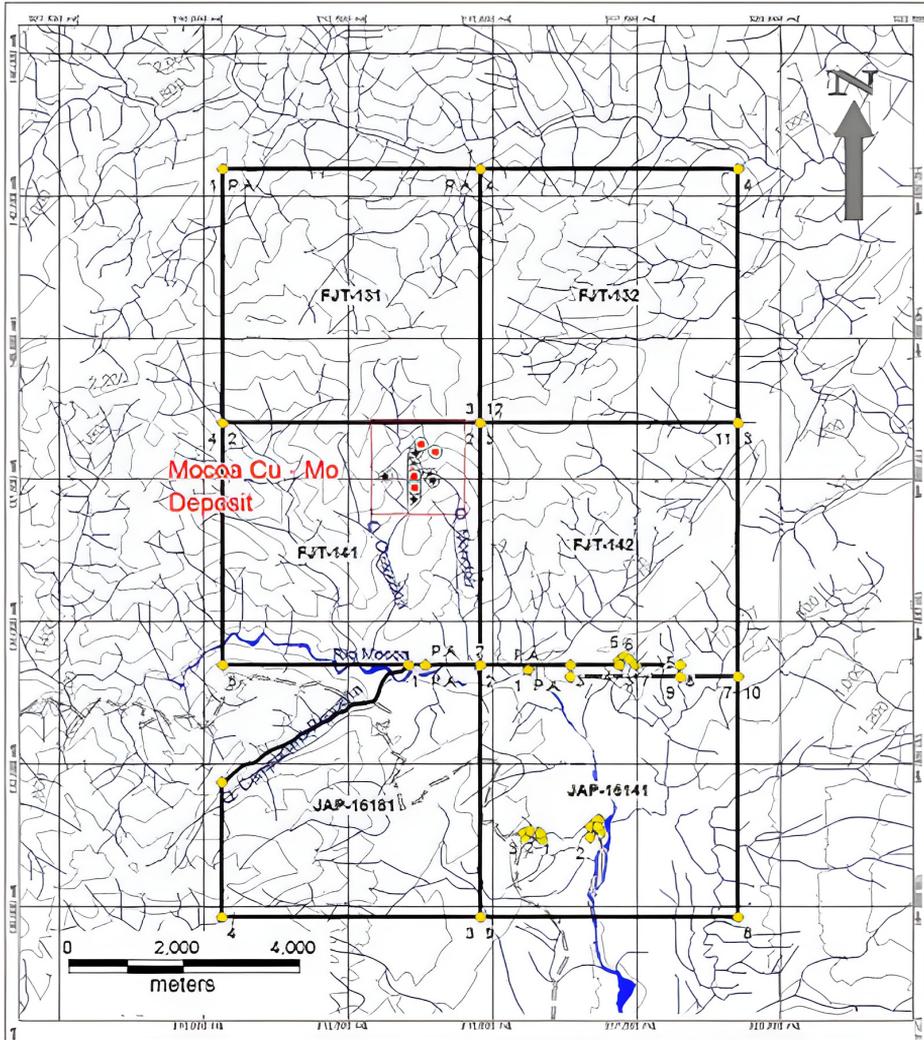
Ashanti Colombia S.A.S. since January 2008 and the seventh with Anglo American Colombia Exploration S.A. since July 2013.

The Colombian government granted in this process concession permits for 30 years to advance exploration and exploitation works of other minerals such as zinc, platinum, silver, copper and gold, as well as construction materials, natural and siliceous sands and gravels.

On May 7, 2018, Libero Copper Corporation (Libero Copper) acquired a 100% interest in the Mocoa Project from B2Gold Corp. (B2Gold) by acquiring all of the shares of Mocoa Ventures Ltd. (Mocoa Ventures). Mocoa Ventures is a wholly owned subsidiary of B2Gold, which owns the Mocoa Project.

1. Technical report *TechnicalReportMocoaCu-MoDepositColombia150618.pdf* (liberocopper.com) with an environmental chapter practically non-existent, reduced to referring to what the mining code contains in terms of licensing.

**Figure 4-2: Claim Map
Mocoa Property**



LEGENO

- B2Gold Dima Wani Cokora
- Mocoa Cu - Mo Deposit
- Tenement Locations
- Claim Boundary
- 50 m Contour
- 100 m Contour
- 200 m Contour
- 300 m Contour
- 400 m Contour
- 500 m Contour
- 600 m Contour
- 700 m Contour
- 800 m Contour
- 900 m Contour
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- 9,400 m Contour
- 9,600 m Contour
- 9,800 m Contour
- 10,000 m Contour

CLIENT

B2Gold Corp.

ROUTE 2

MOCOA PROJECT

Map Scale

Scale 1:50,000

Scale 1:100,000

Scale 1:200,000

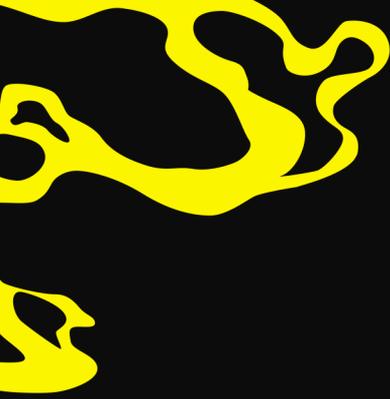
TENEMENT LOCATIONS

Font: Libero Copper Technical Report (NI 43-101 Technical Report).

1. The concession area for mining is located in the tropical rainforest, one of whose environmental benefits is the production of water, which gives rise to the Caquetá, Putumayo, Blanco, Pepino, Mulato and Mocoa rivers. In 1985, Inderena declared the Reserva Protectora la Cuenca Alta del Río Mocoa (RFP-CARM), in order to protect the basin where all the rivers of this water network originate and on which 42% of the department's aqueducts depend for their water supply. The rivers that originate in this territory also contribute to the Amazon River basin.
2. The municipality of Mocoa takes its name from the river that flows through it. It enjoys a humid climate with rainfall exceeding 4,000 mm per year. This territory is formed by high slopes ranging from 600 to 3200 meters above sea level, with a young geological formation, whose soils are in formation, which marks this region as a zone of active erosion throughout the fan of the water basins (23 basins: eight (8) rivers and thirteen (13) streams) of the Mocoa River, which flows into the Caquetá River.
3. The area involved in the mining concession is located in the valley of the Mocoa River, a city where the removal of sediments and materials is permanent, in the course of geological time erosion has been forming narrow terraces in which the inhabitants of this region have chosen to develop their life projects. Its nearly 60,000 inhabitants live mainly from agriculture, livestock, services and commerce.
4. The city has splendid landscapes made up of moorland, terraces and valleys of sedimentary richness. With very precious natural environmental benefits, which are a real potential: it has more than 3,970 species (or different types of animals and plants). Approximately 2,781 species of plants; more than 850 species of birds; 174 species of insects (butterflies, cockroaches, ants, etc), 59 species of fish; 58 species of fur-bearing animals (mammals); 25 species of snakes and lizards, 11 species of spiders and scorpions; 8 species of frogs, salamanders and toads Fungi and crabs (2 species of each). Species declared endangered, such as the spectacled bear, paramo tapir, and jaguar, among others, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), are vulnerable to extinction due to habitat loss and other factors.
5. Mining concessions also overlap with collective ancestral territories; thus, there is growing concern among indigenous and peasant communities about the impact on the resources on which they depend.
6. The current mining exploration carried out by the Cobre mining company is already beginning to affect the natural habitat of species due to the aerial overflight for more than 20 days during the month of February 2022, (helitransporting material for one of the exploratory camps), birds, monkeys and other species fluttered in a daze according to inhabitants of the villages subject to intervention.
7. The company is disrespecting local laws, there is prohibition of the Municipal Agreement 020 of December 6, 2018, in which "MEASURES FOR THE PRESERVATION AND DEFENSE OF THE ECOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF MOCOA PUTUMAYO AND OTHER PROVISIONS ARE ENACTED."

2 DANE population projection 58,938 inhabitants: urban, 40,689; Peasant communities, 18,249 indigenous reservations, as well as their cultural identity

3 Source: GBIF.org (17 January 2022) GBIF Occurrence Download <https://doi.org/10.15468/dl.y4fzby>



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