

DECLARATION KAWSAK SACHA - LIVING FOREST

To be alive and conscious, **SUBJECT OF RIGHTS**

Adopted at the General Assembly of the Kichwa Indigenous People of Sarayaku, in December 2012 and updated in June 2018.

1. Background:

The people of Sarayaku are heirs of a history of resistance and struggle for the validity of our freedom against colonizers, invasions, and external aggressions because we are Sarayaku Runakuna, descendants of the jaguar, inhabitants of the basin of the Bobonaza, Pastaza and Marañón rivers, where the Tayakkuna, carriers of ancient wisdom navigated, naming the places they traveled.

Sarayaku has been legally recognized since 1979. Its status was reformed and approved on June 10, 2004 by the Development Council of the Nationalities and Peoples of Ecuador (CODENPE), as "Original Kichwa People of Sarayaku".

Protected in art. 71 of the Constitution of Ecuador that states that Nature or Pachamama, where life is reproduced and carried out, has the right to have its existence fully respected as well as the maintenance and regeneration of its life cycles, structure, functions and evolutionary processes, and that all peoples, communities, towns, or nationalities can require the public officials to comply with the rights of nature.

In addition, art. 25, 26, and 29 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, establish that indigenous peoples have rights to maintain and strengthen their own spiritual relationship with lands, territories, waters, conservation and protection of the environment, and to the use of the resources that they have traditionally possessed.

In exercise of their right to self-determination and based on their Statute, Constitution and international instruments, the Original Kichwa People of Sarayaku,

DECLARES:

The territory of Sarayaku KAWSAK SACHA - **LIVING FOREST, BEING ALIVE AND CONSCIOUS, and SUBJECT OF RIGHTS**, as we have traditionally recognized as original peoples and nationalities.

THE CONCEPT OF KAWSAK SACHA:

KAWSAK SACHA is a living being, with consciousness, constituted by all the beings of the Forest, from the most infinitesimal to the greatest and supreme beings; it includes the beings of the worlds, animal, plant, mineral, spiritual and cosmic, in intercommunication with human beings, and providing them with what is necessary to revitalize their psychological, physical, spirituality, thus restoring energy, life and the balance of the original indigeneous peoples.

It is in the waterfalls, lagoons, marshes, mountains, rivers, trees and other places in the territory, where the Protective Beings of Kawsak Sacha inhabit and develop a life of their own, similar to that of human beings. Kawsak Sacha transmits the knowledge to the *yachak*--or spiritual elder--so that they interact in the world of the Protective Beings of the Forest, in order to maintain the balance of the Pachamama, to heal people and society. This knowledge is methodically maintained and transmitted to the new generations.

The natural balance of the universe, the harmony of life, cultural perpetuity, the existence of living beings and the continuity of the Kawsak Sacha, depend on the permanence and transmission of the powers of the Protective Beings of the Forest. It is also up to these Beings and the *yachak* to maintain a respectful and balanced relationship between human beings and the beings of the forest.

THE OBJECTIVE OF KAWSAK SACHA

The objective of the declaration is to preserve and conserve our territorial spaces in a sustainable manner, and the material and spiritual relationship established there by the original peoples with the Living Forest and the beings that inhabit it. Our living territory is, and will continue to be, free of commercial extraction of the components of Kawsak Sacha. Therefore, we propose a life model based on criteria of the wealth of our culture, such as the uncontaminated rivers and abundant fish that exist in our territory and life in the *allyu*, and the strength of our organization.

CONCLUSION

Supported by the recognition of the plurinationality of the Ecuadorian State, the Kichwa indigenous people of Sarayaku exhort the Ecuadorian government to recognize and legitimize the Kawsak Sacha as a living and conscious being, subject of rights, as another form of current protection of our territory and territories. of the original Amazonian peoples. Protecting the life and environmental integrity of the territories is a human right and a non-negotiable principle.

We call on national and international peoples and nationalities to unity to unanimously protect and guarantee the Declaration of the Kawsak Sacha - Living Forest.

In the same way, Sarayaku proposes to the international organizations, to adhere and endorse this declaration of protection to the territories governed by indigenous peoples, this conservation proposal born of our own worldview and in accordance with the international agreements on the conservation of biological diversity.

The Kawsak Sacha is where our kallari rukukuna (ancestors) apayayakuna and apamamakuna (grandparents and grandmothers) lived, parents, mothers, where we live, where our future generations will live and where the Protective Beings of the jungle and all the native peoples will remain.

ORIGINAL PEOPLE KICHWA DE SARAYAKU