

Indian Law Resource Center

Indigenous Peoples' Rights

<https://indianlaw.org/issue/land-rights>

Campaign and Advocacy

Our work with Native and indigenous peoples has always drawn the connection between indigenous land rights, environmental protection and human rights. When indigenous peoples are deprived of their ties to the earth and their ways of life, they suffer. The effects of poverty, poor health, discrimination, and grave human rights abuses have many Native peoples and cultures at risk of disappearing completely.

The most important thing we can do to help them is to help them protect and hold on to their lands. They need to survive physically, culturally, and economically. This is why we work to assist Indian communities, especially in Mexico and Central and South America, to get strong legal rights to their lands. If Indian communities can be sure of holding on to their lands, they have a much better chance of improving their health and their lives and carrying on their cultures and their traditional ways of life.

Helping Indian peoples get strong legal control of their lands will also do a great deal to protect the forests and the other environments where they live. Experts agree that Indian ownership and control is the most successful way to protect and preserve forests and other natural ecosystems. There is also wide agreement that getting lands under the control of Indian communities or peoples is one of the best ways to slow down climate change.

There are millions of Indian people today, making up thousands of Indian communities throughout Mexico and Central and South America, trying to hold on to and use their ancestral lands. They need help mostly from experts such as surveyors, mappers, lawyers, and historians who can help them prove their rights and get secure land titles.

We are making plans now to provide the needed experts on a much larger scale so that hundreds of Indian communities and millions of acres of land can be legally protected from invaders, land grabbers, and others who want to destroy Indian communities and cultures. We want to make these experts available on a permanent basis for Indian communities for years to come.

During the pandemic, some Latin American countries were so focused on dealing with Covid that they got distracted from other menaces like drug dealing. In Peru, a cocaine production boom has sieged indigenous territories and some national parks. CGTN America's Dan Collyns brings a story about Narcos versus drug dealers in Peru.

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The Indian Law Resource Center was named as a finalist in the Racial Equity 2030 Challenge by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The Indian Law Resource Center and the nine other finalists were each awarded a grant of \$1 million to further develop their proposals as they compete for three grants of \$20 million and two grants of \$10 million to be awarded next year.

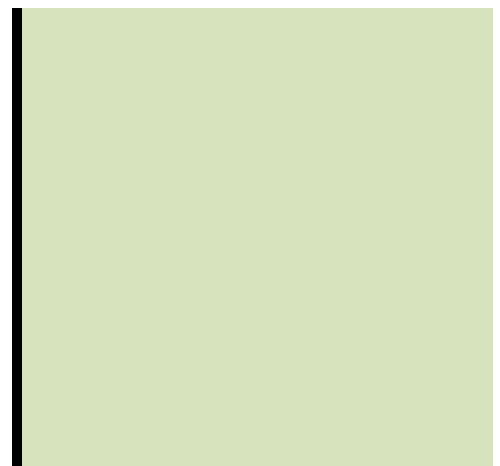
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Securing Land Ownership Rights for Indigenous Communities in Mexico and Central and South America

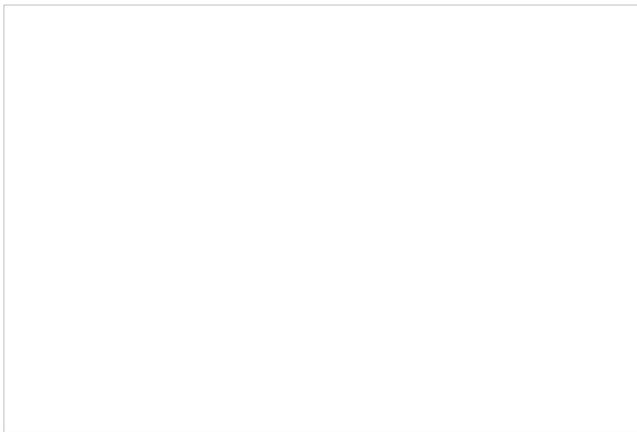
The Indian Law Resource Center is pleased to support LAND OF THE BRAVE - Broken Treaty III, a sequel to the acclaimed BROKEN TREATY AT BATTLE MOUNTAIN and TO PROTECT MOTHER EARTH. LAND OF THE BRAVE, the third and final film of the Western Shoshone Trilogy, documents Western Shoshone life and survival over the past 20 years and their fight to protect their land and way of life.

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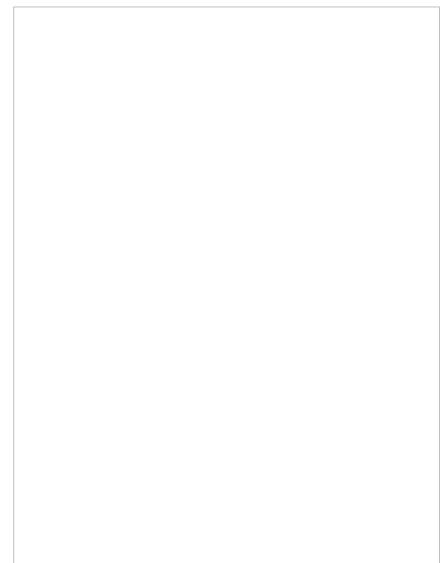
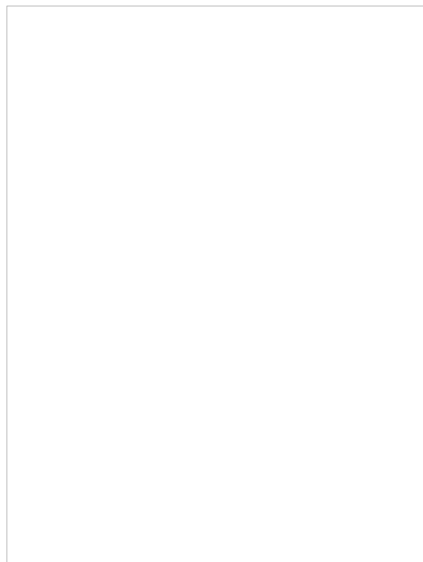
[Strengthening Ties With the Maya Lawyers Association of Guatemala: Senior Attorney Leonardo Crippa Contributes an Article to the Associations Nim Ajpu Newsletter on the American Declaration and Indigenous Land Ownership in Guatemala](#)



One of the largest indigenous organizations in South America, Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations from the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB), has for the first time in its history, elected an indigenous woman to serve in its top post.

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In February 2015, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights transferred Agua Calientes petition to Guatemala, formally launching the first phase of the procedure.

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In February 2005, the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs (a traditional Haudenosaunee government), the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe , and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne signed an agreement with Governor George Pataki to resolve their historic claim to lands in Northern New York.

Multilateral development banks (MDBs) and some national development banks play a central role in the approval of large-scale development projects, such as dams and forestry initiatives, which have had devastating effects on indigenous peoples and other local communities. The Center works to ensure that these financial institutions respect the environment and human rights of indigenous peoples in all their development activities.

We are a non-profit law and advocacy organization.

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