



Filling the Valleys Peru

The valleys along Peru's southern coast are among the deepest on Earth. They are also frequently filled with clouds. In July 2015, Landsat 8 captured this view of the cloud-filled canyons through which the Yauca and Acarí rivers empty into the Pacific Ocean.

You can't see it, but the Pacific lies below the clouds on the lower left. The clouds are marine stratocumulus—a type of low-level cloud so close to the surface that it is essentially fog. Such clouds are a persistent feature off the coast of Peru and Chile, developing most often during the winter and early spring. On some occasions, prevailing winds can push the clouds inland. Because the marine clouds are low, they are easily blocked by coastal mountains and hills, such as the Andes. But in areas where low valleys open to the ocean, the clouds move inland.