



## STEP BY STEP

Since last March 14 we have been in touch with Mrs. Dangond, lawyer of the National Land Agency (Agencia Nacional de Tierras / ANT). She was given the land application filed by San Martin de Amacayacu and Palmeras, after these communities had written the ANT several times to get the latest news about this application. Mrs. Dangond then proceeded to finish the often mentioned socio-economic study (Newsletters 50, 55 and others). With this document, the Office of Indigenous Affairs of the Ministry of Interior Affairs was able to write a concept about the feasibility of the application. Before, when the ANT was still INCODER, such a concept was not requested from the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

To complete the socio-economic study, another meeting needed to be held with representatives of San Martin and Palmeras, in which both communities once again confirmed their agreement with the application. This meeting was held last March 26 in Palmeras (picture below).

Mrs. Dangond could eventually finish the socio-economic study at the end of May and send it to the Ministry. Note: We just needed to transfer 50 euro for printing this document in full color.

The concept of the Ministry of Interior Affairs arrived via Mrs. Dangond mid-July (11 pages) and is basically positive. But one more document is required: A declaration by San Martin de Amacayacu and Palmeras that they officially renounce administratively from the Ticuna Cocama and Yagua (TICOYA) indigenous reserve. With this declaration it will be possible for these two communities to receive their government subsidy independently of this reserve. We assume that this will still cause quite the administrative circus, but independently of the ancestral land application.



We consulted about this situation with our connections at the Colombian United Nations Human Rights Office (Newsletter 64). They were also visiting San Martin last March (pictures below right on previous page) and since then we are in regular contact about the land application via email and Whatsapp.

They were rather careful about denouncing from the TICOYA reserve administratively. Because what will happen then if the new reserve for San Martin de Amacayacu and Palmeras is eventually not approved after all? Then these communities could possibly find themselves in an administrative limbo of which the consequences may be difficult to solve.

Representatives of San Martin and Palmeras gathered last August 5<sup>th</sup> to write a reply to the ANT about the concept of the Ministry of Interior Affairs (pictures this page). This document states that the communities will renounce from the TICOYA reserve under the condition that their new reserve is approved.

On August 10<sup>th</sup>, we received a response from Mrs. Dangong that San Martin and Palmeras really need to renounce and as quickly as possible!

So then we left some time for Mrs. Dangond and the United Nations representatives to talk to the people at the Ministry of Interior Affairs and let the situation settle in. The next meeting has been scheduled for September 2<sup>nd</sup>.



## WORTH MENTIONING

During the whole process of getting the ancestral lands of San Martin and Palmeras recognized as an indigenous reserve, we regularly tried to motivate NGO's and individuals to support our cause. Unfortunately, the answer was always that they were busy with other land applications. Mostly, they were dealing with an application for enlargement of two existing indigenous reserves in the Caquetá area of the Colombian Amazon.

Last July 17<sup>th</sup>, the 1.423 indigenous people living in this area received the good news that 567.900 hectares of their ancestral lands have also been recognized as part of their reserve. With this land, the Chiribiquete National Nature Park is now connected to these two indigenous reserves, thus forming one huge protected area of 10 million hectares of tropical rainforest (almost the size of Portugal).



On the following websites you can see maps of this area:

<http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/medio-ambiente/amplian-dos-resguardos-indigenas-para-crear-un-gran-corredor-de-conservacion-en-el-amazonas-articulo-703598>

<http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/medio-ambiente/el-corazon-del-amazonas-casi-salvo-articulo-703830>

<https://news.mongabay.com/2017/07/colombia-expands-indigenous-reserves-near-key-deforestation-hotspot/>

As you can imagine, we are super happy with this news. The rainforest in this Caquetá area is much under fire by logging and gold and other mineral extraction, coca plantations, oil drilling etc. The more than 100.000 hectares of rainforest that disappear in the Colombian Amazon every year are mostly located here. And we also really hope that

San Martin de Amacayacu and Palmeras are the next communities to receive such good news!

## 7 OCTOBER PRESENTATION BAARLE

Hereby we would like to invite everyone on October 7<sup>th</sup>, to come and listen to the annual presentation of Heike van Gils. The most important figure behind the ancestral land application will also be present this year: José Gregorio Vásquez. The location is Ghil 12 in Baarle-Nassau (5111ED). We will provide the starting time, entrance is free and everyone is welcome. Please bring your neighbours, family and friends!



---

**Would you like to support the Tikuna indigenous community of San Martin together with the Small World Foundation, and stay in touch about the local developments in this remote corner of Colombia?**

Please transfer 15 euro yearly (or more!) to the following bank account in the Netherlands:

Account name: Stichting SMALL WORLD FOUNDATION  
SWIFT/BIC Code: RABONL2U  
IBAN code: NL28 RABO 0132 7262 03

Or check out the online contribution module on: [www.smallworldfoundation.org/?page\\_id=68](http://www.smallworldfoundation.org/?page_id=68)

Please DON'T FORGET TO INFORM US ABOUT YOUR NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS!!  
([heike\\_van\\_gils@hotmail.com](mailto:heike_van_gils@hotmail.com))

The contributions will be spent exclusively on the development and realization of local initiatives in San Martin de Amacayacu in the Colombian Amazon. No wages are being paid to anyone. The expenses will be mentioned as much as possible in the newsletters. For alternative contributions, please contact Heike van Gils at: [heike\\_van\\_gils@hotmail.com](mailto:heike_van_gils@hotmail.com).

For more information about this initiative, please check the website:  
**[www.smallworldfoundation.org](http://www.smallworldfoundation.org)**.