



IMPORTANT VISIT TO BOGOTÁ

At the end of April, José Gregorio Vásquez and Heike van Gils traveled to Bogotá for a week to continue lobbying on all fronts for the official recognition of San Martín's ancestral lands. First of all there was a national congress for all indigenous peoples of Colombia, organised by the Colombian Ministry of Internal Affairs. After a week of intensive dialogue last year, this Ministry promised a lot of money to different indigenous organisations to buy land and to carry out the socio-economic studies required to enlarge existing indigenous reserves or establish new ones. Confusing enough, INCODER is not involved in this agreement, whereas this is precisely the government entity with the task of enlarging or establishing indigenous reserves...

In the meantime, work still continues for the socio-economic study for San Martín de Amacayacu and Palmeras, in the hands of the INCODER team which visited these two communities in July 2013. Disappointingly enough, this study has suffered a delay of almost a year due to the team's legal advisor, a lady who only recently came up with a simply unsatisfactory product. So this legal part of the socio-economic study still has to be written from scratch at this point... Fortunately, the rest of the INCODER team did do her best and found the right person for this legal section. We can not do much more than hope for a speedy result!

The Amacayacu National Nature Park has shown her bureaucratic side with a very unclear concept about San Martín and Palmeras' land application, whereas the park's position should have been simply positive, as was stated in the various conversations. A tough meeting with National Park representatives "higher up" in Bogotá was necessary to get a suitable document in any of these days...

The Ministry of Internal Affairs also received a visit to give (not ask!!) clarifications about whose arguments have more legal weight about the application: The communities of San Martín de Amacayacu and Palmeras themselves (yes!) or an umbrella organisation for indigenous communities (no!).

Conclusion: You would think the government knows how it all works. Welcome in the world famous *Locombia...* (*loco is crazy!*)

The meetings were not suitable for taking pictures, so you'll have to make do with some impressions...

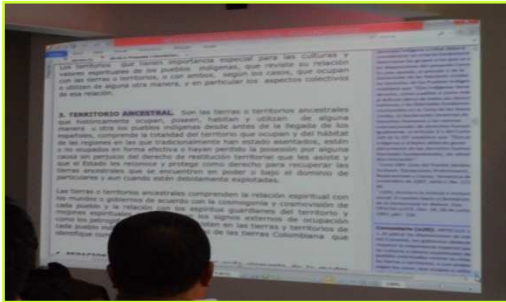




Day 1-3&5 national congress: The view.



Day 2 national congress: Together on the sofa in the hotel lobby to describe the Colombian situation concerning ancestral land recognition for indigenous peoples.



Day 2 national congress: The full definition of "ancestral lands".



Day 5 national congress: Only the viceminister of Internal Affairs comes to listen to the conclusions of the congress...



Day 4 Labour Day: A game of Chinese chess with a lady of the INCODER team while editing parts of the socio-economic study.



Day 1 national congress: Still some empty chairs...



Somewhere on the street: Disagreement with the re-election of current president Santos because "the mafia will continue"...



Day 2 national congress: Amazon Delegation on the background

KINDERGARDEN IN USE!!

Despite the fact that some details are still unfinished (some cupboards and tables, an extra rain gutter, etc), we can proudly announce that kindergarden Tuirupü in San Martin has been taken in use! On May 13th, we celebrated the inauguration with the children and their parents. All other community members were also invited to join the celebration. First there were speeches by teacher Miriam, community leader(*curaca*) Orlando and Heike on behalf of the Small World Foundation. Then we cut the orange tape and enjoyed the different funny presentations. The day was finished with cake, soft drinks and games of mud soccer on the field in front of the school. A beautiful day!

But even before all this happened in San Martin, the children of the Aloysiuschool in Geesteren (Gelderland)held a run to raise money for this kindergarden and a few other independent projects. On behalf of San Martin de Amacayacu and the Small World Foundation: Thanks everyone! We can be really proud of this wonderful project!





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

Please DON'T FORGET TO INFORM US ABOUT YOUR NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS!!
(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.

For more information about this initiative, please check the website:
www.smallworldfoundation.org.