

[The Ecologist](#)

By Carla Shaw

The collapse of Yasuni Initiative has allowed pristine parts of the Ecuadorian Amazon to become vulnerable to oil exploration. As the drilling begins, Carla Shaw tells The Ecologist why she fears for more than just the environment ...

'This could mean the end of forty years of peace in Ecuador.'

In August 2012, I had the opportunity to go deep into the Amazon Rainforest via a small private plane that flew for an hour and a half over the forest to one of the remotest Shiwiar territories near the Peru-Ecuador border. It was the first time I had been able to travel so far in, the other times I had worked in the Amazon was in areas on the periphery of pure primary untouched Amazon.

On the fourth day of our visit, the tranquility of the forest was interrupted by an uninvited military helicopter that landed in Juintsa. My heart began racing as we walked towards these uninvited guests, there was only one thing I could think of why they were intruding upon the Shiwiar territory unannounced: oil.

A year later, in August, 2013, Correa liquidated the Yasuni ITT trust fund initiative to protect the rainforest from oil drilling. His excuse was that the target fund of \$3.6 billion was not reached due to global economic slump for not gaining the financial support from other world leaders. In September the National Assembly were convinced to go ahead with drilling in Yasuni.

The news has spread worldwide and many are now aware of President Correa's decision to auction off 7 million acres of the Ecuadorian Rainforest to Oil Companies despite global resistance and countless public demonstrations in Ecuador and international pleas against his decision. Among the affected areas is Ecuador's largest national park, Yasuni, which was declared a World Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations in 1989.



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