



Grupo de Trabajo Internacional para la Protección de Pueblos Indígenas en Aislamiento y Contacto Inicial



CONCEPT NOTE

General Assembly of the International Working Group for the Protection of Indigenous Peoples in Isolation and Initial Contact - GTI-PIACI. Bogotá, February 2024

Title: GTI-PIACI General Assembly - Regional Program for PIACI Protection

Organizers: GTI-PIACI Executive Secretariat (Land is Life), with support from the GTI-PIACI Governance Group, Logistics Team, Methodology Team and ACT Colombia (Amazon Conservation Team; host member organization).

General Objective

To strengthen the internal governance mechanisms of the Indigenous Peoples in Isolation and Initial Contact - International Working Group (GTI-PIACI, *for its Spanish acronym*), promote the electoral transition period for the Technical Secretariat, and gather planning input for 2024.

Specific Objectives

Internal Assembly

1. Advance the GTI's transition and planning for 2024-2026
 - A. Present an overview of the management, lessons learned and challenges facing the Executive Secretariat (2020-2023 management period);
 - B. Communicate and share information on PIA and PICI protection, by country, for GTI-PIACI planning.
 - C. Reflect on the transition process of the new administration, nominate and proceed with the election of the new Executive Secretariat's administration (2024-2026 management period).
 - D. Submit GTI-PIACI technical documents: report on the findings of the PIA Confirmation Methodology Working Group, and approval of the PIACI and Climate Offset document.
 - E. Build a work plan of priority issues for 2024.

Open Assembly

2. Develop GTI technical inputs and cooperation mechanisms.

- F. Discussion and development of a shared agenda between the GTI-PIACI and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.
- G. Facilitate dialogue spaces between the GTI-PIACI, multilateral institutions, indigenous organizations, partner organizations, and the Colombian State, with a



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view to promoting an international technical assistance network for Colombian government entities for the formulation and implementation of PIACI rights prevention and protection policies and border regions.

Background (See Appendix I)

Participants (See Appendix II)

- One representative per organization and specialist GTI-PIACI members
- Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Chair of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- Representative from OHCHR
- Representative funders (Re Wild, CLUA)

Location: OPIAC Farm, La Mesa (Cundinamarca) and Bogotá.

Date : February 19 to 23, 2024

Format

The Assembly will have a first, internal phase, in which only members of the GTI-PIACI and certain invited guests will participate, and a second, open phase, with the participation of GTI-PIACI members, invited guests, as well as representatives from the Colombian State and the United Nations system.

Organizer Profiles

GTI-PIACI

A working, convergence and coordination network formed of indigenous organisations and indigenous representatives from the Amazon, Cerrado and Gran Chaco regions, and people with a history of commitment to the protection, defense and promotion of the rights of peoples in isolation and initial contact (PIACI). Its objectives are to draw attention to violations of PIACI rights, strengthen strategies and actions for the protection and defense of those rights, facilitate the exchange of knowledge and mutual learning, and enhance knowledge about these peoples in order to strengthen advocacy at the national and regional levels, and before the human rights systems and other international forums in terms of policies and guidelines for the protection of their rights and territories. The formation of the GTI-PIACI arose as a result of the collaborative work by Land is Life, coordinated by PIACI specialist Antenor Vaz, for the preparation of the diagnostic assessment document, "Indigenous Peoples in Isolation in the Amazon and Gran Chaco. Regional Report: Territories and Development" (2019), and was formally ratified in October 2019 with the signing of a founding document by members at the Lima Declaration.



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LAND IS LIFE

Land is Life was founded in June 1992, since then it has played an important role in the struggles of indigenous peoples around the world, working in partnership with communities to promote their rights at the local, national and international levels. Today, indigenous communities and organizations around the world, from the heart of the Amazon to the plains and forests of Africa, Pacific islands and the Arctic tundra, depend on the strategic, financial and moral partnership that Land is Life provides.

For the past 25 years, Land is Life has been a leader in the protection of the lands and territories of indigenous peoples in isolation and initial contact (PIACI) in the Amazon, Cerrado and Gran Chaco regions, participating in the consultation process for the development of the UN Protection Guidelines, as well as in the thematic report of the UN Commission.

It's also played a leading role in providing direct local and regional support to indigenous organizations working to protect peoples in isolation and initial contact and enhance national-level advocacy and local labor protections throughout the Amazon region. Through their regional office in Ecuador, Land is Life provides daily coordination with indigenous counterparts to facilitate advocacy, local support and information exchange with more than a dozen grassroots indigenous organizations. Today, its regional strategy was developed in coordination with this network, working to serve the local and collective missions of all stakeholders involved.

ACT COLOMBIA

The Amazon Conservation Team was founded in 1996 with the mission of partnering with indigenous and local communities to protect the Amazon rainforest, the largest and most biodiverse forest in the world.

From the beginning, ACT's decisions have been guided by close consultation with our allied communities, especially elders, who have defined our priorities in fighting for the rights and protection of ancestral lands. Although our strategies have evolved over time, we have always believed in a holistic approach that integrates support for land rights and management, local community livelihoods and traditional cultural systems and knowledge

APPENDIX I

Background

In November 2019, a group working on the preparation of a REGIONAL REPORT: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN ISOLATION IN THE AMAZONIA AND GRAN CHACO - TERRITORIES AND DEVELOPMENT, organized by Land is Life, met in Lima to launch its publication.



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The report presented a set of recommendations with a view to strengthening regional PIA protection. Among other issues, these recommendations highlighted the need for greater regional coordination, more in-depth methodologies for verifying PIA presence, health diagnoses, the development and strengthening of public protection policies, the need to improve consultation processes in the case of impacts on territories with a PIACI presence, a better understanding of the region's development model (agro-extractive-export), and the important role of multilateral institutions and states.

At the aforementioned meeting, participants decided to create a regional civil society coalition that would bring together indigenous and indigenist organizations, and experts working on PIA protection, thus establishing the International Working Group for the Protection of Indigenous peoples in Isolation and Initial Contact – GTI-PIACI (for its Spanish acronym). At that same meeting, Land is Life was elected to serve as the GTI-PIACI's first Executive Secretariat.

During its four years of existence, the GTI-PIACI has developed a set of activities and initiatives incorporating the eight South American countries with documented PIACI records. GTI-PIACI established protocols regarding its identity and operation through a collective discussion process between all members.

GTI-PIACI Identity

GTI-PIACI is a diverse group of indigenous and indigenist organizations, representatives from the region, and experts with a history of commitment to the protection, defense and promotion of the rights of people in isolation and initial contact (PIACI), working at the local, national, regional and international levels.

Objectives

The International Working Group (GTI-PIACI) is a network of work, convergence and coordination, whose objectives are to draw attention to violations of PIACI rights, strengthen strategies and actions for the protection and defense of those rights, facilitate the exchange of knowledge and mutual learning, and enhance knowledge about these peoples.

The group came together to strengthen the capacity for advocacy at the national level and before human rights systems and other international spaces with regards to policies and guidelines for the protection and promotion of PIACI rights and territories.

Values

We recognize the diversity that exists between the PIACI and the organizations working to protect, defend and promote their rights; the value of learning about the methodologies and practices of other organizations working on the same issues; the greater impact and better results that can be achieved through closer collaboration; and that successfully addressing cross-border issues requires collaboration at the bilateral and regional levels. Interculturality and collaboration define the GTI-



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PIACI, alongside the awareness that learning, exchange, mutual trust, and representation create and strengthen the conditions for the development of collective action in support of the PIACI.

Principles

- The GTI-PIACI regards the PIACI of the Amazon, Cerrado and Gran Chaco as extremely vulnerable peoples at risk of extermination, and therefore entitled to urgent special protection measures aimed at protecting their lives, integrity and the intangibility of their territories.
- The GTI-PIACI upholds that "isolation" is a human right of indigenous peoples and therefore advocates for protection models centered on respect for the principle of "no contact", interpreted as a special expression of indigenous peoples' right to self-determination as defined by international standards.
- PIACI protection is based on the recognition of their integral rights to their traditional territories and requires effective mechanisms to guarantee that intangibility in the face of external threats.
- The GTI-PIACI understands that most PIACI territories have ancestrally been shared with other indigenous peoples, and that protection models must therefore be built with the effective participation of communities located in these shared territories and their representative organizations.
- The GTI-PIACI regards the cross-border dimension of PIACI in South America as an important contextual aspect, and that their protection therefore requires a regional and coordinated approach between states, indigenous peoples and representative organizations, and other civil society actors.

Operational Mechanisms

Members^[1], Characteristics and Functions

Members of GTI-PIACI are indigenous and indigenist organizations committed to the protection and defense of PIACI rights. Other members include independent individuals (specialists) who, through their professional expertise, contribute to the work of the GTI-PIACI. These members necessarily hold a recognized and certified track record of commitment to the protection and promotion of PIACI rights, their mission and vision should be directly related to the self-determination, promotion and defense of PIACI rights, and they must be involved in grassroots work with communities or indigenous organizations.

GTI-PIACI Member Functions

The main function of its members is to support the content, direction and control of the GTI-PIACI, namely:

- Designate contact persons (focal points/representatives) responsible for coordination and communication with the GTI and for the follow-up of commitments. For specific projects, each member institution/organization may define technical focal points.



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- Active participation in meetings, solicitations and activities convened by the GTI (in the General Assembly and through subgroups), including identifying and proposing projects and issues to be collectively addressed and casting votes.
- Contribute to the dissemination and public visibility of the GTI organization's work and initiatives.
- Represent, promote and publicize the GTI-PIACI in national and international forums as an important advisory actor in the construction of regional protection policies.
- Participate, when necessary, as a local level coordinator for the organization and implementation of activities planned by the GTI-PIACI (field missions, workshops and face-to-face meetings).

Technical Secretariat

The GTI-PIACI's Technical Secretariat has the following characteristics:

- The Technical Secretariat (TS) is housed in an organization with regional and international expertise and experience; it has bilingual or trilingual staff, and the capacity to manage and raise resources.
- The work of the TS must be independent of the work of the organization that carries it out.
- The TS's mandate is established in the General Assembly for a predetermined period of time (likely three years); the term of office may be renewed for the current organization, or another organization may be elected.
- The main role of the TS is to act as a convener and facilitate the progress of GTI-PIACI's work. Its main functions are to:
 - Be the operational arm of the GTI-PIACI.
 - Act as a facilitator and catalyst of an organic process.
 - Organize meetings, agendas, reports. moderation, and so on.
 - Fundraise for GTI-PIACI projects.
 - Execute the internal and external GTI-PIACI communication strategy.
 - Prepare a quarterly and annual report on the group's work for approval by the Assembly.
 - Represent the GTI-PIACI when members (in Assembly) so decide.
 - Act as a vehicle to facilitate the advance of GTI-PIACI's work.

Organization and Decision-Making

The GTI-PIACI's main work and decision-making spaces are the:

- a) General Assembly,
- b) Working subgroups, and
- c) Spaces for exchange and knowledge sharing.

GTI-PIACI General Assembly

The General Assembly is the main forum in which all members of the International Working Group participate. Meetings are held quarterly, at least initially, and are coordinated by the TS. The basic elements of the Assembly's operational functioning are as follows:



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- Decisions are made by consensus on structural issues. Decisions relating to the operation and management of the group are made by a qualified majority (2/3 of the parties).
- The Assembly's agenda is composed of items submitted by each subgroup and proposals made by individual members.
- The Assembly is concerned with the following topics:
 - Progress and challenges are identified and shared within the subgroups, and through representatives from each subgroup (potentially different representatives from the same subgroup). Representatives only serve the function of presenting progress, challenges and/or decisions to be taken at the Assembly.
 - Members identify and/or propose potential projects to be developed and topics to be explored. This is the space in which new areas for collaboration are proposed, for example, how a potential collaboration with the government of one of the countries in which the GTI-PIACI works might best be approached.
 - The creation or closure of subgroups is decided upon.
 - The invitation or approval of new members, and potential partnerships and collaborations, are decided upon.
- If there is no time to organize a General Assembly meeting and a collective decision need made - for example, in times of emergency - the TS or subgroup sends the proposal virtually and requests a response or position.

APPENDIX II (*Institutional names in English; Acronyms in original language*)

1. Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest - AIDSESP
2. Amazon Conservation Team Colombia - ACT
3. Center of Tacana II Indigenous Communities of the Madre de Dios River - CITRMD
4. Center for Legal Studies and Social Research - CEJIS
5. Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon - COIAB
6. Machiguenga Council of the Urubamba River - COMARU
7. Center for Indigenous Work - CTI
8. The Missionary Council for Indigenous Peoples - EAPIL / CIMI
9. Native Federation of the Madre de Dios River and tributaries - FENAMAD
10. Ecuadorian Populorum Progressio Fund - FEPP
11. Amotocodie Initiative - IA
12. Maira Institute
13. Land is Life - LIL
14. Observatory of Indigenous Peoples in Isolation - OPI
15. Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon - OPIAC
16. Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Suriname - OIS
17. Payipie Ichadie Totobiegosode Organization - OPIT
18. Regional Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the East - ORPIO
19. Regional Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Amazonas - ORPIA
20. Amazon Socio-Environmental Working Group - WATANIBA