

## Los Cedros Under Threat 24.4.2017

Friends, the [Los Cedros Biological Reserve](#) is under serious threat.

The Rainforest Information Centre, with funding from the Australian Government's development assistance bureau, helped establish the [Los Cedros Biological Reserve](#) in Ecuador in 1988. We have continued to support reserve director Jose Decoux throughout the intervening 30 years, and as a result, Los Cedros is the last remaining well-forested watershed in Western Ecuador.

The Ecuadorean government has secretly signed a mining agreement covering Los Cedros and other "protected" areas with the Canadian company "[Cornerstone Capital Resources inc](#)", a large speculative fund which doesn't do any mining itself but employs local small time operators until the big sell off to some real mining company.

This agreement is under the "Office of Strategic Sectors" and this means no appeal is possible nor effective oversight. This office is under tight observation for the discovery of large scale theft and bribes being paid with key management people either in jail or fled the country. The people who denounced this corruption are also in jail or living underground.

Longtime director of Los Cedros Biological Reserve, Jose Decoux writes: "The mining company has made contact with me and on advice from the lawyer I have to meet with them or face administrative sanctions. Read: expulsion from the reserve without compensation." The first company representative visited Los Cedros last week.

Many of the international scientists who have worked at Los Cedros have signed a [letter attesting to the irreplaceable scientific value](#) of this, the last well-forested watershed in Western Ecuador.

Please write letters of protest to [Cornerstone](#) with cc to [Catherine McKenna](#), Canada's Minister for Environment and Climate Change

Funds are sorely needed for legal assistance and to continue the work of bringing this to the attention of the Ecuadorean public.

The Rainforest Information has started the ball rolling with US\$1000 from Earthways (see below) and Professor Bitty Roy from the Institute of Ecology and Evolution, University of Oregon has sent US\$1500 while Rainforest Rescue in Germany has added 3000 euros, please donate generously and help us reach our \$10,000 target.

Please donate [here](#) (tax deductible for Aussie taxpayers). Donations by US taxpayers of US\$200 or more can be tax-deductible by making a check out to Earthways Foundation and mailing to Earthways, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265 with a note specifying that this is a donation to the Rainforest Information Centre's "Save Los Cedros" campaign.

## UPDATE 18.5.17

Friends, the campaign to prevent mining in the Los Cedros Biological Reserve is gathering momentum. There is now a [petition](#) we'd like you to sign and share and a [passionate video from Geoff Lawton](#), one of the leading lights in the global permaculture movement.

The campaign is also broadening – its not only Los Cedros but a dozen other Bosques Protectores (Protected Forests!) including Chontal Bosque Protector very close to Los Cedros affected by the mining concessions recently approved by this corrupt government . Nearly all of the 311 500 hectare Bosque Protector called Kutuku-Shaimi, where 5000 Shuar families live, has also been concessioned.

Our [crowdfund](#) target has doubled to \$20,000 to support a legal challenge, possibly based on Ecuador's constitution which led the world in including the 'Rights of Nature' principle in 2007. Enforcement is now the critical issue as the Ecuadorian government is systematically violating not only the 'Rights of Nature', but also the human rights of indigenous and rural communities to prior consultation and due process in regard to proposed extraction projects that directly impact them. See [this article](#) for background. We have now raised nearly \$12,000 on this crowdfund, please [donate if you can](#).