

Ecuadorians demand compliance with the results of the popular consultation on Yasuní Park

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by María Josefina Arce

In August 2023, in early general elections, Ecuadorians also voted in the polls to put an end to oil exploitation in Yasuní National Park, one of the most biodiverse places on the planet. One year later, the will of the people has still not been carried out.

Although the Constitutional Court determined that the authorities should dismantle the oil plant within 12 months, Block 43-ITT, in the province of Orellana, in the Ecuadorian Amazon, is still active.

In fact, at present the daily production of hydrocarbons, according to information, is 50 thousand barrels, which is higher than the 43 thousand extracted during the first semester.

Although during his electoral campaign Daniel Noboa supported the closing of the oil activity in the Yasuni Park, when he assumed the presidency last November, he was in favor of postponing this decision in order to finance the confrontation of the high level of insecurity prevailing in the nation.

In the face of popular pressure and the possibility that social, environmental and indigenous organizations would again appeal to the Constitutional Court, last May the president finally created a committee for the progressive withdrawal of oil extraction in Block 43-ITT.

The region is home to more than 2,000 species of trees and plants, 204 species of mammals and 610 species of birds.

Exploitation has led to water contamination, greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation and invasion of Waorani indigenous territories. There has been a long struggle to preserve the area.

In 2013, the environmental collective *YASUNIDOS* appealed to the Constitutional Court in search of a popular consultation.

The vote in favor of stopping oil exploitation in Yasuni was historic, it was a result in favor of the lives of a large part of Ecuadorians, which Noboa's government must respect, as demanded by social, environmental and indigenous organizations.

A demand that was echoed by UN human rights experts, who stressed that the future of Yasuni National Park, its inhabitants, future generations and the global environment depends on the measures taken today.

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