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PRESS RELEASE

Oil Spill Along the Coca and Napo Rivers Affects Ecuadorian Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities facing fresh water and food shortages as oil spill pollutes local river
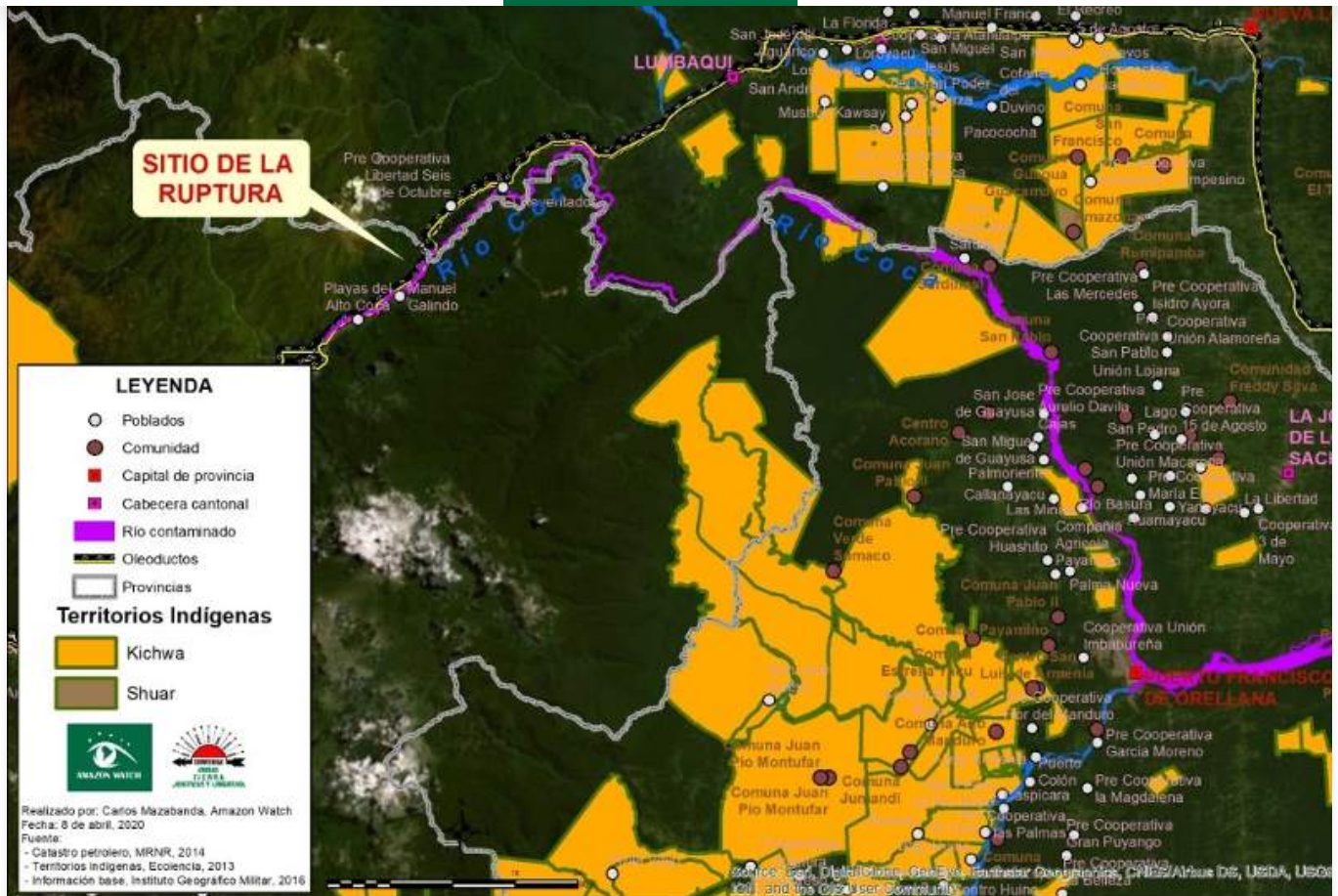
April 9, 2020 | For Immediate Release

Amazon Watch

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Credit: Amazon Watch

Ecuador's state-run oil company, Petroecuador, reported the pipeline bursts of the Trans-Ecuadorian Pipeline (SOTE), the OCP (*Oleoducto de Crudos Pesados* – Heavy Crude Pipeline), and the Poliducto Shishufindi-Quito in an official statement issued April 7th, 2020. The ruptures occurred as a result of a reduction in pipe pressure after the ground eroded out underneath due to heavy rains, and a landslide that followed, in the San Rafael region of the Amazonian provinces of Napo and Sucumbíos. The statement affirmed that a team of technicians would be dispatched immediately to begin repair work – which will take three weeks to complete.
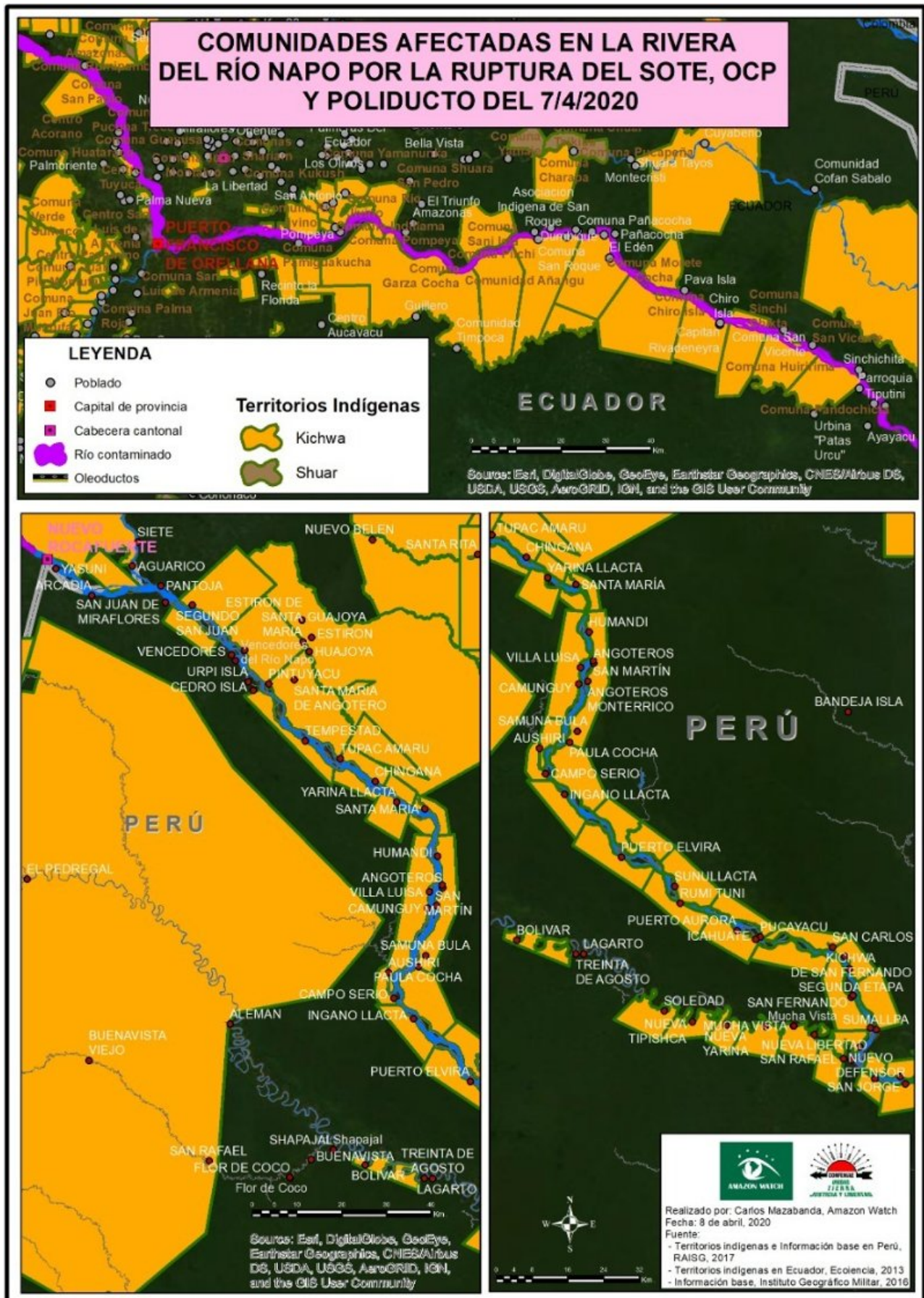
The SOTE spans 308 miles and the OCP 301 miles, each bringing oil from the Amazon basin across the Andes and to refineries on the Pacific coast. Petroecuador has a long history of spills and a poor environmental and human rights record.

In light of these facts, the Alliance of Human Rights Organizations demands that the Ecuadorian government immediately and urgently inform the public of the magnitude of the spill, the places impacted, and the actions that have

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community and the Monos river canyon in the Amazon.

human rights, and "in particular: education, health, food, social security and water for its inhabitants" (Article 3 of Ecuador's Constitution).

This spill could not have come at a worse time for Indigenous peoples and communities near the river, as they are working to protect themselves from the spread of COVID, and securing access to basic food, sanitary supplies, and potable water.

Therefore, it is URGENT that the government take immediate remediation measures and guarantee access to potable water and food. Hundreds of Indigenous and farmer families, and entire communities depend directly on the rivers of the Amazon, because of the spill, their subsistence is compromised and compounded by the impacts of the COVID health emergency that the country is experiencing.

Dirty Energy   Ecuador   End Amazon Crude   Oil and Gas

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Amazon Watch is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1996 to protect the rainforest and advance the rights of Indigenous peoples in the Amazon Basin. We partner with Indigenous and environmental organizations in campaigns for human rights, corporate accountability, and the preservation of the Amazon's ecological systems.

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