

unsafe to eat. In addition, the construction would divert tributaries from the Moisle river, reducing flows by up to 42% of one of the world's most important salmon rivers. This could further endanger the Atlantic salmon. Reportedly, one million cubic meters of forest would also be clearcut for the reservoir and access roads. Quebec hopes to sell power generated by the projects to utilities in the northeastern US.

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Mapuche Exert Rights over Cultural Heritage

On February 20, remains of human skeletons, pieces of Valdivian style ceramics, and a stone pipe were discovered at a construction site in the city of San Martin de Los Andes, Argentina. Representatives of the three Mapuche communities in the region, the Curruhuinca, Vera, and Cayun, demanded immediate return of the artifacts, stating, "We cannot accept any manipulation of these remains be it for scientific or other reasons. There is no doubt that these remains were found on ancestral Mapuche territory where our ancestors rest and this is sacred to us."

The three communities, members of the Mapuche Organization of Tain Kine Getuam held a series of public demonstrations and meetings with municipal authorities, from which they obtained a promise that the artifacts would be returned to their "rightful heirs". The Mapuche remain concerned that this commitment will be kept. The discovery, also brought to light the lack of legislation for protection of such artifacts. The Mapuche representatives noted that protection of their cultural heritage was the "most fundamental human right" of their people.

First Restitution of Indigenous Remains in Argentina

One hundred and six years after his death, the remains of the 19th century hero of Indian resistance, Cacique Inacayal, will be moved from the Museum of La Plata in the province of Buenos Aires, to the community of Tecka in Chubut. This is the first such restitution in Argentina, which recognizes that

the rights of the Indigenous communities precede scientific interest in these remains. Inacayal lived his last days in the capital city, where he was brought with his family by the researcher Francisco Moreno to live on his estate of "Paseo del Bosque". On September 24, 1888 the chief died of sadness.

Continental Indigenous Foundation Formed

Indigenous leaders from throughout the continent came to Oakland, California on April 16 for the founding meeting of the first foundation formed and led by Indigenous people from South and Central America. SAIC hosted this meeting for the Abya Yala Fund during which the various leaders decided the foundation's strategies and goals.

The foundation aims to fund projects developed by Indigenous communities in South and Central America and Mexico. Areas of interest will be territory, environment, training, self-development, women's issues, health, education, organizing, scholarships, and exchanges between Indigenous peoples. Another of the foundation's goals will be to support training in international communication, for example the improvement of communities' access to other foundations. The Abya Yala Fund also plans administrative training and assistance in elaboration of grant proposals.

The meeting participants noted that it is time that the Indigenous communities have direct access to foundations and other forms of financial and technical support for their development efforts aimed at improving living conditions. In addition they observed that hundreds of non-indigenous intermediary groups have been receiving funds to work with indigenous people or in the name of indigenous people, and that many of these funds have been wasted in administration. Intermediaries have at times also imposed their political conditions on Indigenous communities, or have not been responsive to the communities' own interests.

The Abya Yala Fund currently has an office in Oakland, California, and aims to form regional offices in Central and South America. The fund is sponsored by the Tides Foundation until it obtains legal status. Donations are tax deductible, and computers, fax machines, printers and other office equipment are greatly needed.

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