
Environmental policies and Pachamama in Ecuador. Theory and practice in Rafael Correa's Government (2007–2013)

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to analyse the environmental policies implemented in Ecuador in the period from 2007 to 2013. According to the Ecuadorian Constitution these policies must be based on the promotion of the *sumak kawsay* or well-being, which promotes harmonic relations between human beings' activities and the *Pachamama* or Mother Nature. From the theoretical perspective, this approach is related to biocentrism and the super strong sustainability. But in the real world, the Ecuadorian Government has failed to implement a long-term strategy for protecting the *Pachamama*, because it is not easy to forget the social and economic necessities of its citizens. Anyway, this interesting experience gives us an important alternative which is the Net Avoided Emissions (NAE). This mechanism is closely linked to the concept of super strong sustainability and biocentrism that criticises the global carbon market.

Keywords: sustainability; well-being; environmental policy; biocentrism.

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1 Introduction

The world has to face many problems because of climate change and it is difficult to point out holistic alternatives to fight against the global warming, desertification, pollution and so on (IPCC, 2007). The global debate goes on inside the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change. The next Conference of the Parties (COP

21) in Paris will be a crucial event, as it needs to achieve a new international agreement on the climate, applicable to all countries, but with differentiated responsibilities.

In this complicated context, the Ecuadorian experience in the definition and the implementation of an environmental policy could be interesting for the world, as we expect to explain in detail in this paper, because this country was the first in the world to declare the rights of nature in its Constitution and the Yasuní Initiative, which is an innovative proposal against the fragility and the limitations of the global trade carbon market, one of the pillars of the Kyoto Agreement.

Ecuador is a Latin American upper middle-income country¹ that has a complex and difficult environmental situation, as it has one of the highest population densities in South America, high rates of deforestation and a high demand for natural resources such as water and soil. On the social side, poverty affects a large number of its citizens, although significantly reduced in the last seven years². In the economic field, its production structure remains highly dependent on the exploitation and export of oil and other commodities.³

In this context, this paper analyses the environmental policies implemented in Ecuador in the period from 2007 to 2013 that corresponds to the Rafael Correa's government, who will remain in office until 2017. During this period, after the social and political fight of many Ecuadorian social movements, the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador was issued in September, 2008. This constitutional framework has the guiding principle based on the *sumak kawsay* (SK) or well-being, which in turn is a new paradigm for building alternatives against capitalist development (García Álvarez, 2013). The SK promotes the harmony between human activities and nature or *Pachamama*.

To analyse this process, we necessarily have to refer to theoretical concepts related to biocentrism, super strong sustainability and the old concept of deep ecology (Gudynas, 2010b, 2004; Jiménez Herrero, 2008; Naess and Sessions, 1985; Sessions, 1995). Biocentrism, which in our opinion is related to deep ecology,⁴ tries to overcome the anthropocentric perspective, one of the main supports of modern capitalism, that the planet life should be considered in a different way from the traditional vision related to the utilitarian evaluations of human beings, since this approach has turned to be very problematic for the planet's environmental quality (Harris and Goodwin, 2010).

Our main hypothesis is that Ecuadorian environmental policy from the beginning of the national government led by Rafael Correa, has had a new approach based on both the protection of the rights of the nature and the radical proposal of an anti-carbon market by means a powerful mechanism named Net Avoided Emissions (NAE), that is part of the Yasuní Initiative, however, its effective implementation has faced many problems, owing to the growing needs for income from the primary extractive activities such as oil and the implementation of large scale mining in the medium term.

This paper makes a theoretical analysis of the *Pachamama* or Mother Nature, which is a concept derived from the Andean and Amazonian indigenous cultures. According to our criteria, which can also be taken as a hypothesis, the concept of *Pachamama* is directly related to the environmental approaches of biocentrism and super strong sustainability. In this regard we want to know to what extent, since both concepts are part of the guiding principles of environmental policy implemented in Ecuador.

Subsequently, we move into the analysis of the content of environmental policy implemented during this period, reviewing its purposes and instruments, in the context of the current institutional and legal frameworks. We do not deal in detail with measures of environmental policy, but mostly we are interested in a critical vision.

In the last part of this paper, we present the main conclusions of the study, in terms of lessons learned that could serve as models for other experiences in environmental public policy.

2 *Pachamama* and biocentrism

The Ecuadorian indigenous native people understand nature from a holistic perspective, since they consider nature as a living entity that encompasses everything, including human beings. All beings in nature relate to each other “(...) despite being different, we are complementary, we need each other” [Pacari, (2014), p.130].

The Andean culture strongly criticises the Western culture against the absolute domination of human beings over nature, because they consider that the human beings have a vital obligation to care for and protect it, taking from nature only what is necessary to ensure the SK or well-being (Viteri, 2000).

That is, for the indigenous culture there is no subject-object relationship, but there is a subject-subject relationship because all living things are essential elements of the cosmic life. According to Macas (2014, p.191):

“The Mother Nature is a simple resource from the point of view of Western logic, therefore, it is a commodity; moreover, it is a privatized resource. While for the Andean world, the human beings live with animals and things, and all together are part of the Mother Nature, [...] so, in our point of view, from the perspective of ethics against the exploitation of nature, the life is not compatible with capital accumulation, market and economic growth based on the destruction of the Pachamama.”

For indigenous Andean people, *Pachamama* is the spirit of the universe, from the four elements: fire (*Nina*), water (*Yaku*), wind (*Wayra*) and ground (*Allpa*). Nature from a cosmic vision is the *Pachamama* or Mother of the universe, but as land or territory, nature is also *Allpa Mama* or Earth Mother (Kowii, 2014).

Thus, to get a better understanding of the whole concept of *Pachamama* or *Mother Earth*, it is essential to relate to the ideas that shape the SK or well-being.⁵ Under the SK, nature is not subordinate to capital, but it responds to the life requirements, not from a functionalist and mercantile perspective. On the contrary, SK promotes life under the principles of interrelation, reciprocity, correspondence and complementarity. Furthermore, the SK has a political proposal related to the construction of the Plurinational State, whose characteristics are the following: anti-colonial approach, inclusive and democratic (Walsh, 2009; Quijano, 2006). In short, the SK is a paradigm that sets an alternative to the capitalist development.

Pachamama is related to the concept of biocentrism, by which nature occupies a central position in the logic of the life reproduction, as opposed to the traditional anthropocentric view related to the utilitarian dominance of human beings over nature. We should remember what Arne Naess said in the past, who believed that all things in the biosphere have an equal right to existence, since life itself has intrinsic value regardless of the commercial value (Naess and Sessions, 1985; Gudynas, 2010b).

Biocentrism promotes the rights of nature, a proposal that involves political recognition from object to subject, from the perspective of the necessary balance between nature and the needs and rights of human beings. This recognition of the inherent rights of nature represents a break against the separation of human society and nature and

against the unyielding faith in capitalist progress, as stated by Gudynas (2009b). The biocentric perspective must be considered to protect all ecosystems and all life forms, regardless of their economic utility.

According to Acosta and Martínez (2009), biocentrism does not mean in any way that nature should be untouched, but its productive use must maintain the systems of natural life. Also, it means that we need to promote other ways of consumption. An example of these positions is related to water management: this resource is taken as a fundamental human right, which is part of Ecuadorian strategic national resources.

Acosta acknowledged that well-being does not yet include comprehensively the concept of sufficiency inside the economic activities, which is understandable in the sense that well-being is not interested in maintaining or reproducing inequitable conditions of life or in the destruction of the environment. In this regard:

“According to human rights, the emphasis is on the person. This is an anthropocentric view. In the political and the social rights, as the first and second-stage rights, the State recognizes those rights in benefit of citizens, as part of an individualistic view of citizenship. The economic, cultural and environmental rights, which are named the third-stage rights, include the rights for social equity and a healthy environment. They seek to avoid poverty and environmental degradation that negatively impacts the lives of people.”
[Acosta, (2010), p.9]

In brief, the biocentric perspective considers that human beings must protect all ecosystems and all forms of life, regardless of their economic utility. These conceptual proposals of biocentrism are directly related to super strong sustainability. Indeed, according to Gudynas (2011), super strong sustainability is a plural valuation of nature that goes beyond the concept of natural capital. So, the value of nature must be viewed from different points such as ecological, aesthetic, religious, cultural and so on. The concept of natural heritage supports this multifaceted assessment that nature has intrinsic value, independent of its utility or human appreciation.

On the other hand, we have weak sustainability, which is based on an assessment of nature from economic criteria. This point of view considers that any use or involvement of nature can be handled through technical solutions to environmental mitigation. In the middle of them, there is the strong sustainability approach, which in part takes into account the validity of the technical solutions and economic valuation, but it advocates the preservation of at least part of nature⁶. In short, biocentrism questioned nature as a simple market of resources; therefore it attacks the capitalist forms of production or any other forms of production that commercialise nature.

However, these theoretical proposals for the protection of *Pachamama* have been questioned by several authors who consider these ideas are excessively rhetorical and only moral and metaphysical appeals. These writers people consider that this cultural approach is a radical proposal related to excessive care of nature or *Pachamamismo*.

3 Environmental policy 2007–2013

At this point we are interested in the most objective assessment of the environmental policies implemented by the Ecuadorian National Government, for which we will focus on the substantive content of such policies. Following the approach of Lichtensztejen (2008), the economic policy has four elements: purposes, instruments, actors and results,

but the real scope of any economic policy could be understood if we analyse the purposes or the objectives and the instruments. Although in public policies we must consider the social main actors and political decision maker, the fact remains that such policies could be expressed in its purposes and instruments applied.

3.1 Rights of nature

Ecuador became the first country in the world to constitutionally establish nature as a subject of rights. These legal provisions are reflected in Articles 71 to 74 of the Constitution. Indeed, nature or *Pachamama* has the right to fully respect existence and the maintenance and regeneration of its vital cycles and its structure (Martínez Yáñez, 2014).

These rights are not declarative but they are enforceable against the public authority. The restoration of nature is no longer an option and becomes an obligation for the State. It has to fight against the environmental problems and apply the precaution and restriction measures for activities that could lead to the extinction of species, or the destruction of ecosystems or the permanent alteration of the natural cycles. Individuals, communities, people and nationalities can benefit the environment and natural resources for well-being, but the environmental services must not be subject to commercial appropriation and must be regulated by the State (Gudynas, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2010a, 2010b).

The Ecuadorian Constitution lists a number of environmental principles related to the promotion of a sustainable development model and respectful of cultural diversity. Environmental policies are binding for the State and society. In case of doubt about the environmental provisions, the law must be applied in the most favourable sense to the protection of nature (art. 395). The State and society have a responsibility to prevent any environmental impacts, but in case of nature damage, its comprehensive restoration (art. 396).

The communities have the right to be consulted on a particular governmental proposal that affects their environment (art. 398). The biodiversity management is a sovereign power of the State (art. 400). Ecuador is free of transgenic crops and seeds, although the law accepts some exceptions. It is not legal to establish economic rights and intellectual property rights for products or synthesised products obtained from the collective knowledge associated with biodiversity (art. 401 and 402).

In relation to the natural heritage and the ecosystems, a national system of protected areas for conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecological functions is established. This system can be governmental, autonomous-decentralised, community or private (art. 405). It is prohibited to make any extractive activity inside the protected natural areas, although exceptions are determined by national interests (art. 407).

The article 415 provides that environmental services are not subject to appropriation; their production, delivery, use and development are regulated by the State. There are other regulations related to soil conservation, energy efficiency, use of environmentally clean technologies and practices and so on.

In the field of historical recognition of the rights of the nature, the constitutional proposal promotes a model for sustainable and equitable development that seeks to balance friendly state-market environment. In this state of things, the ultimate goal is the accumulation not of capital but of well-being. In this regard, Gudynas (2010a, p.5) argues the following:

“In the Ecuadorian Constitution, the nature becomes a subject of rights, and therefore it has intrinsic values. These values, that are part of the environment, does not depend on the income nor the ownership of human beings; they are value inherent in living things and their physical support. This position has implications for at least three fields: ethics, legitimizing a debate about values enclosing the non-human environment; moral, obligations such as ensuring the preservation of biodiversity; and political, expressed in aspects ranging from the adoption of the Constitution to the development of a new legal framework.”

Returning to Gudynas, if such constitutional provisions are to be specific to the rights of citizens related to third-stage generation, that are self-limited to ensure a healthy environment, or otherwise they are related to a biocentric strategy that integrates environmental, social and economic issues. According to him, these in turn comprise the economic, social and cultural rights, as Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, among others. However, this approach is limited since it ultimately maintains the supremacy of human beings over nature, when in fact it is necessary to maintain a more comprehensive vision that is called biocentric, rather than anthropocentric.

The conclusion for Gudynas in the Ecuadorian case, it is that the national Constitution combines both approaches, the right to a healthy environment as well as the recognition of the inherent rights of nature because both criteria are not opposed but they are complementary related to a biocentric perspective, different from an anthropocentric vision.⁷

3.2 *Environmental objectives and mechanisms*

Returning to the theme of the purposes of environmental policy, we find that the concepts of natural heritage and sustainable management are used, the State assumed many responsibilities such as regulation of mining activity and maintaining biodiversity, ecosystems and water. The national State is also obligated to respect the multiculturalism of the country and to maintain the ancestral knowledge.⁸

Table 1 Environmental policy: strategies and national goals

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Goals</i>
Protect the natural heritage	Strengthen and enhance the national natural landmark. Develop mechanisms for adaptation to climate change. Reduce the incidence of risks to natural and cultural heritage.
Reinstate, restore and recover the natural heritage	Promote the conservation and development of intangible assets. Prevent, reduce and control pollution.
Enhance the fruition of the natural and cultural heritage	Promote conservation, sustainability, and local production development through the flagship projects. Promote territorial development through the use and sustainable use of biodiversity. Build a sustainable development that uses the natural heritage by respecting the limits.

The three major strategies identified for such purposes are given in Table 1, and are related to:

- 1 protect the natural heritage
- 2 restore and to recover the natural heritage
- 3 enhance of natural and cultural heritage.

If we analyse Table 1, it is possible to understand that the most of these objectives are related to the perspectives of the weak and the strong sustainability, particularly when the Government promotes the use of natural heritage by respecting the natural limits.

In relation the environmental measures, the Government seeks to promote a new ecosystem and sustainable culture in the society, changing the current way of thinking. Also, there are more specific aims related to the implementation of the National Strategy for Climate Change, the National Water Plan,⁹ the implementation of the Single Environmental Management System (SUMA), strengthening cities and heritage areas and financial incentives for the conservation and use of natural and cultural heritage. They have also defined land management policies in the decentralised and autonomous governments (local governments).

In the field of taxation and sustainability, during 2008 and 2009, the national Government issued many legal reforms in tax matters including the creation of the Tax on Rural Land (an annual tax on the ownership of rural land)¹⁰. Also in 2011 the Law on Environmental Development and Optimization of State Revenue was issued, that includes a monetary incentive for citizens to recycle their waste and to re-circulate in the production process.¹¹ Additionally there is a green tax on vehicle pollution.

The hardest part for environmental policies has been related to natural resource extraction, because the domestic production model is based on the exploitation of non-renewable resources such as oil and production export commodities such as bananas, flowers, coffee and cocoa. In this situation, the governmental perspective has been limited to the purposes of control and mitigation of negative externalities arising from such activities.

A significant action taken by the Government has been the implementation of a set of hydro-electric projects leading to change the energy dependence on fossil fuels. According to the Coordinator of Strategic Sectors Ministry (MCSE, 2013), the Ecuadorian dependence on fossil fuels has increased to near 80% of the primary energy supply, which has increased the country's vulnerability. The governmental prospect is that the change of the energy matrix will be accomplished in 2016, with a majority share of hydropower.

4 Yasuní-ITT

One of the flagship projects of the environmental policy was the Yasuní-ITT Initiative¹² that was presented in a speech by the President of the Republic within the General Assembly of the United Nations in September, 2007.

The initiative involved the commitment of Ecuador in the non-exploitation of about 850 million barrels of oil of 14° API, preventing the emission of 407 million metric tons of CO₂. The compensation to be received by the country amounted to US\$ 3,600 million. Resources from international contributions should be allocated in five areas of development: real protection of Ecuadorian protected area; recovery, restoration and

reforestation of degraded ecosystems; social development and sustainable production for Amazonian populations; energy efficiency; and investment in science and technology.

The commitment assumed by the State was the indefinite maintenance of the ITT oil zone underground, with a guarantee by means of so-called Yasuni bonds created to financially support the project. It means that this initiative had a warranty that could lead to the return in case of non-compliance with commitments (Le Quang, 2013).

In this context, we believe that this proposal from the beginning was influenced by both internal and external adverse factors that finally conspired against its implementation. In fact, internally, it was notorious the government discourse related to plan 'B' for exploitation, that taking shape over the years, which finally reduced his credibility (Crespo Plaza, 2007). Internationally, several governments have lacked the political decision to promote a strategy that went beyond the pay system for polluting, recognised by the Kyoto Convention. Surely another element to consider is about the severity of the global financial crisis at the end of the first decade of this century, which effectively restricted potential economic compensation funds.

Definitely, the Yasuni-ITT Initiative questioned the logic of international environmental negotiations, as it is based on the principles of differentiated responsibility addressing global environmental problems (Albán and Quirola, 2012; Lohmann, 2012; CEPAL, 2012). All this point of view was included in the concept of NAE. The NAE criticises the current market mechanisms that have failed to stabilise CO₂ emissions.¹³

The concept of NAE is as follows: if a country decides not to exploit a natural resource, for example oil, this country is not producing greenhouse gas emissions. In this context, there will be a net reduction in national and global level and this net reduction must be compensated by developed countries because of their environment responsibilities. This innovative mechanism was presented in both COP 16 (Mexico) and COP 17 (South Africa).

According to official figures, the funds allocated only represented a poor 0.3% of the total expected. In the government's logic, this low collection was the main reason for cancelling the Initiative, whose decision was taken by President Correa in August 15, 2013,¹⁴ arguing that oil development in Yasuni National Park only affects one per thousand of the Park. They estimated additional revenue generation could reach at least 18 billion dollars in 23 years, funds that could be indispensable for fighting poverty of millions of Ecuadorians.

According to the current constitutional framework, the exploitation of renewable natural resources in protected areas is prohibited, unless the National Assembly authorises such exploitation, which is why, after the issuance of Executive Order No. 74, a very fast process started to prepare reports to support the governmental decision (Asamblea Nacional, 2013). The National Assembly issued the legislative authorisation on 4 October.

In the short time of less than three months, many technical reports were prepared by various ministries and government agencies to justify the approval of the National Assembly for oil exploration. Economically, the reports pointed to the need to generate new oil production to avoid decline by mining depletion and to generate about 18 billion dollars in net present value. In the environmental aspect, they mentioned the

environmental sustainability criteria based on the use of environmentally clean technology and process monitoring and control. It is also emphasised that the exploitation of the oil fields linked to the Initiative would affect only one per thousand of the area of this park (Larrea et al., 2008, 2012).

The Ecuadorian society received this decision without surprise because the official speeches in favour of Plan B had been positioned internally months ago. Several groups of intellectuals, political leaders, leaders of social organisations such as the indigenous and environmentalists showed their objections to the cancellation of a flagship project that the government had committed itself to carry out as part of its strategy to build the SK. What follows in the short term, it is the order of the Ecuadorian people public consultation for non-oil development in Yasuni, a situation that is conditional upon a complicated bureaucratic and political framework, which if overcome could make way for the popular consultation late 2014 or early 2015 (Yasunidos por la Vida, 2013).

5 Conclusions

From the definition and implementation of the environmental policies in Ecuador, we conclude that the National Government's vision has been based on the concept of weak sustainability and in some rare cases strong sustainability, leaving for another time any kind of alternatives from super strong sustainability. The governmental decisions have been dominated by the criteria of profitability of economic activities such as oil exploitation, whose financial indices show significantly higher levels compared to the potential environmental services.

In brief, the short-term economic needs have been imposed on the valuation of ecosystem biodiversity that responds to a medium and long term approach. Anyway, we think that this strategy has a rationale for a developing country with large and contradictory social, economic and environmental needs, so one thing it is the political speech and another thing is the implementation of a long-term strategy. The international context does not help to implement radical and ecological alternatives, because of the speculative globalisation, including the carbon markets.

The most significant advances in the environmental field are those policies related to the change in the energy matrix due to the large public investment in hydroelectric projects that should be operational in 2016. The Government has also advanced policies through a new system of green taxes on plastic bottles and pollution from vehicles. Policies relating to the environmental sector institutions have been based on the creation of new governmental coordination and regulation, but the scope and results have not been analysed in this work.

All the environmental policy of the government of Rafael Correa was seriously affected by the cancellation of the Yasuni-ITT Initiative, seven years after its submission to the Union Nations in 2007. Many lessons for the future struggle aimed at the protection of *pachamama*. This initiative constituted a radical proposal for an anti-carbon market by means of a powerful mechanism, the Net Avoided Emissions (NAE), which in our view is closely linked to the concept of super strong sustainability and biocentrism.

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Notes

- 1 Ecuador reached a gross national income of \$5,190 in 2012, according to the Atlas method used by the World Bank's country classification. Ecuador changed from the lower-middle income category to upper middle-high income category, as a result of a continuous process of economic growth that has lasted 12 years.
- 2 The poverty level according to the method of revenue decreased from 37% of the Ecuadorian population in 2007 to 25% in 2012, while the extreme income poverty was reduced from 17% of Ecuadorians in 2006 to 9.4% in 2012. Source: National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC).
- 3 During 2012, the oil GDP represents about 11% of national GDP. Oil exports reached 58% of total exports. Revenues from oil reached 42% of the non-financial public sector.

- 4 According to Arne Naess, the Shallow Ecology is related to the pollution and resource depletion and its main objective is the health and the richness of the developed countries. On the contrary, the deep ecology is related to many critical principles such as: the inter-connection and inter-dependency between human and non-human beings, diversity and symbiosis in the nature; the intrinsic value of the things regardless its monetary value and so on.
- 5 There is debate about the translation of the Kichwa word *sumak kawsay*, since it is a complex issue in the sense that miss-conceptual approach could destroy its essence and philosophical content. Following Huanacuni (2010), it is essential to achieve the most reliable translation for *suma qamaña* in Aymara and *sumak kawsay* in Quichua. Acosta (2013) believes that it is important to avoid the trivialisation of the concept from a restricted cultural perspective. The *sumak kawsay* used in Ecuador begins with *sumak* that means fullness, sublime, magnificent, beautiful, superior and holistic. *Kawsay* means life. Thus the literal translation of *sumak kawsay* would be the fullness of life and finally translated as well-being, as established by the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador. For Ecuadorian indigenous intellectuals, the most accurate translation is the well coexistence or harmonious coexistence with *pachamama*.
- 6 Jiménez (2008) argues that sustainability or strong sustainability conditions of uncertainty, ignorance and irreversibility on natural systems are of greater scope that the criteria of economic efficiency, therefore, the ecological approach to sustainability prevails. Under the Rule of Constant Natural Capital, the elasticity of substitution between artificial and natural capital is zero, although both are not independent but complementary. The issue is that are not substitutable by the manufactured or artificial. We recommend expanding this topic to check the various works of Eduardo Gudynas, especially Gudynas (2004, 2011, 2009b), which are detailed in the bibliography section of this paper.
- 7 In this point, Sánchez-Parga (2011) questioned the biocentric strategy, as it would be an irresponsible discourse because it does not confront the competitive techno-capitalist model. This author believes the current Ecuadorian Constitution is saturated with a reactionary approach “to promote a new model of society from an Andean ethnic past” [Sánchez-Parga, (2011), p.48].
- 8 According to the Ministry of Heritage Coordination (MCP), natural heritage comprises the systems located in natural environments and their management is no longer limited to the preservation of the exceptional, but towards sustainable management implies taking into account the rights of future generations and to ensure continuity of natural processes and dynamics.
- 9 Water availability in Ecuador is crossed by three problems: growth in per capita consumption (in wealthier segments of the population), high pollution of water sources and the effect of climate oscillations on sources and water storage sites.
- 10 This tax is paid by the rural land owners where the extension is greater than 25 acres in the mountains, coast and Galapagos; Amazon and land is taxed at 70 hectares.
- 11 This law created a tax on non-returnable plastic bottles, but is payable for the same value of the tax for collectors. The tax environmental pollution caused by the use of motorised land transport. The amount of this tax is related to the vehicle size and the year of fabrication.
- 12 The initials correspond to ITT oil block Ishpingo-Tambococha and Tiputini found within the Yasuni National Park, with proven oil reserves of 846 million barrels of heavy oil, which could represent 20% of all national stocks. Meanwhile, the Yasuni National Park covers an area of 982,000 hectares, making it the largest protected area of Ecuador. In 1989, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization declared this park as a World Biosphere Reserve. This area becomes the largest reservoir of biodiversity in the world because, among other things, owns 20% of the bird species worldwide, 80% of orchids and 40% of mammals in Amazonia. Within the Yasuní Park was established in 1999 an intangible area in consideration of the presence of two uncontacted peoples called *Tagaeri* and *Taromenani*.

- 13 The NAE has benefits that outweigh the mechanisms established under the Kyoto Protocol, since its approach is based on the principle of environmental integrity and the stabilisation of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- 14 President Rafael Correa said that there were a lot of international problems against this initiative during a television and radio network interview, because many international governments did not pay what they had offered in terms of economic cooperation.