

## **Huancavelica, Peru. II International Congress of Young Environmentalists was a success.**

Huancavelica, a land of mercury and scissors dancers, received several delegations of young people from the United States, Bolivia and Peru in the II International Congress of Young Environmentalists, held from January 26 to 30 of this year. This event, held in the auditorium of the National University of Huancavelica, was organized by the Joining Hands Network Peru, Atiypaq, and the Technical Bureau of Water Management Huancavelica – Megahed.

With the objective of generating learning processes that contribute to advocacy for the resolution of environmental conflicts in their respective countries, young men and women attending the Second Congress presented several experiences in which young people from the Joining Hands Network of Peru, Network-Uma Vida de Bolivia, and the PCUSA actively participated.



The experiences presented at the II Congress were: "In Lomas de Carabayllo youth fighting for water and the Bosque Seco" by the Youth Group JESHENI and "El Día del Pueblo" of Peru. "Case Study: Environmental Injustice by mining and dams Milluni Chico Milluni Grande, La Paz" by the UMAVIDA Network of Bolivia. "Strengthening local economies for an efficient food sovereignty" by CEDEPAS Center, Peru. Network of environmental protection for the health of the province Yauli, La Oroya "presented by the Association Filomena Tomaira Pacsi Peru. "The church and social agencies and their role in protecting the environment" presented by the Association of Fraternity Life Peru. "The basin of the outfall and its environmental impacts: Oruro" by the UMAVIDA Network of Bolivia. "Ecological sanitation and ECODESS" CENC experience in Peru. "The effect of river Huaynamayu children in the camp Pailaviri - Potosi of Bolivia UMAVIDA Network. "Environmental Problems and Solutions at the University of San Francisco" by young people in the PCUSA.



The Second International Conference of Young Environmentalists began with a very special moment that was the traditional ceremony of offering to the sacred hills, from the Wamanis, for the success of the Congress carried out by indigenous priests.

A portion of the II Congress included the Regional Forum: “Water and the management of the Andean territories” which was held in the Ascension Municipality Auditorium. This is a sensitive issue to the concern of local actors (civil society, communities, platforms, work tables by the water authorities), a problem of access and use of water between Ica and Huancavelica. This conflict has transcended the borders of the country and was recognized by the affected communities as one of the flagships of their struggle for a healthy and sustainable environment.



In the basin of the Ica Huancavelica river, the water is distributed naturally from the highlands of the Andes to the users located along the lower river, but in ignoring the impact it can have on the balance of ecosystem components and also rejecting the mores of water handling by the Andean communities, a large water infrastructure has been built to transfer much of the water to Ica,

sustained by decrees of the supreme executive and other rules of decentralization and regionalization of the country.

This project has dammed the waters of the higher lagoons in order to drive water through a massive canal that crosses about 33.5 miles until it reaches the valley of Ica where it is used for irrigating arid lands. In addition, the members of PETACC are committed to a new project for a canal water trap that would drain the primary sources of the upper parts of the basin and continue driving more water toward Ica, which has aggravated the conflict of interests for water use between the two regions.

These actions were interpreted as a tax and have deteriorated relations between the residents of the wet upper basin and dry lower basin, generating conflict between the two regions, mainly due to investments and operations of the Special Project Tambo Ccaracocha - PETACC, which through the National Institute of Development INADE has been involved for five decades with the upper lakes of Huancavelica. Special Project-Ccaracocha Tambo (PETACC) by Supreme Decree N ° 021-2003-HOUSING, was transferred from Central Government to the SO-INADE Regional Government of Ica, on August 22 of 2003.



Therefore, the water shortages in the Andean bogs and lack of access to water by Alpaca herding communities in the province of Huancavelica, Castrovirreina, and Huaytará is no coincidence, it is associated with several factors: environmental, such as Andean ecosystem deterioration, economic, given the uneven investment capacity of farmers and breeders of alpacas agroexport of Ica, the social gap between the rural and high Andean coastal urban policy and the exercise of the powers " Authorization of the State, which led to a shortage of this resource and the dispute over access to water among users of the Ica River – Huancavelica

The Regional Forum, "Water management and Andean territories" was carried out with the participation of regional managers to answer concerns as well as to present their proposals for intervention using their experiences in geographic scenarios such as snow capped mountains and wetlands that are natural suppliers and the largest reserves of water in the region.



Also, during the II International Congress of Youth Environmentalists, a fair was held that included artisan crafts as well as publications of environmental and development projects. Despite the rain and cold the mentality of the youth did not wane.

Taking advantage of the rich cultural, historical and ecological aspects of Huancavelica, the Youth Congress participants were given time to visit historical sites such as the mines of Huancavelica at Santa Barbara, the viewpoint, and the peasant community of Sacsamarca.



Finally, the youth participants worked out the conclusions of the II Congress, signed a Final Declaration and chose Bolivia to be the site of the Congress to be held next year.



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