



**Three years of regional impact
to protect Andean wetlands:
Let's go for more!**



**ALIANZA
HUMEDALES
ANDINOS**

humedalesandinos.org



The Alliance for Andean Wetlands is composed of socio-environmental organizations from different countries in the region.

Argentina



Chile



Regional



Bolivia



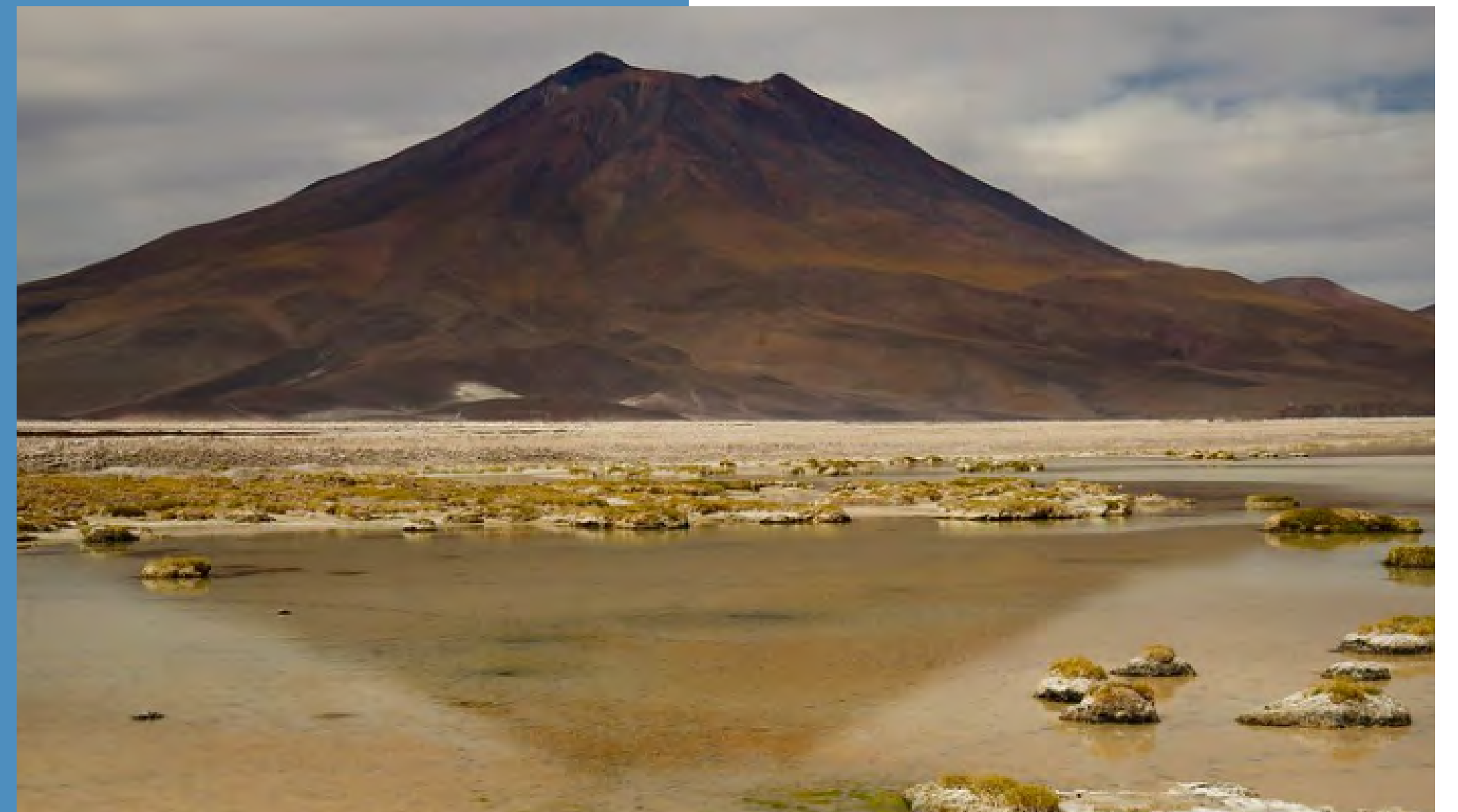
Its goal is to promote the protection and conservation of Andean wetlands, as well as the territories of **local**, rural, and indigenous communities that depend on them, particularly in Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile.



Why our work is necessary



- > Because the tensions that the energy transition poses on Human Rights are undeniable.
- > Because the Gran Atacama region faces common problems and requires collective action at the regional level.
- > Because lithium extraction leads to significant water depletion through both consumption and loss.
- > Because the widespread adoption of electromobility and renewable energy technologies would require a substantial increase in the extraction of minerals such as lithium.
- > Because the promise of the global energy transition is putting increasing pressure on local ecosystems and livelihoods in an already highly-vulnerable region, where water shortages would be exacerbated by increased lithium extraction, an activity that requires intensive water use.



How we work

We work collectively and in close coordination with communities, using pedagogical, legal, research, advocacy, communication, and mobilization strategies.

Our actions are organized through working groups, meetings, and regular virtual workshops where organizations that make up the Alliance share strategies, challenges, and lessons learned.



Capacity building

We have dedicated part of our work to strengthening and/or building capacities -both within and beyond the Alliance- on key issues related to the protection of Andean wetlands and the life they sustain, including:



> **Bilateral investment treaties**

> **Protection of environmental defenders**

> **Cumulative and integral environmental impact assessment, with a watershed approach**

> **The Inter-American System for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights**

> **Hydrogeology of Andean salt flats**

> **Critical analysis of direct lithium extraction methods**

The human rights impacts of mining for the transition reach the IACHR for the first time



Participation in the hearing on [“Minerals for the energy transition and their impact on human rights in the Americas”](#) before the IACHR:

At a [public hearing](#) on November 15, 2024—together with allied organizations and representatives of indigenous communities and peoples—we presented evidence to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the main threats that mineral exploitation for the energy transition



(lithium, copper, cadmium, cobalt, and others) poses to Indigenous Rights, the right to a healthy environment, access to environmental information, citizen participation, and justice in Latin America. We presented specific cases that are already occurring in Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile.

International alert to save Andean wetlands from damage caused by lithium mining

In May 2025, we sent an [urgent alert](#) to the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, an international treaty for the conservation of wetlands, regarding changes in the ecological conditions of Andean wetlands in Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile due to an increase in lithium mining projects and the failure of governments to comply with their international obligations to protect these ecosystems.



The voice of communities and ecosystems reaches international decision-making forums

In April 2024, in Santiago, Chile, as part of the 3rd meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Escazú Agreement—the world's first treaty with specific provisions to protect individuals, groups, and organizations that defend human rights in environmental matters—we organized an event that highlighted the conflicts and threats that the energy transition in the Global North poses to the human right to a healthy environment in the region.

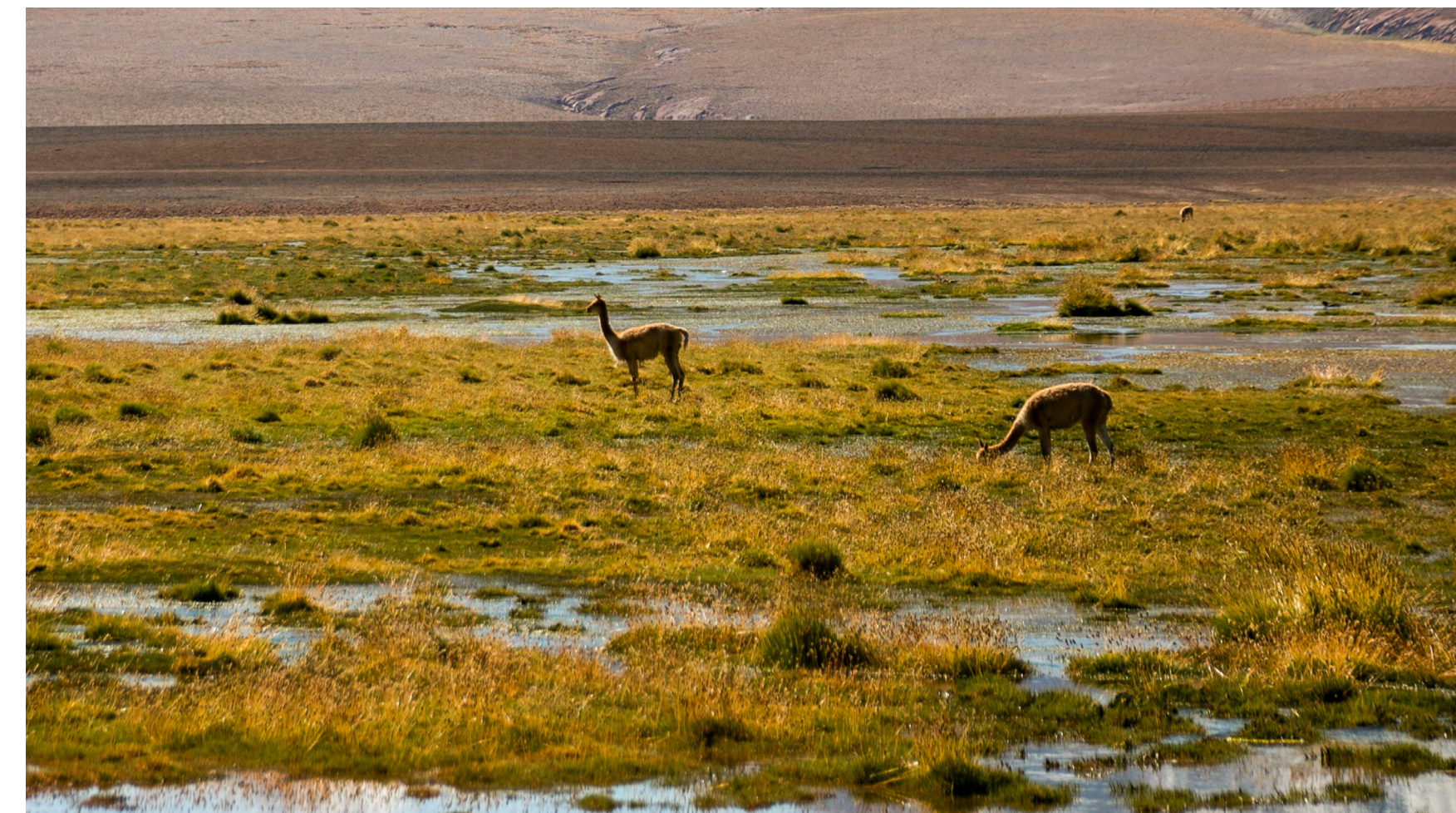


In October 2024, we participated in the 16th UN Conference on Biodiversity (COP16) in Cali, Colombia. At this important international forum, we organized the side event [Energy Transition and Biodiversity: Safeguarding Andean Wetlands](#) to highlight how the Global North's race toward energy transition, including lithium extraction, is endangering Andean wetlands. We challenged attendees to look beyond the promise of transition and consider the impacts on territories.





Progress in preserving the Andean wetlands of Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile



- Using strategic litigation, we obtained a ruling that halts the approval of new mining projects in Salar del Hombre Muerto, Argentina, and sets a precedent for the region.
- We contributed to the report on human rights in the life cycle of renewable energy and critical minerals, called by the UN Special Rapporteur on climate change and Human Rights.

- We reinforced processes of resistance and territorial defense against the expansion of lithium and other mineral mining for the transition in Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile.

The Alliance's work in numbers



We produced

14

*policy briefs,
webinars
and pedagogical
materials.*



We support
communities in

4

legal
bodies.



We were
featured in
more than

75

national and
international
media outlets.



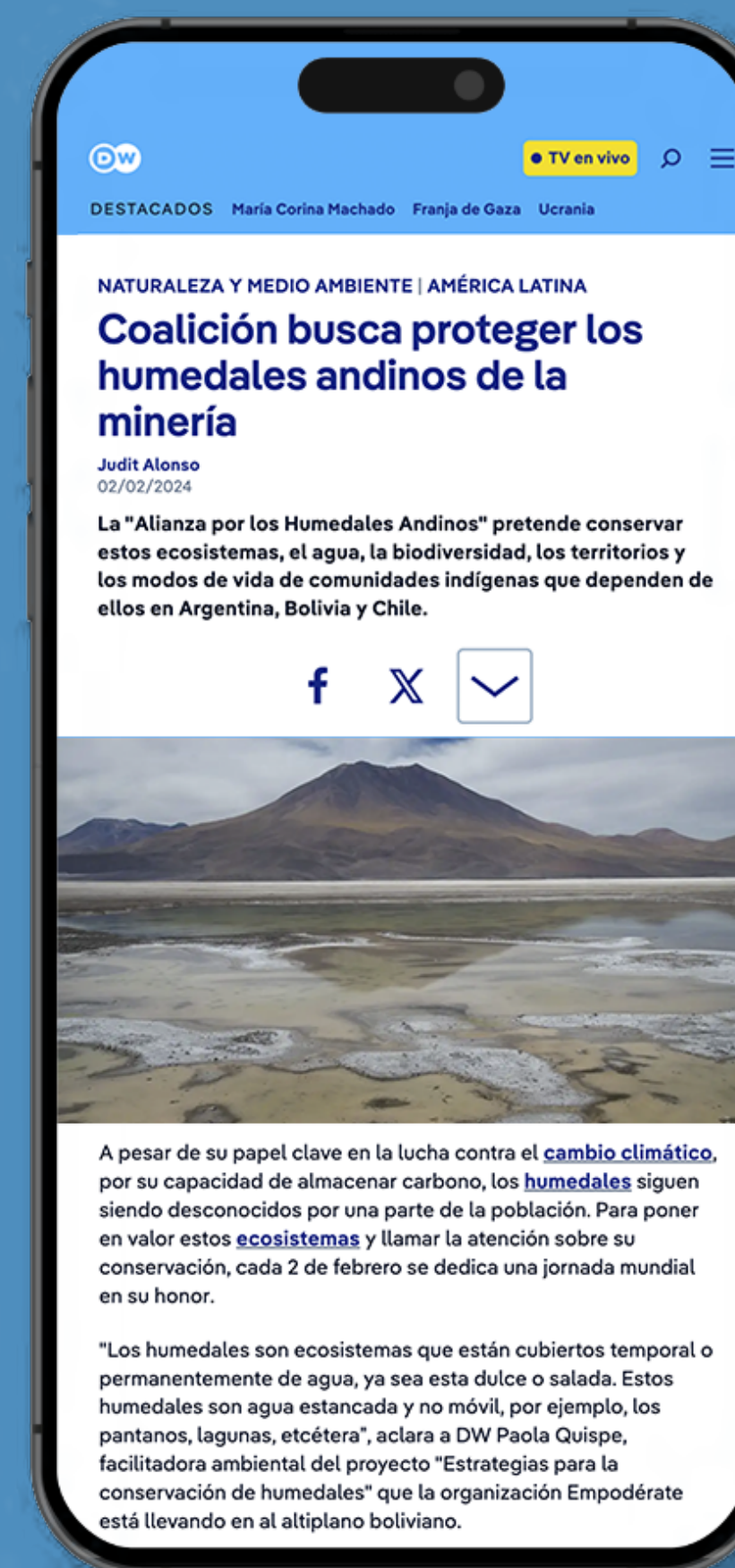
We advocated in
more than
15 forums and
processes at the
international
level.



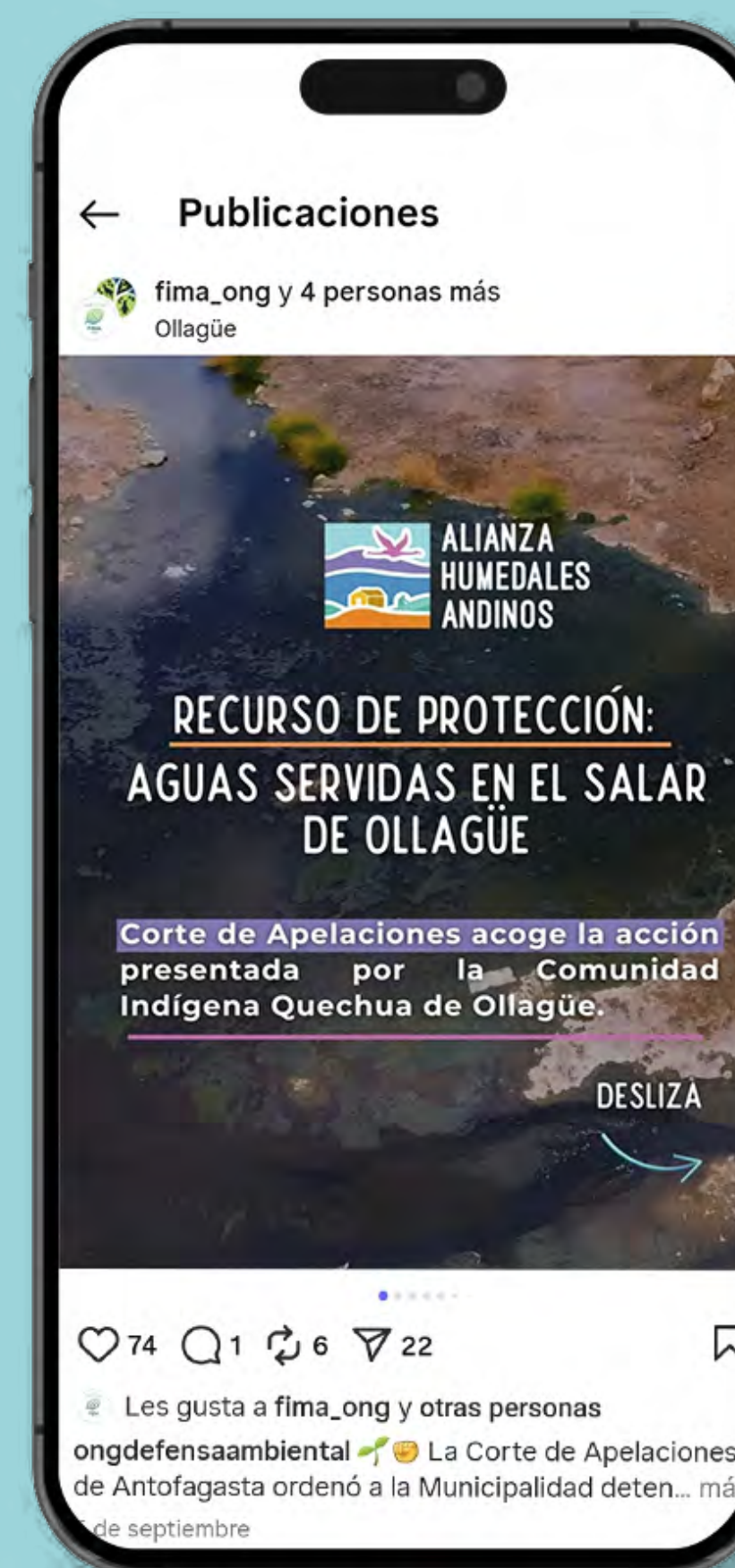
We launched more than **40**
awareness campaigns at the regional
and national levels.

Media coverage

National, regional, and international

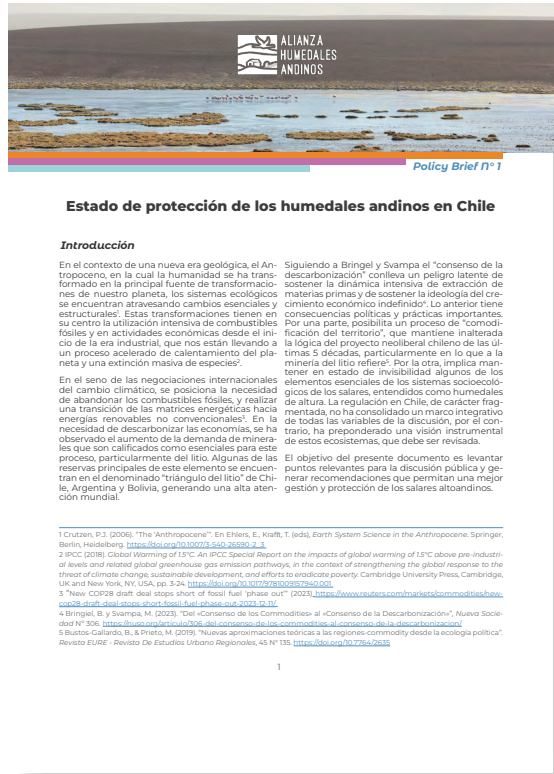


Social media campaigns





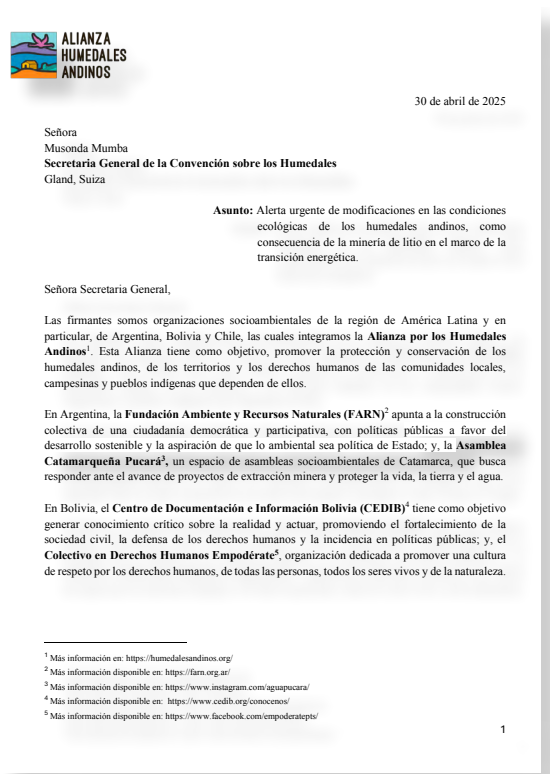
Publications



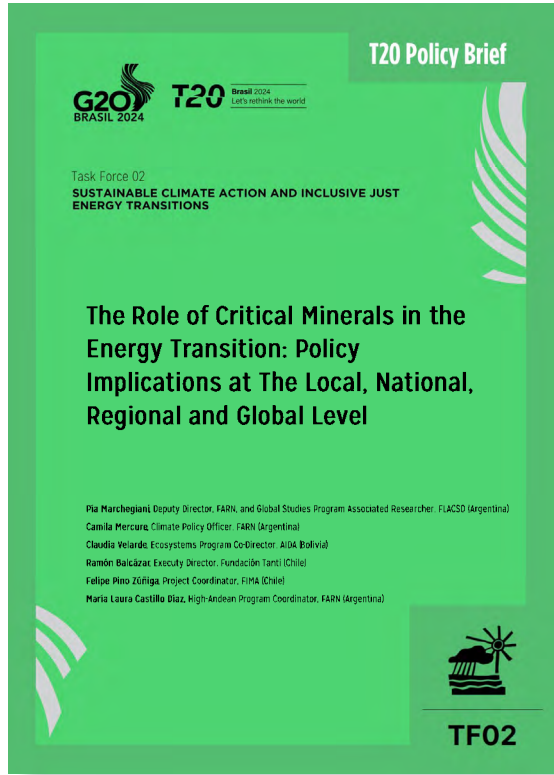
State of Protection of Andean Wetlands in Chile (policy brief).



Network of Protected Salt Flats: Critical Analysis of the Implementation of Criteria from the National Lithium Strategy (policy brief).



Urgent Alert to the Ramsar Convention



The Role of Critical Minerals in the Energy Transition: Policy Implications at The Local, National, Regional and Global Level (policy brief for the T20)



Salt Flats Are Wetlands (booklet).



Support for communities

The **Andean Wetlands Alliance** team provided technical and legal support to communities in **Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia.**

> In **Chile**, we collaborate with three communities in the north of the country to protect high Andean ecosystems. In Toconao, we support the Lickanantay people in defending the Salar de Tara, a Ramsar site, achieving the rejection of the Minera Plata Carina SpA project and protecting this wetland. In Ollagüe, we support the Quechua indigenous community in filing a protection appeal against the municipality for the contamination of the saltflat with sewage. In addition, the Alliance participated, together with the communities involved, in the indigenous consultation process for the Special Lithium Operation Contracts (CEOL) in the Ollagüe and Ascotán saltflats, meeting with the Minister of Mining,



Aurora Williams, to address concerns and plan sustainable scenarios in response to the impacts of mining activity. In Chiu-Chiu, we collaborated with the Atacameño community on an initiative to declare Laguna Inka Coya and the Salado River meadows a Natural Monument, strengthening the legal protection of these fragile ecosystems. He also produced three Policy Briefs: State of Protection of Andean Wetlands in Chile, Network of Protected Salt Flats and National Lithium Strategy, and Technological Surveillance of Lithium Extraction Methods, which analyzed the main challenges and opportunities for the conservation of these ecosystems in the face of advancing extractivism.



> In **Argentina**, we strengthened and continued our support for the communities of Salinas Grandes and Laguna de Guayatayoc (SGLG), in Jujuy and Salta, and communities in Antofagasta de la Sierra, in Catamarca, in various legal proceedings at the local, national, and international levels to guarantee the rights of access to information, citizen participation, and free, prior, and informed consultation and consent, to demand the creation of robust baselines and the proper application of Strategic Environmental Assessment and cumulative Environmental Impact Studies, in the face of the advance of lithium exploration projects that threaten the high Andean wetlands. Among the main cases are legal recourses, amicus curiae briefs, and constitutional claims filed by communities, FARN, Pucará, and, in some cases, together with other Argentinean organizations to demand the suspension of tenders and mining activities that violate environmental and human rights standards. In addition, training sessions were held and support was provided to strengthen the participation of community representatives in international forums.

> In **Bolivia**, among other things, the advocacy capacities of indigenous peoples were strengthened through the exchange of experiences with other countries. For example, in March 2024, we organized the “Plurinational Meeting of Leaders of Indigenous Communities and Peoples Living in the Andean Salt Flats: For our rights to water and territory,” with the participation of people from Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile who shared experiences on the protection of water, biodiversity, and life in the face of lithium mining, in addition to discussing the impacts of extractive activities on communities. We also conducted research on legal, socio-environmental, and water issues to highlight these impacts and submitted various requests for information. With our support, the Quillacas Nation (Llica and Tahua) and the Lípez Nation (Nor and Sud Lípez) issued statements calling for water protection. A statement was also issued, supported by the Potosí Environmental Protection Network and 84 environmental organizations from across the country, and a movement against lithium mining was formed.



Future outlook

We will continue working to achieve the necessary changes for the protection of Andean wetlands, including:



> Encouraging active collaboration, promoting the exchange of information, knowledge, and experiences

> Promoting real processes of just energy transition

> Continuing to advocate before relevant regional and international actors, processes, and forums.

> Further research and scientific-legal analysis on the socio-environmental impacts of lithium and other mineral mining for the transition

> Continuing to provide legal and scientific support to communities, as well as legal assistance on collective rights and potential socio-environmental impacts.





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