

# Conservation in Colombia: A Shared Responsibility

A hub of biodiversity threatened by cocaine

Francisco Santos  
Vice-president

# Colombia: A mega-diverse nation



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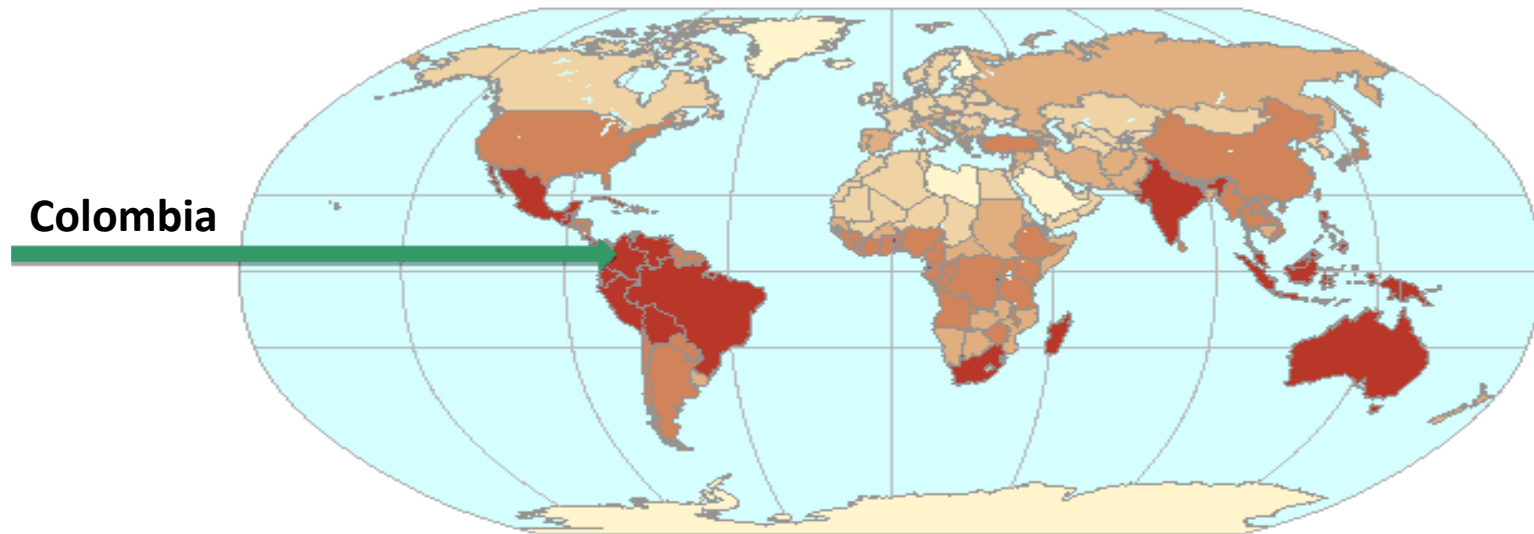


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# Colombia: A mega-diverse nation

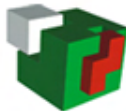
## Country-Level Biodiversity –

The few countries in **red** in this map are the world's **most biodiverse** nations. Colombia is one of them.



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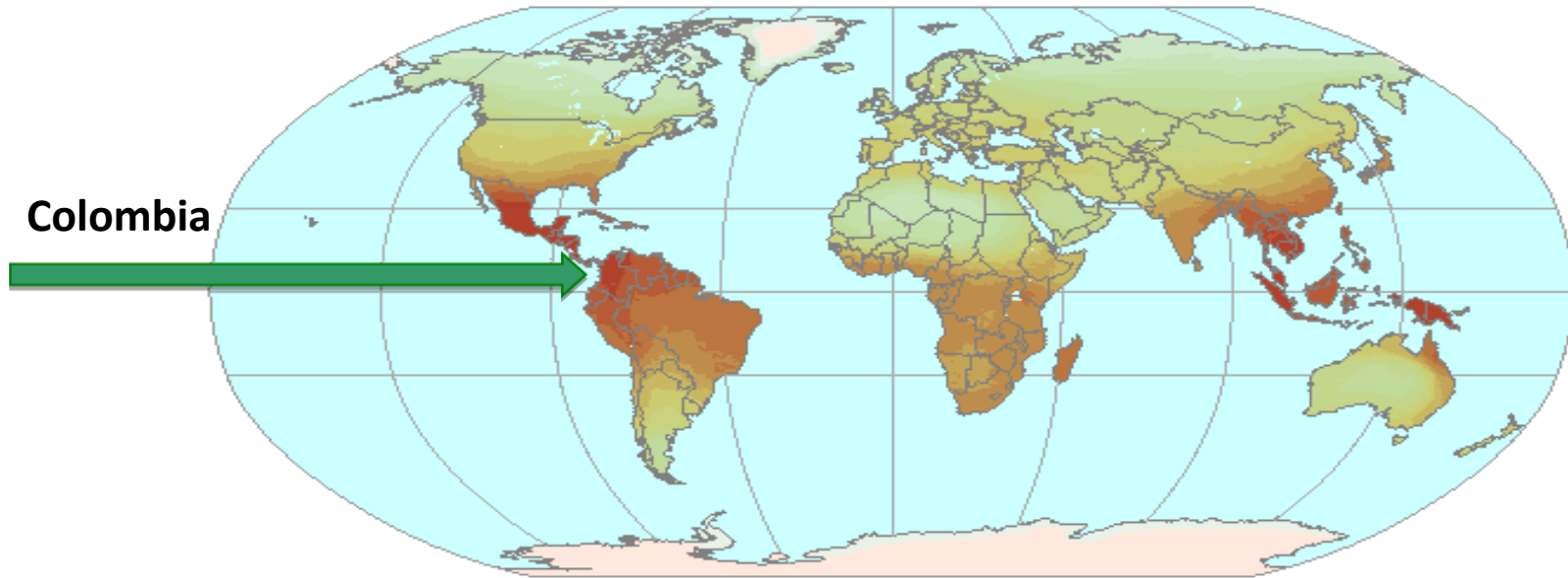
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0 10828km

# Colombia: A mega-diverse nation

## Flowering Plant Family Diversity -

Even fewer nations have high levels of flowering plant family diversity, depicted in this map in **red**. Colombia is also one of them.



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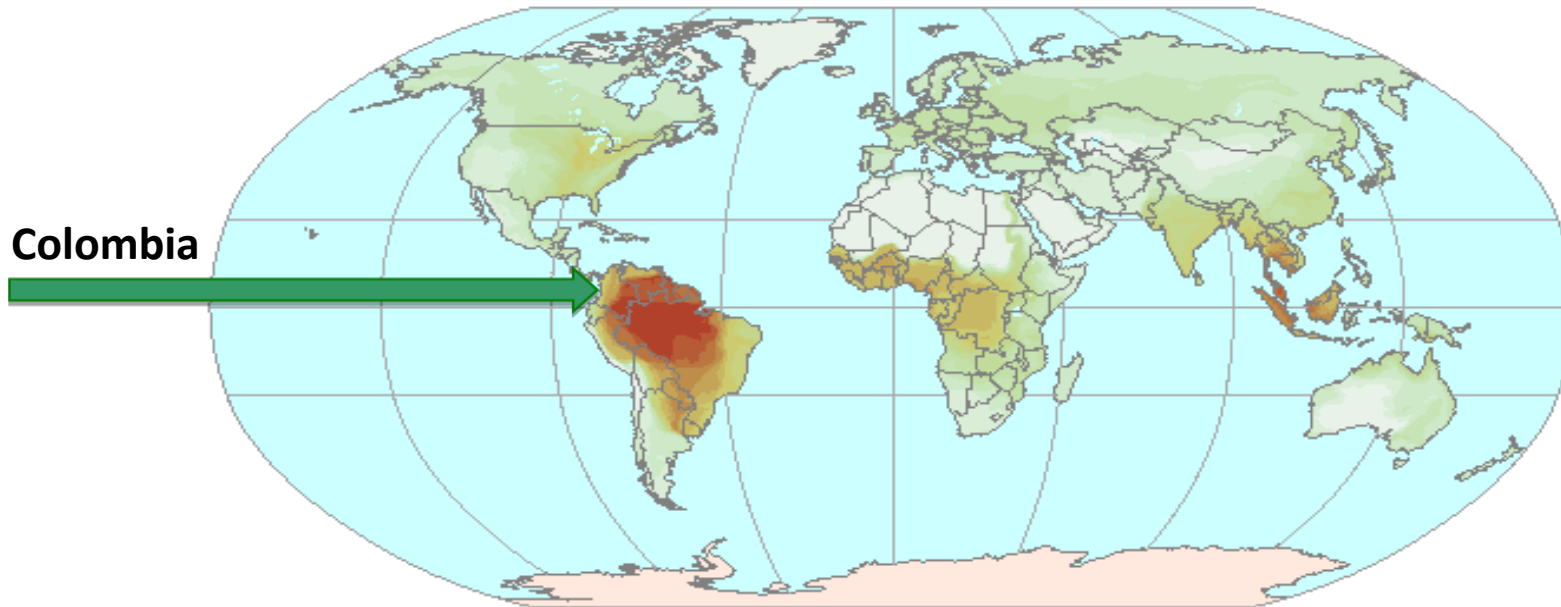


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# Colombia: A mega-diverse nation

## Freshwater Fish Diversity -

Only a handful of South American countries, including Colombia, have high levels of **freshwater fish diversity**, indicated in the map in **red**.



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# Colombia: A mega-diverse nation

Colombia's continental extension is nearly the size of France and Spain together.

This area is comprised of ecosystems as varied as the Amazon, Andean, Plain, Caribbean and Pacific regions.



Páramo, El Cocuy, Boyacá

# In terms of plant species, Colombia is home to:



**35,000**  
plant  
species:  
**29% of**  
them are  
endemic.

Bromelia sp.

# In terms of animal species, Colombia is home to:

**2,000**  
species of  
freshwater  
fish: **10% of**  
**the world's**  
**diversity.**



*Pseudoplatystoma tigrinum*



# In terms of animal species, Colombia is home to:



**506** reptile species:  
**6%** of the world's diversity.

Caiman. Tuparro National Park, Orinoquia

# In terms of animal species, Colombia is home to:

**650** species of amphibians: **13%** of the world's diversity.

**367** species are endemic.



# In terms of animal species, Colombia is home to:



**1800** bird species:  
**19%** of the world's diversity.

**67** are endemic species.



# In terms of animal species, Colombia is home to:

**447** species of mammals:  
**9.3%** of the world's diversity.

**32** are endemic species.



Puma, Tuparro National Park, Orinoquia.

## New species

30 new species registered (with support from Conservation International) in the last 5 years...



Gold frog of Supatá (*Atelopus sp.*),

...and counting.



# Highly vulnerable to climate change

Because of its high mountains, maritime coasts (Pacific and Caribbean) and insular areas, Colombia is **very vulnerable to climate change**. Native forest devastation increases the problem.



# Paramo ecosystems are also **vulnerable**



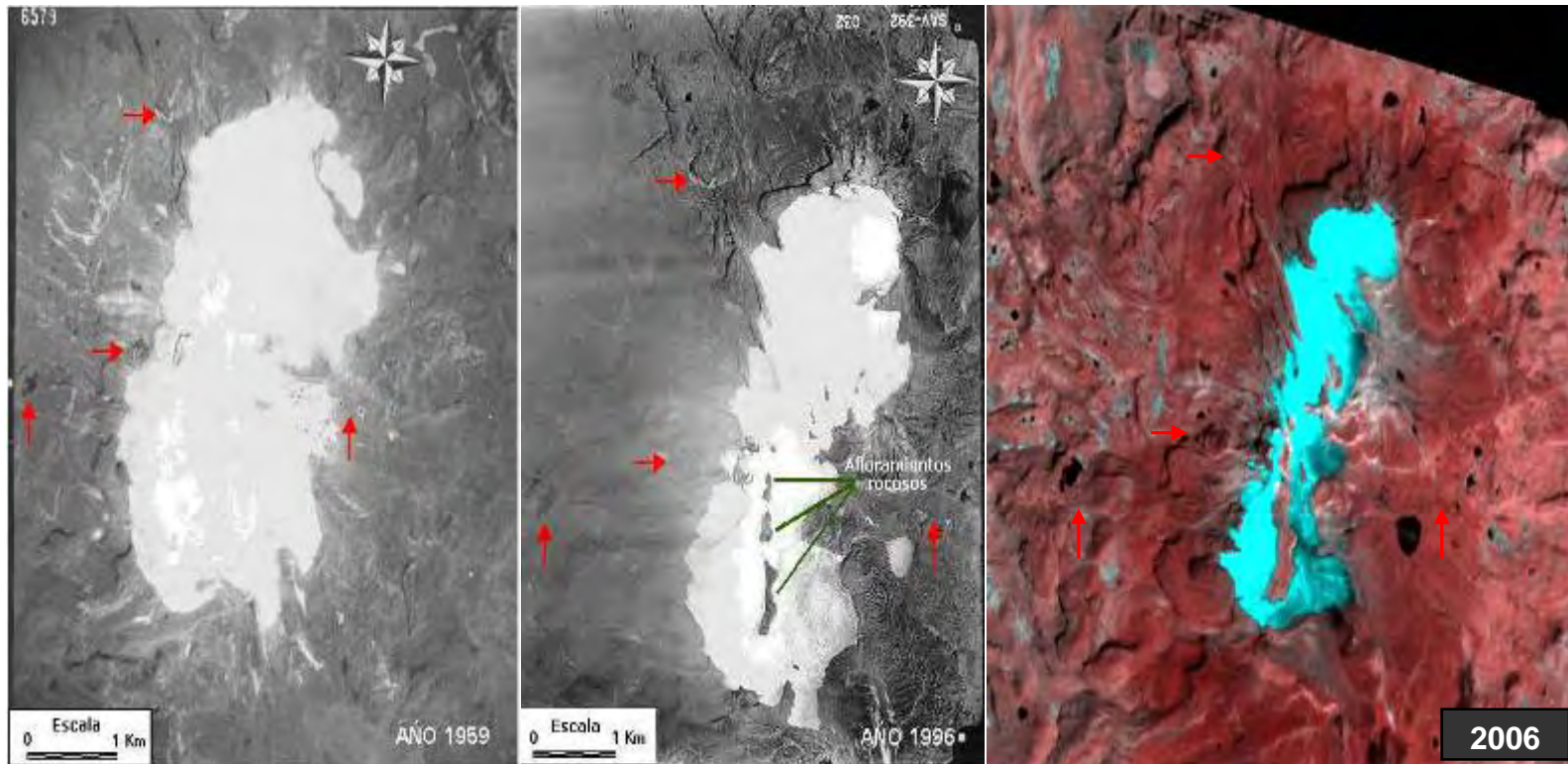
El Cocuy, Boyacá

“Paramo” ecosystems only occur in mountains near the Equator. Their richly diverse flora and fauna are adapted to severely cold, mostly wet conditions.

**By 2050, it is likely that 56% of all Colombian “páramos” will be threatened.**

# Colombia is losing its glaciers

Colombia has **lost 50% of its glaciers** over the past 50 years.



Santa Isabel



# And our forest is **disappearing...**

An estimated **200 thousand hectares** of Colombian natural forest are lost each year, mostly due to **the planting of coca to produce cocaine.**



Central Andes

## Devastation of wild areas

Over **2 million hectares**, an area half the size of Switzerland, have been clear cut to grow coca in the past 20 years.

Last year, **8,000 hectares** of Colombia's natural parks were destroyed to grow coca, including these in La Macarena National Park:





# Devastation of wild areas





# Devastation of wild areas



# Devastation of wild areas





# Devastation of wild areas



# Pollution in Colombia's jungle

The principal cause of air pollution in the Colombian jungle is the burning of natural forest to make way for coca.





# Valuable water sources are **contaminated**

The production of 1 kg of coca paste generates 600 kg of trash and contaminates 200 lt of water.



# Valuable water sources are **contaminated**

Among the chemicals most commonly used by coca growers are those known as the “**dirty dozen.**”





# Valuable water sources are **contaminated**

Cocaine labs use thousands of gallons of hot water, which are then dumped into rivers, causing temperature changes that **can destroy aquatic ecosystems.**



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↓ ↓

**THE WORLD DRUG PROBLEM SEEN THROUGH A  
GREEN LENS**

Shared Responsibility's mission is to make the **silent environmental catastrophe** caused by illicit crop cultivation felt around the globe.



Coca nursery at Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca





# ! ECOcide

Shared Responsibility believes that if more were known about the **ecocide linked to cocaine** consumption, this drug's allure would sharply decrease.



**162** bird species are threatened.

Gorgeted Puffleg (*Eriocnemis isabellae*)  
Humming bird discovered last May. 100 hectares of its 1,200 hectare habitat disappear every year due to coca.



Colombia is the second richest country in terms of magnolia species, after China.

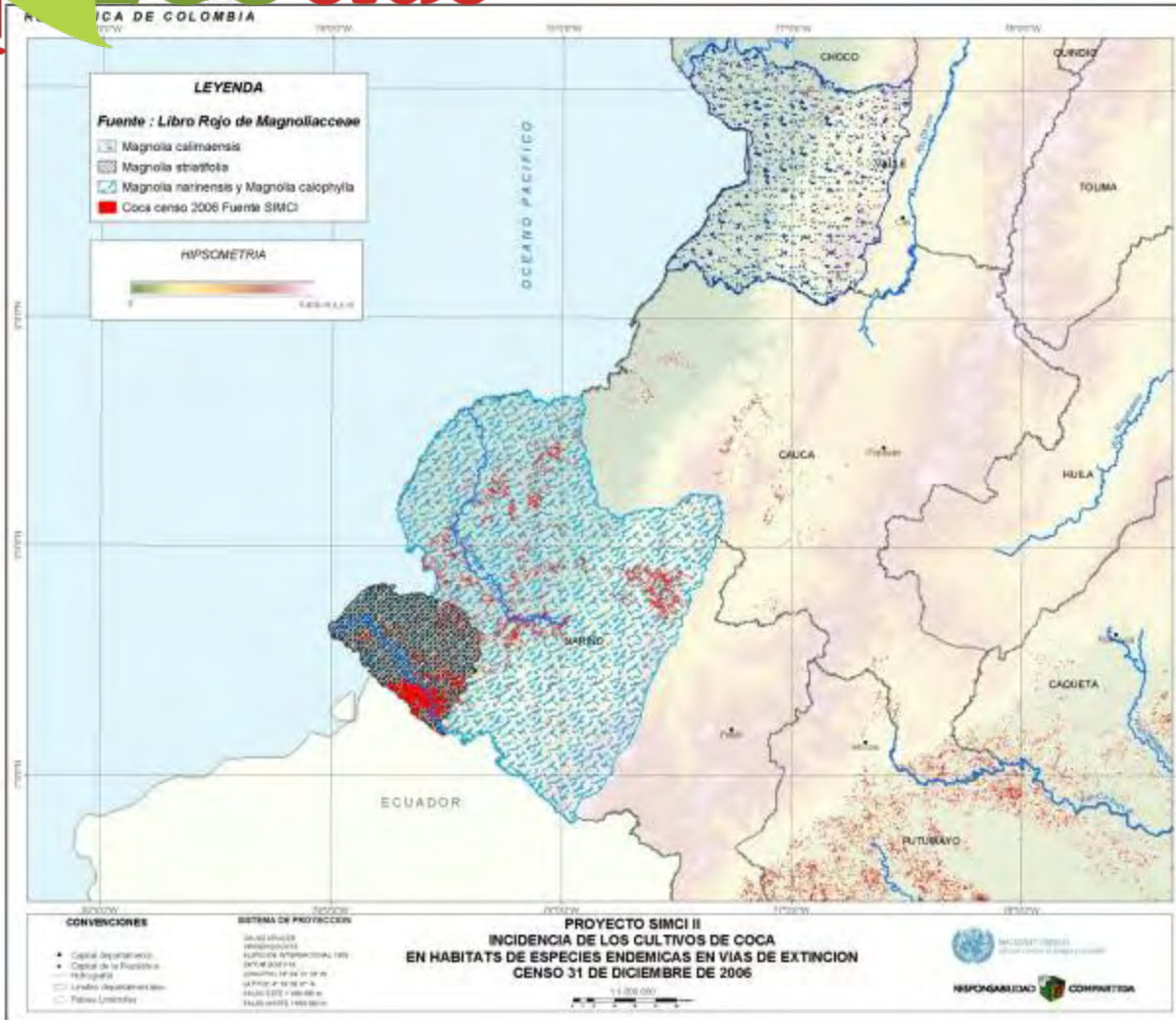
3 endemic species are found only in southern Colombia, where coca growers are destroying their sole habitats.



*Magnolia hernandezii* (EN) Molinillo



# ECOside



Coca crops in the distribution area of 3 endemic species of Magnolia.

# ! ECOcide

For each hectare of coca planted, three are slashed and burnt. One hectare of coca produces 7.4 kg of cocaine per year.

**Thus, the consumption of 1 gram of cocaine implies the destruction of 4 m<sup>2</sup> of Colombian forest.**



**WHAT COLOMBIA**

**IS DOING**



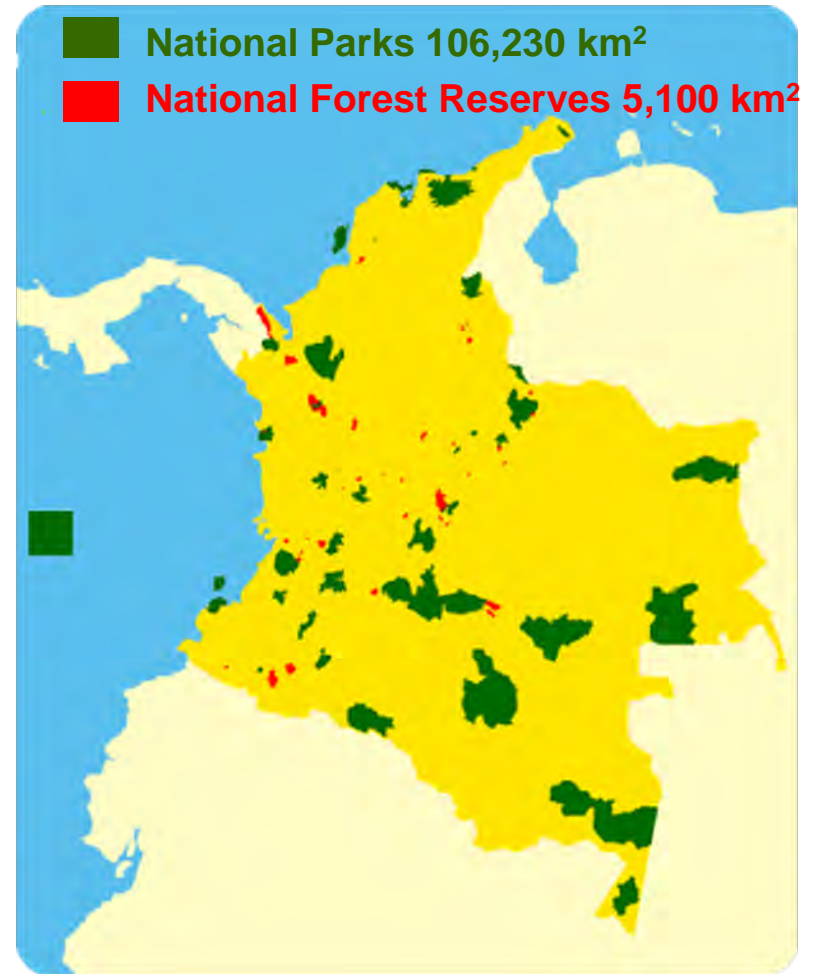
# Government efforts to keep Colombia green

Colombia was ranked **9th out of 149 countries** on the Yale and Georgetown University 2008 Environmental Performance Index.

This year, Newsweek Magazine ranked Colombia's environmental policies **1st among mid-income nations**.

Colombia has **257 protected natural zones** with an area 12 times Switzerland and a third the size of Japan..

In the last 5 years, **4 new national parks** were created and the Malpelo marine protected sanctuary was expanded.



# Alternative Development: Forester Families Program



**Helps** peasant, indigenous and afro Colombian families directly affected by illicit crops, or threatened by them generate alternative sustenance.

**2.3 million hectares** have been kept free of illicit crops since 2002.

**300 thousand hectares** conserved.

**\$334 million USD** invested by Colombia.

# Alternative Development: Productive Products



Supports the design and development of medium and long term agricultural and agro forestry projects as an **alternative to illicit crops**.

Since 2002, over **195 thousand families** benefited by this program.

More than **170 thousand hectares of legal crops** planted.



# Manual Eradication Groups

In 2006, mobile eradication groups eradicated 43 thousand hectares, breaking the world record for manual eradication.

In 2007, the record was broken again, with 66 thousand hectares eradicated.

So far this year, 7,000 eradicators have eradicated 71 thousand hectares.

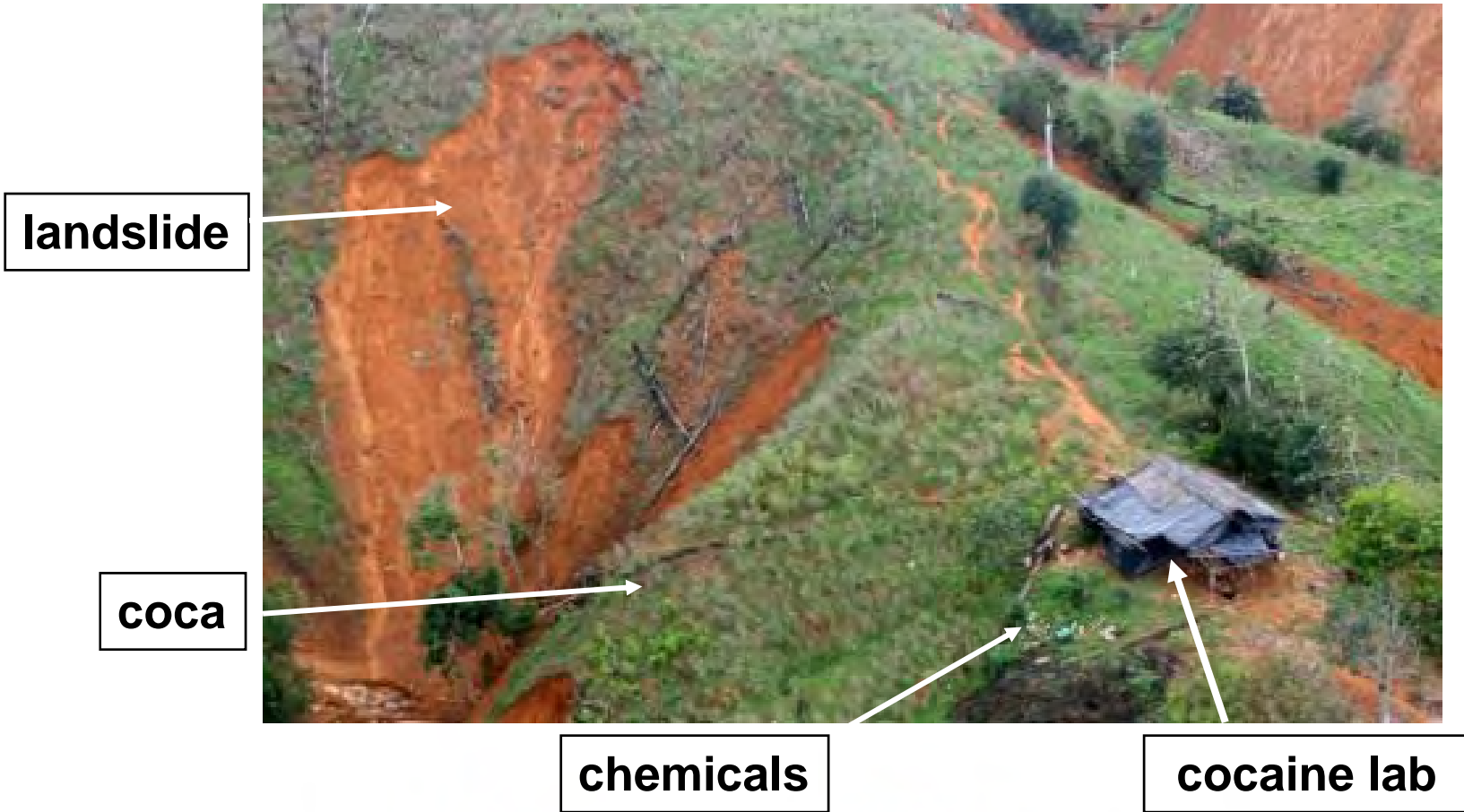


**WHAT WE**

**CAN DO**

# Spread the word

Cocaine's **ecocide** paints a poignant picture. It is important to let other people know about it.





# Spread the word

“**Cocaine** consumption is as bad for you as for the planet’s biodiversity.”



This message belongs to whoever wants to use it.

We invite individuals, governments and institutions to do so.



**Thank you very much!**