

America

Constellation: AM South C10

Columbia, Venezuela, Costa Rica



NEEDS

Continent: **America**

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Country: **Colombia**

Cry of the Earth

- deforestation resulting from timber exploitation in the jungles of the Amazon and the region of Chocó
- illicit drug crops grown by peasants in the national parks
- soil erosion
- soil and water quality damage from overuse of pesticides
- air pollution, especially in Bogota, from vehicle emissions

Cry of the Poor

- income inequality is among the worst in the world, and more than a third of the population lives below the poverty line.
- Forced displacement continues to be prevalent because of violence among guerrillas, paramilitary groups, and Colombian security forces
 - Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations are disproportionately affected.
- One of the world's highest levels of "forced disappearances"
 - About 30,000 cases have been recorded over the last four decades—although the number is likely to be much higher—including human rights activists, trade unionists, Afro-Colombians, indigenous people, and farmers in rural conflict zones.
 - Rights defenders, indigenous and Afro-Colombian leaders, and other community activists face threats and violence
- Colombia's economic development is hampered by inadequate infrastructure, poverty, narcotrafficking, and an uncertain security situation

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Country: **Venezuela**

Commitments

Cry of the Earth

- sewage pollution of Lago de Valencia
- oil and urban pollution of Lago de Maracaibo
- deforestation
- soil degradation
- urban and industrial pollution, especially along the Caribbean coast
- threat to the rainforest ecosystem from irresponsible mining operations

Cry of the Poor

- more than one million predominantly middle- and upper-class Venezuelans are estimated to have emigrated.
 - The brain drain is attributed to a repressive political system, lack of economic opportunities, steep inflation, a high crime rate, and corruption
- sex trafficking and forced labor
 - Venezuelan women and girls, sometimes lured from poor interior regions to urban and tourist areas, are trafficked for sexual exploitation within the country, as well as in the Caribbean
 - Venezuelan children are exploited, frequently by their families, in domestic servitude
 - people from South America, the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa are sex and labor trafficking victims in Venezuela
 - thousands of Cuban citizens, particularly doctors, who work in Venezuela on government social programs in exchange for the provision of resources to the Cuban Government experience conditions of forced labor
- A brutal crackdown on dissent that intensified since 2014 has led to the arbitrary prosecution of political opponents, dozens of killings, thousands of arrests, and abuses against detainees that in some cases amount to torture.
- Venezuela is facing an unprecedented humanitarian emergency with severe shortages of medicine and food that Venezuelan authorities have failed to adequately address

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Country: **Costa Rica**

Cry of the Earth

- deforestation and land use change, largely a result of the clearing of land for cattle ranching and agriculture
- soil erosion
- coastal marine pollution
- fisheries protection

- solid waste management
- air pollution

Cry of the Poor

- murders of environmental defenders in the region
- Poverty has remained around 20-25% for nearly 20 years, and the government's strong social safety net has eroded due to increased constraints on its expenditures
- sex trafficking and forced labor
 - Costa Rican women and children, as well as those from Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and other Latin American countries, are sex trafficked in Costa Rica
 - child sex tourism is a particular problem with offenders coming from the US and Europe
 - men and children from Central America, including indigenous Panamanians, and Asia are exploited in agriculture, construction, fishing, and commerce