



¿SI NOSOTROS NO
ENTONCES QUIÉN?

A call is made to defend the forests and the territory of the Sierra Norte de Puebla against extractivism and over-exploitation.

- **Inhabitants of 19 ejidos in 5 municipalities unite knowledge and create Regional Collective in Defense of Forests and Territory; seek community forest management**
- **Video documentaries on community struggle and victories are presented for the first time**

Chignahuapan, Puebla, July 11, 2022. Within the framework of the first **Regional Meeting of Defenders of Forests and Territory**, held on Friday at the Ejidal Auditorium of Acolihuia, Chignahuapan, Puebla, **inhabitants of 19 ejidos in five municipalities presented the Regional Collective in Defense of the Forests and the Territory of the Sierra Norte de Puebla, which "seeks to have a substantial impact on decision-making for the regulation and compensation of the true owners of the forests."** This in order to guarantee a decent life for future generations, preserving their identity and customs.

The collective, made up of people from the ejidos of **Ajolotla, Acolihuia, Cruz de Ocote, Poxcuatzingo, Tecoltemic, Tlacuitlapa, Atexca, San Francisco Terrerillos, Sebastopol, El Manantial, Tenejac, Eloxochitlán, Jicolapa, Tulimán, Río Blanco, Atotonilco, Ixtlahuaca, Mesa Chica and El Terrerro, located in the municipalities of Chignahuapan, Ixtacamaxitlán, Zacatlán, Aquixtla, and Ahuazotepec**, was established to fight against toxic mining and the destruction of land and territory, as well as to protect natural resources from industrial over-exploitation. , the excessive consumption of large cities and the omissions of those who make decisions, through conservation actions and sustainable and community use of the region's forests.

The **Regional Collective in Defense of Forests and the Territory of the Sierra Norte de Puebla** seeks to train communities to strengthen their knowledge in community organization and forest defense, will facilitate the dissemination and good practices on community forest management, and will articulate and promote alliances and dialogues with authorities and decision makers.

"With this regional meeting we celebrate four years of existence, in which we celebrate by opening a space to share our experience and listen to the voice of our allies. For us, it is a pleasure to share our reflections on the importance of community organization as a means of legitimate resistance against mining and extractive projects that threaten our forests. Despite the impacts of the pandemic, in these years we have resisted and strengthened the ties between our communities through the formation of this group, the carrying out of a community diagnosis and permanent training in different topics with a focus on communication and incidence " , assured Ana María Luna, defender of the Ejido de Eloxochitlán, Zacatlán, and member of the collective.

Representatives of the forestry organizations Silvícola Ocote Real, the Unión de Ejidos de la Sierra Norte de Puebla, the Mexican Network of Forest Peasant Organizations (Red MOCAP), as well as civil society organizations were also present at the public

presentation of the group. civil Project on Organization, Development, Education and Research (PODER) and If not Us, Then Who?, which have accompanied its formation process.

Likewise, during the event, the documentaries Incendios en la Sierra Norte de Puebla and A town protects its land: Tecoltemic marks the path were presented, accompanied by discussion panels and a Cultural Tianguis, where the ejidos that make up the collective shared the great gastronomic, artisanal, and natural diversity that exists in its territories.

"We are a group of people from the Sierra Norte de Puebla that watches over its natural assets. We defend life, our territories, our forests, and water, which is a human priority. We seek justice and respect; we fight with the same common goal and conserve our identity and our customs. We rely on our ancestors to continue weaving stories, life and communities. We continue to learn to share with our people and thus we work together because there is no more powerful weapon than union", assures the group in the document "declaration of struggle".

END

The **Regional Collective in Defense of the Forests and the Territory of the Sierra Norte de Puebla** is made up of human rights defenders who are inhabitants of 19 ejidos in 5 municipalities of the region and is accompanied in its formation process by community organizations, civil society organizations and international foundations. Among them are the Project on Organization, Development, Education and Research (PODER), the Mexican Network of Forest Peasant Organizations (MOCAF Network) and If Not Us, Then Who?

For more information, contact:

América Olguín, Regional Collective in Defense of Forests and the Territory of the Sierra Norte de Puebla

WhatsApp: +52 1 5545219803

Email: colectivoregionaldbtsnp@gmail.com

Check here the declaration of struggle of the collective:
<https://share.mayfirst.org/s/2aZtxRbRLZAYogT>

Multimedia material available at: <https://share.mayfirst.org/s/2aZtxRbRLZAYogT>