

## Conference on Climate Change (CMPCC).

by Julio Aracil

Between 20 and 22 April was held in Cochabamba, Bolivia, the Peoples' World Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth to respond to the failure of the Copenhagen Summit and find a new political impetus to halt the most serious socio-environmental problem of humanity.

People from all over the world attended the World Conference. Convened by the Government of Evo Morales, had the participation of indigenous communities, affected communities, social movements, scientists, lawyers, parliamentarians,



NGOs and governments committed to promoting social and environmental justice.

According to official figures there were 35 151 people, 9154 of them from abroad, representing 142 countries. They participated in the 17 official tables of the conference and conclusions obtained in these tables will be presented to the next conference of COP 16 in Cancun and these conclusions can be read in <http://cmpcc.org>.



#### Contact

The full set of 54 images is available in PHOTOSHELTER.

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Note - Text is for reference purposes only.



## Coca, the sacred and damn leaf.

by Julio Aracil

Coca, the sacred leaf, has lived with the Andean people for more than seven centuries. Aymara, Inca, and even the Spanish colonizers used the properties of the leaf on their profit. For indigenous people it is strength, life and spiritual food, for the Andean workers it is healing, energy and food.

Coca, the damn leaf, has lived with the Andean people since 1859. Criminal gangs, governments and even politicians have used the properties of the alkaloid on their profit. For the corrupt governments it is power, money and decline, for Western governments it is an enemy, epidemic and death.

This combination of good and evil in a small leaf has generated joys and



sorrows to the most hurt and least compensated people by the processes used in the Western world, in the nineteenth century coca was a medical revolution in the twentieth century it is a lethal adversary. Farmers of this ancient bush have been directly affected by the legislation that has been imposed by the various colonizers which have suffered this region since the Inca conquest, through the Spanish and finally the American interference in their backyard.

Around 21 million people use cocaine in the world and there is a world production of 850 metric tons in 2008. This phenomenon provides employment for thousands of farmers and modify the rural environments where it is cultivated.

But it is from the 80s of the previous century when major changes occur in this environment. The emergence of drug trafficking as the great global enemy brought undercover wars and narco-states to these rural areas which were profoundly affected and changed forever the traditional and ancient structure.

Today, farmers faces a new war, in this case an ideological war to wash the global awareness about a







product, the coca leaf, that they consider honorable and necessary for their culture. Unlike other rural, coca allows unique survival rates and prevent mass migration to urban areas.

The future of these farmers depend on decisions made by powerful men hundreds of miles away from their home, decision affecting both legal and illegal area of this plant sacred or damn by the prism used.

## Contact

These photos are part of a grup of 12 stories about coca leaf production, coca markets and drug trafficking fight. The full set of 420 images is available in PHOTOSHELTER.

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