



## Letters

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### Camisea impacts

Bob Williams's article "Pluspetrol: Camisea could spur Peruvian gas exploration boom like Bolivia's" (OGJ Online, Nov. 6, 2002) highlighted the potential to make Peru's "energy industry competitive on a worldwide basis." While undoubtedly a potentially important area for gas development, the Camisea project also impacts areas of tremendous importance to global biodiversity and traditional lands of many indigenous groups, some of which live in voluntary isolation from the outside world. Only the coordinated work of government agencies, companies, civil society, and multilateral agencies will ensure the development of a project that will translate in economic profit while preserving the invaluable natural and cultural richness found in the project area.

The Camisea project, and future energy development, must take account of these considerations if Peru's energy industry is to promote sustainable development and sound resource management. Indeed, failure to adequately address these issues could potentially delay or even derail its full implementation.

In terms of biodiversity, the Camisea project overlaps three important areas. Block 88 of the project is located in an area containing some of the highest biological and ecological value of all forested regions in the world. **The pipeline crosses the Yungas (montane forest) and Punas of the "VilcabambaAmorbo Corridor," part of Conservation International's "Tropical Andes" hotspot, an area of tremendous importance to biodiversity, but under significant threat.**

The proposed terminus for export of LNG products in Pisco is adjacent to the Reserva Nacional de Paracas, Peru's only marine protected area, and an important region for industrial and artisanal fishing. In terms of cultural richness, Block 88 also overlaps the Nahua-Kugapakori Reserve, a territory established to protect seminomadic indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation from the outside world. Given their unique status and special vulnerability, special care must be taken to avoid negative impacts on these groups' cultures.

This intersection of energy development and the region's unique biological and cultural richness requires that those involved in the Camisea project—the companies, communities, civil society representatives, government agencies, and multilateral entities—work together to create and capitalize on opportunities to address the environmental and social issues that are intertwined with the Camisea project. Only through commitment and good faith efforts to arrive at consensus-based solutions for the Camisea project will Peru be able to realize its energy potential while protecting its unique natural and cultural heritage.

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