



UPPER AMAZON CONSERVANCY

August 2010

Peru: Overflight Reveals Illegal Settlement in the Alto Purús National Park

A July overflight revealed a large settlement of approximately 10 houses inside the Alto Purús National Park near its border with the Murunahua Reserve for Uncontacted People. The overflight, conducted by the [Upper Amazon Conservancy](#) in collaboration with [CAVU](#), was a follow-up to an April overflight of the Murunahua Reserve, which found widespread logging activity in the Reserve near the border with the Park (see [July report](#)). The settlement is located near the watershed divide of the Envira and the Mapuya rivers, providing strong evidence that it is part of a network of camps used to extract mahogany from both the Park and Reserve.

These protected areas are international conservation priorities due to world-class biodiversity and their critical role in protecting the upper headwaters of the Amazon River. Furthermore, the logging operations are a direct threat to tribes of uncontacted indigenous people who have shunned modern society to continue hunting and gathering inside the Park and Reserve. The two protected areas harbor the largest concentration of such people in Peru.

The mahogany extracted from these unauthorized settlements is transported to the city of Pucallpa where it is trucked to Lima and shipped to the United States and Europe for the high-end furniture trade. With more than 80% of Peru's mahogany exported to the United States, the logging provides evidence that Peru is failing to uphold the environmental and forestry obligations of its 2009 free trade agreement with the U.S. Moreover, the logging violates the [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species](#) (CITES), under which mahogany is listed.



