

INGI ANDE

Our Territory

The territory for the Kofán people represents all of life, and it is Mother Nature, because God left it to them. It is not only the superficial layer of the earth, the one we see on top. Inside the earth there are also spiritual beings, just as we live on the surface. The earth is a heritage of life, because in it food is produced, as well as everything necessary for existence. Therefore, the territory is the lung of ancestral wisdom. Through it we live, and we know traditional medicine and the spirituality of the world.

The Kofán people inhabit the northwestern area of the Colombian–Ecuadorian Amazon, between the Guamuez River (Putumayo River) and the Aguarico River (Napo River). Their history has been marked by a constant struggle for the protection of their territories and their culture, in the face of the weakening of their traditions. Today, organizational and cultural recovery processes are beginning.

Known for their knowledge of medicinal plants and the healing abilities of the *Taitas*, or traditional doctors. Their homes and ceremonial houses are scattered along the rivers and streams of their ancestral territory. The Santa Rosa del Guamuez Reserve is one of the three reserves inhabited by the Indigenous Kofán people, located 15 minutes from the municipal center of La Hormiga, Putumayo. The Yarinal Reserve is located an hour and a half from the urban center of La Hormiga. The Campo Alegre del Afilador Reserve is located in the southernmost part of the Department of Putumayo, in the Municipality of San Miguel, along the banks of the Afilador and Guinea streams, which flow into the San Miguel River, the river that serves as the border with the Republic of Ecuador.



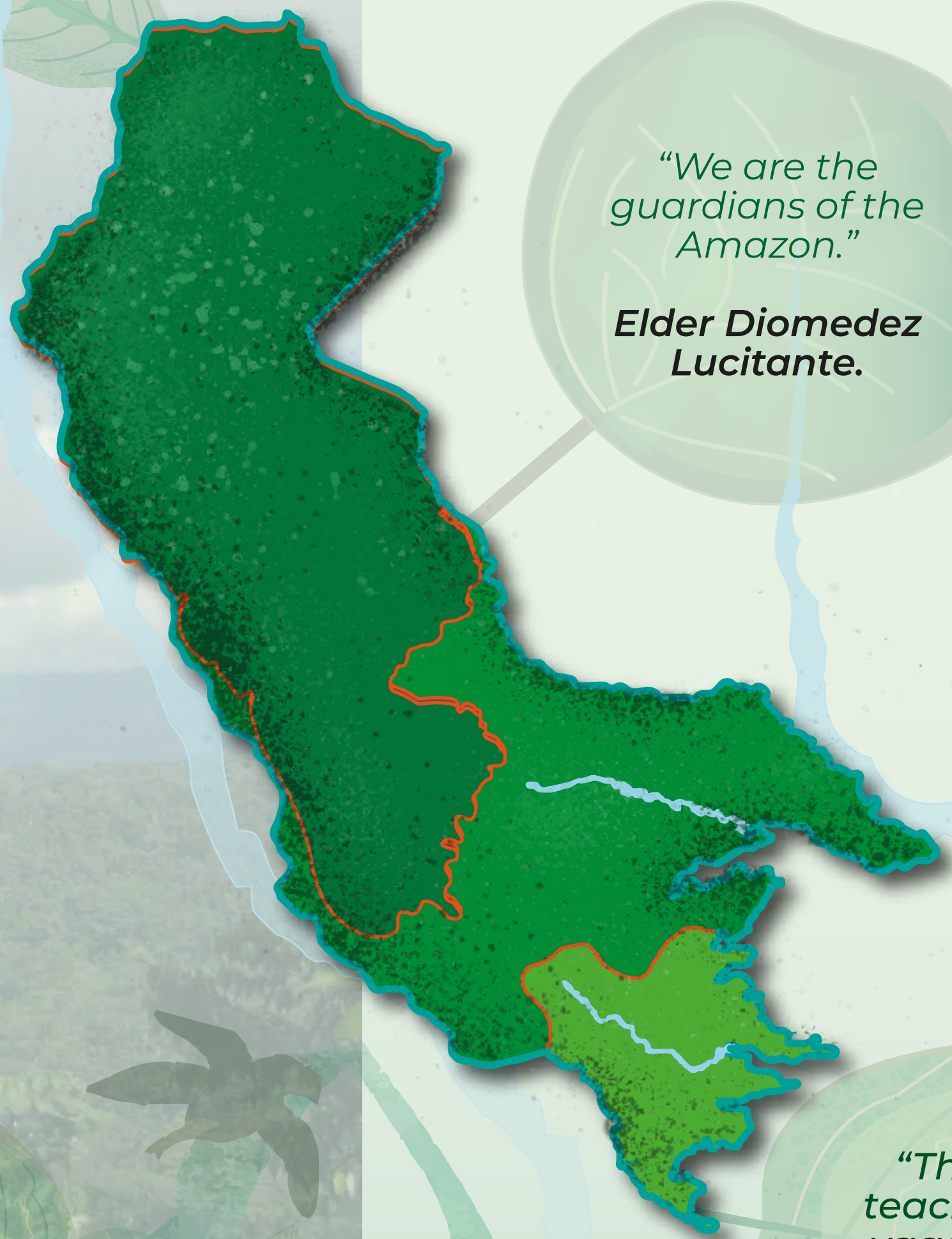
“When God finished building and everything was ready, he said to his mother: ‘The moment has come to call them.’ He climbed onto the platform with a coconut that produced a sound; he called them, but they did not come. Then God called them with a shout: ‘Come, all of you, to drink the *chicha* I have prepared for you!’ After the call, some beings began emerging from nothingness, wearing feather necklaces, tiger fangs, crowns of macaw feathers, their faces painted, their bodies covered with fragrant plants from nature, and each one carried drums and *rondadores* (flutes) to celebrate.” Fragment from the origin story of the Kofán People (Safeguard Plan, Kofán People, 2010)

“The *patw kinihi* was a stone tree from which water flowed. One day, God—transformed into a kínder bird (hummingbird)—followed the *morrocoy* (turtle), who knew where the stone tree was. They pierced it with a guacho (traditional tool), drank from it, and water came out of that trunk, which they carried home. (...) Later, the *tirii* (spirit) was the one who cut the *parcas* (tree) and became trapped in the sky, and a great amount of water fell. Then they said that the great tree should become a boa, and it became a boa. The largest *parca* became a river, and the smaller ones became streams. Then the splinters were named *sábalo dorada*, and sardines. The bark of the tree was named catfish; from there the sea, rivers, and all the water animals were born, and the Kofán people had what they needed to live.” Fragment from the story Atw Kinihi – Stone Tree (Safeguard Plan, Kofán People, 2010)



Flora Sanctuary

Orito Ingi Ande Medicinal Plants



"We are the guardians of the Amazon."

Elder Diomedez Lucitante.

"In **2008** at the request of **the traditional Kofán authorities**, the **Protected Area Flora Plantas Medicinales Orito Ingi Ande Sanctuary** was declared under Resolution 0994 of June 16, 2008.

The knowledge of the grandmothers and grandfathers is essential for the conservation of the Protected Area.

During this time, 205 plants have been documented, 57 species collected, 25 successfully protected, and more than 300 plants delivered to the reserves, established in the *Nasipas* (chagras*) of more than 15 grandmothers and their apprentices."

*From the Kofán worldview, chagras can be understood as spaces of fertility, socialization, and transmission of ancestral knowledge and wisdom from the elder grandmothers about the ways of cultivating our native foods.

"The territory is for teaching, for drinking yagé and passing on knowledge to future generations; it is a school."

Abuela Rosa Elvira.

Flora Sanctuary

Orito Ingi Ande Medicinal Plants

“The Orito Ingi Ande Sanctuary of Flora and Medicinal Plants (SFPMOIA) is one of the seven protected areas of the National Parks System in the Andean–Amazonian Piedmont, contributing less than 2% of the nationally protected hectares in the Piedmont region. Its location in the Nariño–Putumayo Orobiome and its altitudinal gradient between 700 meters above sea level and 3300 meters above sea level make the SFPMOIA the only area within the National Parks System that contributes to the conservation of samples of the High Andean Nariño–Putumayo Orobiome, the Sub-Andean Nariño–Putumayo Orobiome, and the Tropical Humid Zonobiome of Nariño–Putumayo.” (SFPMOIA Management Plan 2024, p. 27).

On Governance

“The territory is Mother Nature because our father left it in the world for our life. We must keep in mind that the territory is not only the superficial layer of the earth, but also includes the spiritual beings of the astral space and the guardian masters of the land. The Earth is a heritage of life because within it our food is produced, as well as everything necessary for our existence.” (Kofán Safeguard Plan 2010, p. 27)

We are people whose cultural foundations are rooted in spirituality; therefore, many of the decisions we reach must be made through our ancestral wisdom, which defines our position and our way of facing different circumstances. With this in mind, we can understand that the Law of Origin is our guiding principle, expressed through the governance exercised by the traditional authorities (*Kuendza Atesw A'indekhw*). This governance is understood as the representation of our forms of governmental structure, based on criteria of autonomy; internal organization for coexistence; and the defence of the fulfillment of the rights and duties that guarantee our physical and cultural survival.

Within this political–organizational community framework, an important space is given to understanding the universe that surrounds us through spiritual ceremonies.

Within this context, there is a close relationship between the Santa Rosa del Guamuez Reserve, the Yarinal Reserve, and the Campo Alegre del Afilador Reserve with Colombia's National Natural Parks, with the purpose of protecting medicinal plants and as a strategy to contribute to the preservation of the yagé culture in the territory known as the Orito Ingi Ande Sanctuary of Flora and Medicinal Plants. This area was declared a protected zone on June 16, 2008, through coordinated decision-making processes that enable its purpose and that take place across various instances and shared workspaces.



AINDEKHW

Plant Samples

“God had called us so that we would exist in this world, caring for everything that exists in it. After calling us, he left us the yagé, but before that he prepared it, drank it, and suffered; he fell to the ground and vomited. That is why now we drink yagé, we vomit, and we suffer in order to learn. Afterward, the Kofán began to live along the riverbanks. Everything that exists in nature is our brother because it was created by God; for this reason, we will always be guardians and protectors of all creation.” Fragment from the origin story of the Kofán People (Kofán Safeguard Plan, 2010)

Plant: 4. Shukungw

Common use: Sores in the mouth and inside the nose.

Scientific name: *Triolena* sp

Resguardo Campoalegre del Afilador



Plant: 5. Kuwaruchw

Common use: Sores in the mouth and inside the nose.

Scientific name: *Biophytum somnians*

Resguardo Campoalegre del Afilador



Plant: 6. Ihi tsaupa

Common use: Acne, toothache, bruises

Scientific name: *Piper marsupiatum*

Resguardo Campoalegre del Afilador



Plant: 2. Yagé uco

Common use: Ritual entheogen

Scientific name: *Diplopterys cabrerana*

Resguardo Santa Rosa del Guamuez



Plant: 3. Yoco

Common use: Entheogen, energizing, emetic

Scientific name: *Paullinia yoco*

Resguardo Santa Rosa del Guamuez



Plant: 7. Tusindi

Common use: Ear ache

Scientific name: *Pearcea sprucei*

Resguardo Campoalegre del Afilador



Plant: 1. Yagé

Common use: Ritual entheogen

Scientific name: *Banisteriopsis caapi*

Resguardo Santa Rosa del Guamuez

Plant: 15. Ajo de monte

Common use: Insect bites and 'mal aire'

Scientific name: *Mansoa standleyi*

Resguardo Campoalegre del Afilador



Plant: 14. Kenene

Uso común: Urinary infections, prostate

Scientific name: *Aristolochia* sp.

Resguardo Santa Rosa del Guamuez



Plant: 16. Chunisi

Common use: To calm children who cry a lot

Scientific name: *Solanum anisophyllum*

Resguardo Yarinal San Marcelino



Plant: 13. Shishitusi

Common use: Snakebite, prostate

Nombre científico: *Dracontium* sp.

Resguardo Yarinal San Marcelino



Plant: 12. Kharuru

Common use: Joint and head pain

Scientific name: *Anthurium* sp.

Resguardo Santa Rosa del Guamuez



Plant: 11. Sararu

Common use: To calm children who cry a lot or don't sleep

Scientific name: *Solanum lepidotum*

Resguardo Campoalegre del Afilador



Plant: 10. Shendu

Common use: Feet fungus

Scientific name: *Tournefortia gigantifolia*

Resguardo Campoalegre del Afilador



Plant: 9. Feriri

Common use: Rashes, insect bites

Scientific name: *Potalia resinifera*

Resguardo Yarinal San Marcelino



Plant: 8. Oreja de negro Singw tsunsina

Common use: Fever, kidney issues

Scientific name: *Geogenathus ciliatu*

Resguardo Yarinal San Marcelino

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