



MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
February 8, 2017

Contact:

Emily Jacobi, Executive Director, +1-347-328-3110 emily@ddem.us

**NEW INITIATIVE COMBINES INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP &
INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY TO HALT DEFORESTATION**
**Digital Democracy and ten coalition partners receive funding to stop
deforestation in the Amazon rainforest**

Digital Democracy, in partnership with a coalition of international partners led by Hivos, Greenpeace and indigenous organizations, is launching a new program aimed at addressing deforestation. The program, *All Eyes on the Amazon*, has been made possible thanks to a 14.8 million euro contribution from the Dutch National Postcode Lottery's Dream Fund. It will combine modern technologies, such as satellites, drones and tablets, with the centuries old knowledge of Indigenous inhabitants of the Amazon. The contribution was announced at the Postcode Lottery's 2017 *Goed Geld Gala* ("Good Money Gala") charity awards held in Amsterdam on 6 February.

Combining efforts to defend Indigenous Rights

To halt deforestation in the Amazon, an exceptional coalition has been created between environmental and human rights organizations and the indigenous led [COICA](#) - Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin.

"Indigenous people in the Amazon face urgent threats against their lands. Our coalition will provide technical, legal and advocacy expertise to support indigenous communities in the Amazon to advocate for their rights," said Emily Jacobi, Executive Director of Digital Democracy. "*All Eyes on the Amazon* gives us the opportunity to scale the trainings and tools we have developed in Ecuador, Guyana and Peru to partner with more indigenous peoples across the Amazon."

"This coalition will ensure that the indigenous communities will no longer stand alone. We support them in securing and defending their land rights," said Edwin Huizing, executive director of Hivos. "Through improved satellite technology and drone photography made by indigenous forest guardians, deforestation will be quickly and effectively brought into view. With this indisputable evidence, indigenous groups can take action themselves. The coalition will also offer protection to those indigenous activists who face dangerous reprisals for their activities."

Exposing illegal activity

At the same time, the international supply chains running from the Amazon all the way to retail outlets will be exposed. “To companies, investors and governments that destroy the forest we say ‘we see you, we will follow you, and we will bring you publicly to account’,” said Joris Thijssen, Director of Greenpeace Netherlands. “The more indifferent the new Brazilian government becomes toward the environment and the rights of those who live in the Amazon, the more determined we will be to protect them.”

Hope for the Amazon

Quick action is needed because in the Amazon, both people and the environment are under more pressure than ever before. The rush for remaining timber, oil, and precious metals is destroying some of the most remote and biodiverse rainforest on the planet. Indigenous communities living in rainforests are crucial to the sustainable protection of these areas. However, their voices are often ignored by mainstream decision-makers and they often lack the tools, knowledge and contacts to defend their rights and the environment effectively. The *All Eyes on the Amazon* program is going to change that, thanks to the support of the Dutch National Postcode Lottery.

All Eyes on the Amazon will be run and implemented by a coalition of eleven environmental and human rights groups and local community groups. In addition to Digital Democracy, Hivos and Greenpeace, this includes the Association of Indigenous Peoples in the Amazon (COICA), the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), the World Resources Institute (WRI), the University of Maryland (UMD), INTERPOL LEAF, and the NGOS Both ENDS, WITNESS and ARTICLE 19. The Dutch National Postcode Lottery funds the program.

Contact:

Emily Jacobi, Executive Director of Digital Democracy is available for interviews. Additional partner organization representatives are available upon request.

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