



SHIPIBO CONIBO CENTER

Annual Report 2024/25

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Dear friends, allies & kin,

2024/25 has marked an important period of growth, resilience, and impact for The Shipibo-Conibo Center (SCC). As the Amazon continues to be a critical epicenter in global geopolitical and environmental struggles, the need to uphold and amplify Indigenous voices from the region has never been more urgent. Crucial to planetary climate balance, the Amazon rainforest has been subject to relentless pressure from extractive industries and detrimental governmental policies that threaten Indigenous sovereignty, ecological integrity, and cultural survival.

In the face of these mounting threats— from land grabs and environmental crimes to systemic violations of human rights—the work of The Shipibo-Conibo Center has been more vital than ever. Over the past year, SCC has played a pivotal role in supporting the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Nation by fortifying grassroots organizations, defending community leaders and sacred territories, and advocating for Indigenous rights at both national and international levels.

This year was also defined by powerful moments of cultural resurgence and international recognition. The SCC helped create new platforms for the transmission of Shipibo cosmology, traditional knowledge, and artistic practices—carving out meaningful spaces for exchange, solidarity, and visibility. From organizing transnational gatherings to contributing to policy advocacy and the defense of the Amazon, the Center's work has continued to challenge extractivist narratives and reinforce Indigenous-led models of ecological stewardship and cultural continuity.

The accomplishments of this year stand as a testament to the strength of collective action and the enduring vision of the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo People to shape a future rooted in autonomy, communal governance, and planetary care.

SCC has focused on five lines of action that include:

- (1) the promotion of [Indigenous Autonomy initiatives](#);
- (2) the strengthening of our Legal Defense Program;
- (3) the training of the next generation of Indigenous Leaders and Lawyers;

- (4) Indigenous contemporary art, in close collaboration with our represented artists;
- (5) [The Bakish Mai Multiversity](#): A Living Space for Indigenous Knowledge, Autonomy, and Collective Resistance
- (6) The public programs at The Shipibo-Conibo Center Headquarters in Harlem NYC

Today, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support throughout the past year. It is with great joy that we share a summary of all we've achieved together during this transformative time.

Abou Farman and Matteo Norzi, President and Executive Director, SCC

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2024/2025



1.INDIGENOUS AUTONOMY

A combination of legal work, communal decision making and strategic action expanded territorial and political autonomy in concrete ways.

1.1 Land Titling

Thanks to our work with Area Legal of Coshikox, significant progress was made in the legal recognition of Indigenous territories. In September 2024, the community of Nueva Villa Sol successfully achieved formal land titling after years of struggle to assert their rights, thanks to sustained accompaniment and strategic support. Similarly, on February 9, 2024, the community of Nuevo Unión completed its titling process. The resolution approving the formal recognition of their land was closely

monitored, supervised, and verified to ensure that all procedures were properly followed and that the community's rights were fully upheld.

1.2 Area Ecológica Indígena

Following the successful creation of the *Área Ecológica Indígena* (AEI) in Caimito and its significant positive impact on territorial protection and community empowerment, several other communities were inspired to follow suit. Building on this momentum, they organized their *Guardias Indígenas* and formally declared their own territories as *Áreas Ecológicas Indígenas*, with the steadfast support of the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Council (COSHIKOX) and the Area Legal team.

In 2024, three new AEIs were established in the Chanajao Lagoon, Tsoya Lagoon, and Tipishka Lagoon. Each of these achievements reflects not only the determination and collective action of the communities themselves, but also the tireless efforts of the *Guardia Indígena Shipibo*, COSHIKOX, and the Area Legal. Together, they have carried out sustained training initiatives focused on political education, self-governance, and territorial defense—equipping communities with the knowledge and tools to reclaim and protect their ancestral lands through peaceful and legal means.

These milestones represent concrete steps toward Indigenous autonomy and ecological stewardship, reaffirming the commitment of the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo People to defend their territories while strengthening traditional governance and resilience.

1.3 Strengthening the Guardia Indígena in 2024

By the end of 2024, the *Guardia Indígena Shipibo* had expanded to an impressive 22 established bases across the territory—a powerful testament to the growing strength, credibility, and momentum of this grassroots movement. Its peaceful, organized approach to territorial defense continues to inspire widespread community engagement and serve as a model of Indigenous-led protection of ancestral lands.

Throughout the year, a series of intensive legal and strategic trainings were carried out across the region. These included workshops held directly within communities as well as specialized sessions hosted at the Bakish Mai Multiversity. There, local *guardias* joined forces with Indigenous leaders from across the Amazon Basin during the *International Indigenous Congress of Guardias*—a landmark gathering dedicated to the exchange of territorial defense strategies between Ecuador, Colombia and Peru, rooted in lived experience, traditional knowledge, and collective sovereignty.

This progress was made possible thanks to the invaluable support of key allies including the *Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI)*, *Amazon Frontlines*, and the *Forest Peoples Programme*. These partners provided essential protection measures in response to the increasing threats faced by *guardia* members, as well as critical resources to ensure the success of training and gatherings throughout



the year. The growing network of *guardias* now stands not only as a shield against external threats, but as a living expression of Indigenous autonomy, resilience, and unity in defense of the Amazon and its future.

2. LEGAL DEFENSE PROGRAM

In 2024, the legal defense program made significant strides in protecting Indigenous territorial rights across the Ucayali region. A major success was the defense of the territorial integrity of the community of Caimito through a variety of actions. The community organized a protest in front of the DRAU (Regional

Agrarian Office) on August 19 to demand the legal review of a resolution that threatened their land rights. Earlier in the year, on February 16, a precautionary legal measure was obtained in favor of the same community, in which the judiciary ordered Mennonite settlers to immediately halt illegal logging on communal lands. The legal program also supported an appeal that reinstated the georeferencing process for Caimito's second land title, which had been arbitrarily annulled, allowing the legal proceedings for territorial defense to move forward (November 4).

Another major victory came on November 20, when the Regional Government of Ucayali formally recognized the community of Antiguo Ahuaypa after years of sustained pressure and legal oversight. In November, a formal complaint was filed regarding illegal deforestation in the community of Puerto Adelina, supported by direct action from the *Guardia Indígena*. That same month, a judicial resolution that had previously halted the community of Nuevo San Juan II's land claim through adverse possession was overturned, enabling the community to continue asserting their territorial rights.

The legal program also played a crucial role in the defense of the Nuevo Oriente de Chanajao territory in October, securing personal protection measures for community leaders and working with the *Guardia Indígena* to expel illegal fishermen and cancel an unauthorized tourism concession, thus safeguarding the Chanajao Lagoon. On September 25, legal representatives accompanied a demonstration before Ucayali authorities to denounce exclusionary conservation practices, land trafficking, and the persecution of Indigenous leaders linked to the mismanagement of the Imiría Regional Conservation Area (ACR Imiría).



In September, the legal program successfully defended the community of Nuevo San Juan against a territorial recovery lawsuit, which was declared inadmissible, effectively protecting the community's land rights.

Finally in October, another major achievement came when the newly established Guardia Indígena in the community of Nuevo Oriente de Chanajao reclaimed its titled land with legal support from COSHIKOX and the Area Legal. The community's land had been occupied for over seven years by a private tourism enterprise known as Asonprebiocha posing as a nature conservation project.

The reclamation process began with the georeferencing of the territory—a crucial step that confirmed the encroachment. Armed with this evidence, the community, in coordination with COSHIKOX, developed a strategic plan to recover their land. Guardians from five sister communities joined in solidarity, along with members of the legal team. They peacefully positioned themselves in front of the occupier's residence and remained there day and night until he acknowledged the legitimacy of their claim—and agreed to leave. Their steadfast commitment marked a powerful victory for the Guardia's strategy for territorial defense and Indigenous self-determination.

The Shipibo-Conibo Center is firmly committed to offering free legal defense to Indigenous communities in the Peruvian Amazon who are facing threats or have been affected by environmental crimes and human rights violations. In addition, we have actively engaged in strategic litigation aimed at securing formal recognition of the Shipibo Nation's representative body by the Peruvian government and relevant national and international institutions.

We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support of our allies at Global Greengrants, whose steadfast commitment to our legal program—beginning in 2019—has been instrumental in advancing the defense of Indigenous rights and territories.



3. TRAINING OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF INDIGENOUS LEADERS AND LAWYERS

As a result of a collaborative effort between The Shipibo-Conibo Center (SCC), the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Council (COSHIKOX), the Instituto de Defensa Legal (IDL), and the Forest Peoples Programme, we have facilitated a series of training spaces for Indigenous leaders from ten communities across the Ucayali region. These sessions have focused on strengthening the capacity of communities to defend their territories—ranging from the use of legal instruments to the organization and formalization of Indigenous Guards. The complex interplay between Indigenous and State jurisdictions demands that leaders and advocates be equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to navigate legal systems and assert their rights effectively.

Our training programs are designed not only to empower current community leaders but also to nurture a new generation of Shipibo-speaking legal practitioners capable of engaging with state and international actors. As part of this long-term vision, the SCC has committed to supporting Indigenous individuals who aspire to become lawyers by covering their educational expenses. This year, under the guidance of lead counsel Dra. Linda Vigo Escalante, we proudly celebrate the graduation of Belmer Cornejo Limas—an active member of our legal program—who earned his law degree from the Universidad Privada de Pucallpa. Additionally, two other members of our team, Bersy Gisela Castro Romaina and Lady Diana Vela

Mahua, are nearing completion of their legal studies at the Universidad Nacional de Ucayali.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Belmer for this remarkable achievement and reaffirm our commitment to supporting Indigenous leaders in their pursuit of legal education and the defense of their ancestral territories.



4. INDIGENOUS CONTEMPORARY ART, IN CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH OUR REPRESENTED ARTISTS

In 2024, The Shipibo-Conibo Center (SCC) continued its deep commitment to advancing Indigenous cultural production as a vital form of resistance, knowledge transmission, and ecological thought. Through close collaboration with our represented artists, we work to dismantle colonial paradigms that have long relegated Indigenous art to ethnographic or folkloric categories—separate from contemporary art discourses. Instead, we champion Indigenous aesthetics as living, evolving, and essential to shaping new visions for the future.

Our represented artist Sara Flores achieved even greater international visibility this year, becoming the first Indigenous artist to be featured in a solo exhibition at Museo de Arte de Lima (MALI), the most important institution of the Peruvian capital. Moreover, she has recently opened her first solo exhibition in the UK at White Cube Bermondsey. The Guggenheim Museum in NY and the Fine Arts Museums in San Francisco incorporated her work in their collections, and several other museums are about to do the same. Sara Flores' work was brought to the market also at *Art Basel Hong Kong*, *Art Basel Paris*, *Art Basel Basel*, and *Art Basel Miami Beach*, as well as at *Frieze Art Fair* in London, New York, Los Angeles, and Seoul.

Additionally, in a historic moment for Amazonian art, Sara Flores and Celia Vasquez Yui exhibited together at the *Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts* in the groundbreaking exhibition *Ayahuasca and the Art of the Amazon*, further establishing the relevance of their work in global art institutions. Celia Vasquez Yui is set to open a solo exhibition at Mindy Solomom gallery in Miami in November 2025.

The Indigenous artists working with the SCC however do not approach their practice as self-centered or market-driven endeavors. Guided by principles of reciprocity and kinship—extending beyond the human to include plants, animals, land, and spirit—they see their creative work as part of a broader ecosystem of collective responsibility. Many share the income generated from their artistic success to support diverse forms of Indigenous resistance across the Amazon, directly challenging the extractive and accumulative logic that dominates Western art markets.

Their work offers a living model for reuniting art, healing, ecology, and politics—realms that have been violently fragmented by centuries of colonial and neocolonial exploitation. Through cultural production, the SCC and its artists reaffirm that art is not merely a form of expression, but a practice of care, memory, and radical imagination.



5. THE BAKISH MAI MULTIVERSITY: A Living Space for Indigenous Knowledge, Autonomy, and Collective Resistance

In 2024, the Multiversity Bakish Mai continued to develop into a hub for Indigenous-led education, reflection, and resistance. Conceived as a space for the living transmission of ancestral knowledge and political imagination, Bakish Mai hosted a series of workshops and gatherings, all led and organized by Shipibo people and their allies. These events reaffirmed the centrality of Indigenous worldviews in reimagining self-determination, ecological stewardship, and cultural resilience in the face of persistent threats.

Among the key gatherings was the *Workshop on Political Cosmovision and Autonomy of the Shipibo-Konibo-Xetebo Nation*, led by COSHIKOX, which focused on strengthening Indigenous governance frameworks rooted in ancestral principles. The *Shipibo Women's Gathering* also returned in 2024 with renewed force, centering on ancestral practices of care. This included healing through medicinal plants focused on women's health, collective embroidery as a space for

intergenerational dialogue and reflection, and the revitalization of culinary and artistic traditions as acts of cultural and spiritual continuity.

In parallel, the *Plants with a Mother* program hosted a **Harvest Workshop**, bringing together participants to reap what was planted during the 2023 planting season. After eight months of dedicated work on the chakra (traditional agroforestry system), the harvest revealed both the immense potential of this Indigenous ecological model and the challenges posed by increasingly unstable climate patterns and shifting socio-political conditions.

Bakish Mai also served as the host of the *Second International Forum of Guardias Indígenas of Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia (2024)*. This transnational gathering brought together Indigenous leaders and *guardias* from across the Amazon Basin to share experiences of territorial defense, strengthen cross-border alliances, and reflect on strategies for deepening autonomy and collective self-care in a context of ongoing state neglect, environmental violence, and threats from both legal and illegal actors.

Additionally, a *Workshop on Politics and Law*, co-organized with IDL (Instituto de Defensa Legal) and COSHIKOX, offered training focused on defending *Áreas Ecológicas Indígenas* (AEIs)—a groundbreaking conservation model led by Shipibo communities. These workshops emphasized the protection of ecosystems through legal empowerment, strategic organizing, and community-based governance that excludes external extractive interests while preserving Indigenous ways of life.

Throughout the year, Bakish Mai continued to serve as a space of critical thought, hands-on learning, and intergenerational transmission. Its programming included theoretical courses, skill-based workshops, and experiential learning opportunities that advance the institutionalization of Indigenous knowledge systems and technologies. This work is essential to renewing the pathways through which ancestral wisdom is transmitted, ensuring that new generations inherit the tools, stories, and visions necessary to protect and transform their worlds.



Image: Film still from New Red Order

6. THE PUBLIC PROGRAMS AT THE SHIPIBO-CONIBO CENTER HEADQUARTERS, NYC

The Shipibo-Conibo Center (SCC), located in West Harlem on ancestral Lenape land, is a living cultural platform rooted in the cosmovision of the Shipibo-Konibo people of the Peruvian Amazon. Our NYC-based programming reflects a clear artistic and cultural vision aligned with our mission: to integrate Indigenous epistemologies into the core of contemporary cultural life.

Through curatorial experimentation and discursive engagement, we foreground Indigenous practices as sovereign systems of knowledge and aesthetic complexity, not marginal supplements to dominant art histories.

In 2024, The Shipibo-Conibo Center deepened its work as a living cultural space and political platform for Indigenous-led thought, art, and action. Our programming this year focused on strengthening networks of solidarity between the Amazon and the North, centering the voices of Indigenous leaders, artists, and land defenders through a series of public events that were rooted in ancestral knowledge, resistance, and creativity.

During the 23rd Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), we convened a side event titled “**Indigenous-Led Alternatives to State-Led Conservation**,” held at the Church Center for the United Nations. The panel brought together powerful voices from across the Amazon Basin: **Lizardo Cauper Pezo**, President of COSHIKOX (Ucayali, Peru); **Gloria Ushigua**, Sápara Nation (Ecuador); and **Laura Yawanawá**, Yawanawá People (Brazil), with live contributions from the **Shipibo Guardia Indígena** and the COSHIKOX legal team, joining remotely from the Peruvian Amazon. The discussion, moderated by **Dr. Columba González-Duarte**, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at The New School, presented bold and clear Indigenous visions of conservation grounded in autonomy, reciprocity, and deep ecological knowledge.

As part of the forum, **Lizardo Cauper Pezo** addressed the United Nations plenary, denouncing the systematic violations facing his community and calling attention to the intensifying threats of extractive industries and political marginalization in the Ucayali region. His testimony echoed widely, offering an urgent and eloquent call for Indigenous sovereignty and the protection of Amazonian territories.

The following evening, in collaboration with **Creative Time**, we hosted “**Jungle Whispers and Forest Echoes**”, an immersive sound installation and conversation with **Shipibo** artist **Sara Flores**. The event offered an intimate experience of the auditory landscapes of the Amazon rainforest, inviting participants to slow down and listen closely—to the land, the rivers, and the ancestral memory carried in the vibrations of the forest. Sara Flores’ insights illuminated how these sensorial dimensions relate to her visual practice, rooted in Shipibo cosmovision and medicinal geometry.

On April 19, we organized a gathering titled “**Parallel Walk and Minga: Advancing by Turning and Turning**.” This walk through Harlem—a historically Black neighborhood now facing the pressures of rapid gentrification—created a powerful bridge between local experiences of land dispossession and the collective defense of Indigenous territories in the Amazon. Artists, activists, and community members joined us along the route. Claudette Brady from **Save Harlem Now** and Kei Williams from **Black Gotham Experience** guided participants through the neighborhood, sharing stories of Harlem’s rich cultural legacy and some ways of resisting the impact of gentrification and urban displacement. These narratives grounded the walk in historical memory and affirmed the continuity of struggles for land, identity, and justice.

The procession culminated at **The Shipibo-Conibo Center**, where we connected via livestream with the **Guardia Indígena Shipibo** in Peru. From the heart of the Amazon, they shared their frontline experiences of mapping and defending their territories through the ancestral practice of *making linderos*—a spiritual and political act of asserting Indigenous sovereignty in the face of extractivist violence.

The day concluded with the annual Minga, an evening gathering at the Center, bringing together friends, collaborators, and neighbors for an intergenerational celebration. Music, shared food, and open conversation transformed the space into one of joy, remembrance, and mutual recognition—hallmarks of our collective work. **New Red Order** presented a cycle of videos along with their typically sharp commentary, and **Dioganhdi** shared their bold music, infusing the evening with an insurgent energy. Their presence underscored the power of cultural intervention as a form of resistance, and reminded us that the path forward is one we build together—step by step, and turn by turn.

Throughout 2024, The Shipibo-Conibo Center reaffirmed its commitment to acting as a cultural corridor between the Amazon and the Global North. Through immersive programming, direct participation of Indigenous leaders, and ongoing artistic collaboration, we continue to build a space of collective memory, resistance, and possibility—where ancestral voices are not only heard, but guide the way forward.