

**AMAZON WATCH \* AMAZON DEFENSE COALITION - ECUADOR**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**August 24, 2005**

**Contact: Leila Salazar, 415-487-9600 / Cell. 310-420-7575**

***Chevron Battles Amazon Indians In "Trial of Century"***

**SCIENTIFIC RESULTS IN ECUADOR TRIAL POINT TO  
BILLION-DOLLAR LIABILITY FOR CHEVRON**

**Hundreds of Soil and Water Samples Show Texaco Left Extensive Toxic  
Contamination in Rainforest**

**Five Indigenous Groups and 30,000 People Affected**

**Quito, Ecuador--** ChevronTexaco, now Chevron Corp (CVX), appears to be losing ground in the environmental "Trial of the Century" in Ecuador's rainforest over Texaco's operation of a former concession, according to the environmental group Amazon Watch.

Leila Salazar, spokesperson for Amazon Watch, which is monitoring the litigation, said the results of the scientific inspections from 14 well sites of the 350 operated by Texaco have been submitted to the court in the jungle town of Lago Agrio as part of the judicial process. Of 569 water and soil samples analyzed by laboratories, 341 – or 60 percent -- violate Ecuador law regulating petroleum activity. Chevron's own sampling has produced devastating proof against itself – for example, of 77 water samples submitted to the court by Chevron, 97 percent violate Ecuadorian legal standards.

The class-action lawsuit, which was filed in Ecuador after a decade of legal jousting in the United States, alleges that Texaco dumped more than 18 billion gallons of toxic waste directly into the rainforest over a period of 26 years – or about 30 times as much pure crude as was spilled in the Exxon Valdez disaster. An estimated 30,000 people are affected, and several studies published in peer-reviewed journals have demonstrated skyrocketing cancer rates and other health problems in the area. The only comprehensive damage assessment, completed in 2003 by the American firm Global Environmental, said it would take at least \$6 billion to clean up most of the damage.

The results are all the more significant because legal standards in Ecuador are far more permissible than those in the United States. For example, Ecuador's standard for dumping Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH) – considered the best indicator of petroleum contamination – is between 10 and 40 times more lax than most U.S. states.

According to tabulations of the lab results done by the Amazon Defense Coalition (Frente de Defensa de la Amazonia), which represents the affected communities, Chevron submitted a total of 223 water and soil samples that violated Ecuador norms. One Chevron soil sample came in at an alarming

265,338 parts per million of TPH – 250 times over the maximum allowable level in most U.S. states and 25 times higher than the Ecuadorian norm.

The scientific results of the 14 sites reveals the following:

- Of the 107 water samples submitted to the court by both sides, 105 (98 percent) contain high levels of toxics and poisons that violate Ecuadorian law. These include TPHs and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, which contain elements that cause cancer and other illnesses.
- Of the 356 soil samples submitted to the court by Chevron, 143 (44 percent) contain levels of total TPHs that violate national law. These levels, although a lower percentage compared to the water samples, are significant because Texaco has a strategy of conducting samples in areas (such as on top of hills) where there is a lower probability of finding toxic chemicals.
- Of the soil samples taken by the plaintiffs, 90 out of 107 (84 percent), violate Ecuador law.

### **Texaco's Remediation**

Chevron's main defense in the case – that Texaco remediated a few of its former sites in the mid 1990s – appears to collapse with the new results. In every one of the 12 sites supposedly "remediated" by Texaco from which samples were given to the court, Chevron itself produced soil and water samples that show extensive contamination that violates Ecuadorian law.

For example, at a Texaco well site called Sacha 6 -- supposedly "remediated" by Texaco in 1996 -- every one of the 14 water samples violated Ecuador law. In the well site Sacha 21, also "remediated" in 1996, every one of six water samples violated the law.

Fifteen more inspections are planned before the end of 2005. The inspections must finish in June of 2006, according to Pablo Fajardo, the lawyer for the plaintiffs. A decision in the trial, which will be made by a judge, is expected by early 2007.

The judicial inspections and the technical reports are done by court appointed experts with experience in the petroleum industry, such as chemical engineers, geologists, and petroleum engineers and samples taken by both sides are analyzed by independent, certified laboratories. The tabulations presented in this release were derived by the Amazon Defense Coalition based on official lab results submitted to the court in Ecuador.

The results did not surprise people living in the region.

"This only confirms through science what we have suspected for years: that the remediation of Texaco is a fraud, and the decision of the company to dump toxic water was a violation of national territory," said Luis Yanza, a spokesperson for the affected people suing Texaco.

For additional information, visit [www.chevrontoxico.com](http://www.chevrontoxico.com).

# ##