



Conflict Factsheet

Waste Management Conflict, Ecuador

Type of conflict Main	Intensity 1
Conflict Locality South America	Time 2012 –ongoing
Countries Ecuador	Resources Air (Pollution), Agricultural / Pastoral Land, Water

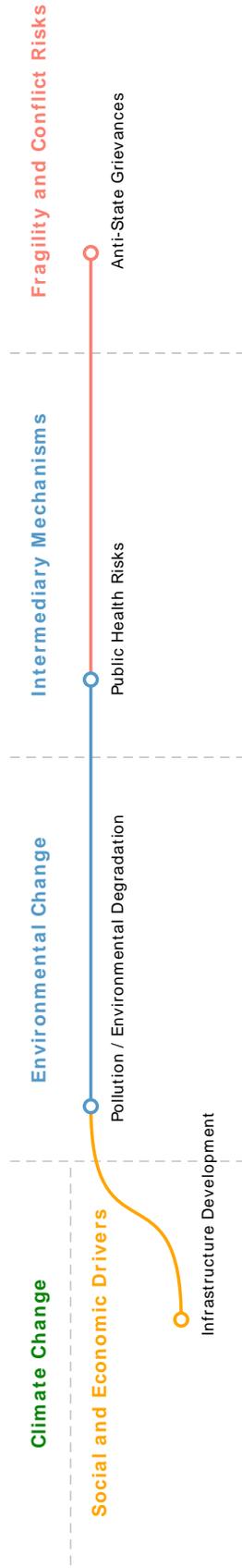


Conflict Summary

Ecuador's 2013-2017 Program of Government lists integrated solid waste management (ISWM) as a current topic on Ecuador's national agenda. The program calls for the elimination of garbage dumps and the creation of technically managed sanitary landfills; however, establishing sanitary landfills has generated opposition from communities worried about the environmental impacts of these landfills on air, water, and soil resources. This conflict summary focuses on a still unresolved conflict concerning a landfill in the province of Cañar, Ecuador.



Conceptual Model



Context Factors



Air (Pollution), Agricultural / Pastoral Land, Water



Conflict History

Since 2010, the canton of Cañar has experienced serious problems with waste management. In March of 2010, public perception of garbage dumps as threats to people and the environment prompted communities to demand their closure. Because of what happened, the four municipalities of Cañar, Suscal, El Tambo and Biblián formed the Municipal Association Integrated Sanitation Company for the Cañari People (EMMAIPC-EP).

The Curiurcu alternative

In 2012, the Ministry of Environment of Ecuador (MAE), with the help of a consultant, determined that the best site for the proposed landfill was located in the community of Curiurcu. The Curiurcu alternative was optimal because it was located on municipal land. Municipalities acquired 57 hectares in 2010, and installations are planned for 6.5 hectares. A report by the consultant estimated that the construction of the landfill at this site would cost approximately US\$2,600,000.

Curiurcu community opposition

Plans to build the Landfill in Curiurcu were met with community opposition. In June 2012, the consultant informed the MAE that it would be impossible to make the final designs because the community would not let them in to finish their field work. This information was verified by the Ministry in August, witnessing the community of Curiurcu's opposition to the project. Subsequently, building the Cañari People Association Solid Waste Treatment Center was opposed by political and community sectors such as the Committee to Defend Mother Earth (Pachamama) and Good Living, comprised by representatives of Curiurcu and the surrounding communities of Zhuya, Malal, Gaza, and Puruvín.

Waste management issue

Serious socio-environmental conflicts surround mismanagement of solid waste, especially when that waste, neglected by local governments, causes environmental pollution or negatively affects people, particularly those living near disposal sites. Although pollution from waste mismanagement has not yet been a detriment to local natural resources, simply the perception of this as a possibility is catalyst for conflict in these local communities. To add to the situation, the history of inadequate handling of related issues in this region has generated profound concerns regarding this issue.

Resolution Efforts

Since 2012, there have been a series of meetings to discuss this issue.

National Secretariat of Political Governance assembly

In November 2013, the National Secretariat of Political Governance called an assembly in the affected communities to discuss this issue, yet none of the authorities who favour the implementation of the landfill attended. At the assembly, the affected communities expressed their demands: to clarify details of the land purchase executed in 2010 by the municipalities, including the boundaries and the actual dimensions (the boundaries and the actual dimensions with deeds and with the owners from the community); to prevent the conclusion of the final designs that were not coordinated with the community; and to hold a



meeting so that the authorities can hear the arguments of technicians and community members regarding their refusal of the proposal.

Series of discussion supported by the Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano

In 2014, new mayors were elected and, with support from the Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano, a series of discussions were held with the communities, meetings were conducted among different levels of government and dialogues occurred between communities and authorities. In November of 2014, an assembly was attended by communities and the mayors they elected to agree on the steps necessary to reach an agreement. Currently, the conflict is improving, and although factors such as public statements and confrontations or the detention of community groups of technicians have rekindled conflict, it has never resulted in violence. . The stakeholders, a majority of which are technicians and politicians, have strived for collaboration when dealing with the conflict- In particular, the President of the Municipal Association has remained open to dialogue and to resolution by alternative means. However, community leaders have consistently maintained their refusal of the landfill and have gradually closed off any possibilities of dialogue.



Intensities & Influences



INTENSITIES

International / Geopolitical Intensity



Human Suffering



INFLUENCES

Environmental Influences



Societal Influences



Violent Conflict

No



Salience with nation

Regional



Mass displacement

None



Cross Border Mass Displacement

No



Resolution Success

Reduction in geographical scope

There has been no reduction in geographical scope.



Increased capacity to address grievance in the future

There is no increased capacity to address grievances in the future.



Grievance Resolution

Grievances have been partially addressed.



Causal Attribution of Decrease in Conflict Intensity

Conflict resolution strategies have been clearly responsible for the decrease in conflict intensity.





Entry Points for Resilience and Peace Building

Dialogue

Various meetings between the community of Curiurcu and authorities were held to discuss the issue and allow community leaders to express their concerns over the implementation of the landfill. Technicians and politicians have maintained a collaborative attitude in dealing with the conflict. Nonetheless, no resolution has been reached as community leaders have firmly maintained their position of refusing the landfill project.

1

Resources and Materials

References with URL

[Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano \(FFLA\) \(2015\). Gobiernos locales y conflictividad socioambiental: Buenas prácticas para la transformación de conflictos socioambientales. Quito, Ecuador.](#)

Further information

<https://factbook.ecc-platform.org/conflicts/waste-management-conflict-ecuador>