Human Rights in Suriname:

indigenous rights, rights of nature & rights of future generations

August 2026
UPR-53 Pre-sessions

A coalition of NGO's from Suriname representing indigenous leaders, conservation organizations, human rights defenders.

Suri'yama has ~93% Forest Cover.

We proudly are the Most Forested Country on Earth.

- **7.2M hectares** Conserved Area in the south of Suriname was placed under indigenous self-protection in 2015 called TWTIS (Tarëno Wajana Nature Conservation in South-Suriname in Development).
- Suriname officially protects **2.1M hectares** in 11 Nature Reserves, 1 Nature Park, 4 MUMA's.
- However, **~80%** of these protected areas in the coastal and northern areas overlap (our unrecognized) indigenous and tribal territories.

Indigenous Peoples protect Suriname's nature, while our rights remain unrecognized.

Anno 2026: We have no constitutional recognition and no secure collective land rights.

1975

Suriname's Independence.

1976

Indigenous men & women marched 150km to Paramaribo for the acknowledgment of their rights.

1990

Ikihie was born.

2015

Inter-American Court judgment in the Kaliña and Lokono case required recognition of my Peoples and protection of Indigenous collective territorial rights.

2022 → **2026**

UPR recommendations 2022 not implemented.

50+ years later: **Suriname** is still the only country in the Western Hemisphere that **does not recognize its indigenous peoples**, nor their collective rights.

How can we protect a forest for future generations when the law does not recognize our right to protect our own territory?

“We are left with an unnatural status quo in which we now must play a Western, legal game to regain what - historically and spiritually- has always been ours.”

- Paramount Chief of the Tarëno peoples in South Suriname, Jimmy Toeroemang, in his speech to the Dutch King in December 2025 reflecting on colonial times and today’s effects that need repair.

No FPIC: Decisions about our territories are still made without our meaningful participation

- We were not consulted for the national report.
- **2023**: Organization of Indigenous Suriname (OIS) submitted **ten draft laws** to Parliament on Indigenous rights, Indigenous Traditional Knowledge, Benefit-Sharing over resources, FPIC, etc. *Not discussed / adopted*.
- **2025**: The Association of Indigenous Village Leaders (VIDS) submitted an **FPIC Protocol** to Government and Parliament. *Not discussed / adopted.*
- **May 2023**: **extrajudicial killings** of two indigenous human rights defenders in a conflict over rights on territory.
- **June 2026**: **chemical poisoning** of Saramacca River impacting communities’ water, fishing grounds. *No adequate compensation.*

Our people, our forests, our rivers, our animals, our ancestors and our future generations are interconnected, however, **our natural capital is being destroyed.**

- Suriname's fresh head waters all start in the south, within primary, undisturbed rainforest - **100%** protected by Tarëno and Wayana indigenous peoples.
- Logging and mining concessions remain actively distributed by authorities, overlapping with these territories, and **without FPIC or mapping**.

Meanwhile, Environmental institutions remain severely under-resourced:

- The National Environment Authority operates with **<30%** of its required minimum budget
- Nature Management policy receives **<0.05%** of the national budget (2026)
  - Co-management by indigenous peoples is not legally recognized, and thus not compensated.
  - The Government has ~1 warden per 65,000 ha. forest

And poverty disparity for Indigenous Peoples remains high:

- Basic needs in the interior - drinking water, electricity, education, healthcare – are still lacking for **40%** of indigenous and tribal communities living from nature.

Suriname is entering a new economic era — with offshore oil and gas, continued mining, large-scale agriculture and carbon markets.

Development for whom, decided by whom, and at whose cost?

We ask you to help us safeguard The Future of Our Forefathers

1. Recognize the role of Indigenous Peoples

- Implement the Kaliña and Lokono judgment: recognize Indigenous peoples, secure collective territorial rights.
- Adopt the FPIC framework as binding protocol.
- Ratify the Escazú Agreement

2. Move toward a holistic human-rights framework

- Include the Rights of Nature and rights of future generations in updated nature management legislation
- Acknowledge Indigenous peoples as guardians of nature by recognizing co-management of nature in legislation

Protecting Indigenous rights, nature, and future generations are not three different goals. They are one responsibility.

On behalf of my peoples, my forefathers and my next generations:

THANK YOU.

August 2026
UPR-53 Pre-sessions

A coalition of NGO's from Suriname representing indigenous leaders, conservation organizations, human rights defenders.