



ELAW Annual International Meeting

“We shared different ways to solve problems. Exchanging these experiences helps us understand how communities in other parts of the world are defending their rights. This strengthens our network and our fight for human rights.”

Saitoti Parmelo
Association for Law and
Advocacy for Pastoralists
Tanzania



Saitoti Parmelo

**May 16-20, 2016
San Miguel de los Bancos, Ecuador**

ELAW Annual International Meetings build the bonds that make our network strong. Participants in ELAW Annual Meetings work together to meet the challenge of protecting our climate, defending critical ecosystems, and giving communities a voice in building a sustainable future.

Courageous advocates from around the world gathered in Quito and the cloud forest of Ecuador for ELAW's 2016 Annual International Meeting. Environmental defenders from 19 countries shared successes, strategized about new challenges, and inspired each other.

Two substantial earthquakes rattled the meeting site at Hosteria Sapos y Ranas in San Miguel de los Bancos, but did not stop participants from collaborating at an outstanding meeting.

Longtime ELAW partner Manolo Morales and his organization, Corporacion de Gestion y Derecho Ambiental (ECOLEX), hosted the meeting and did a great job. Pushing past challenges such as securing visas, tracking down lost luggage, and overcoming power outages, they took great care of all visitors.

We enjoyed learning about environmental successes: strong progress toward meeting Germany's goal of obtaining 80% of its energy from renewable sources by 2050; communities in Guatemala asserting their collective rights to prevent mining abuses; Mexican advocates protecting free-flowing rivers from short-sighted hydro projects, and more.

We also heard about new challenges: coastal communities in Honduras being forced to relocate because of rising seas; China's new law aimed at making it more difficult for organizations outside China to collaborate with Chinese partners; and the growing threat of attacks on ELAW partners around the world.

Participants worked hard to replicate successful strategies and collaborate for greater impact. We were inspired by seeing that in all corners of the globe, skilled and committed advocates are working to build a greener future. By linking across borders and working together, we become stronger and win more victories.

Thanks again to ECOLEX and participants in ELAW's 2016 Annual International Meeting!