



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release No.: 071702-1
Date: July 17, 2002
Pages: Two

Ecuadorian Environmental Grantee Takes U.N. Prize

ARLINGTON, Va. — Fondo Ecuatoriano Pupulorum Progressio (FEPP), an IAF grantee, was among eight recipients honored with the United Nations Environment Programme's Global 500 Award for 2002. The presentation to FEPP, six other organizations and an individual, all now inscribed on the Global 500 honor roll, was made June 4 in Shenzhen, China.

“We are pleased and proud,” said a FEPP spokesperson of the award, “but the credit belongs to the indigenous, Afro-Ecuadorian and farming communities who have supported our work, and to the institutions with whom we have been able to coordinate our activities.”

The UNEP's award citation emphasized FEPP's achievements in conservation and development in Ecuador's Andean and tropical zones. In collaboration with local residents, FEPP has reforested, pruned and inventoried thousands of acres; managed hundreds of other forest projects; developed additional land for

cultivation by low-income residents and for agro-forestry; constructed terraces to improve and recover eroded soil; and effectively managed water resources. FEPP has also assisted Ecuador's Ministry of the Environment in defining boundaries within park lands and in resolving land disputes.

“FEPP has certainly been a ground breaking and effective organization in Ecuador,” said Charles Kleymeyer, formerly of the IAF and now senior fellow at the Center for the Support of Native Lands. “It is known widely for its high levels of commitment and innovation, its deep respect for grassroots groups, and its participatory and responsive approach. FEPP is a treasure and a resource that benefits all levels of Ecuadorian society by its tireless work with the disadvantaged.”

Between 1991 and 1995, when Kleymeyer was the IAF representative in charge of Ecuador projects, FEPP received IAF grants worth \$178,000 toward its efforts to work through 50 grassroots organizations at improving income and marketing opportunities for artisans and farmers. This year, Camari, an independent offshoot of FEPP, was awarded \$300,000 for a marketing project reaching 140 grassroots organizations.

Created by Congress in 1969 to help improve conditions for the poor in Latin America and the Caribbean, the IAF has awarded more than 4,300 grants to self-help projects over the past three decades. Many of them have an environmental component.

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