The long-awaited national miners protest began on March 20 in Lima and numerous other departments in western Peru. A similar protest for Madre de Dios began March 24, although it also included various other non-mining related issues. As usual, protestors closed down major roads. Key demands from protestors included extension of the April 19 formalization deadline, repeal of decrees targeting illegal mining, legalization of small-scale river mining, assistance with overlapping land claims, and a new mining law.

Top government officials, including President Humala, repeatedly stated that the deadline would not be extended as it had been during previous mining protests and April 19 would stand.

However, the government did ultimately offer a compromise: miners enrolled in the formalization process before April 19 will be given 120 days to finalize the process with government assistance and not be treated as illegals. Thus, instead of having to complete the formalization process by April 19, miners now must only have started the process.

Signed agreements were reached between the government and mining representatives of six departments: Arequipa, Apurímac, Ayacucho, La Libertad, Cajamarca, and Puno. As of the time of this writing there was still no agreement with miners in Madre de Dios. The agreements seemed to hinge on the compromise noted above and the saneamiento process noted below. Miners still protesting in the streets denounced the agreements.

The next big step in the formalization process is a phase referred to as “saneamiento.” This phase will begin the day after the formalization deadline (ie. April 20th) and is expected to extend into 2016. Saneamiento lacks a direct translation in English, but implies legal ordering and restructuring. The government will provide details in an official strategy document (Estrategia de Saneamiento del Proceso de Formalización) expected to be made public on March 31.

Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental SPDA (a Peruvian law & policy NGO) offered brief recommendations for the process, including the need to establish clear steps, deadlines, and consequences for missing deadlines within the saneamiento process, greater support for regional government, creating roles for national government institutions beyond the Environment Ministry, mechanisms for resolving overlapping land claims, and limiting the process to the 70,000 miners already inscribed, among others.

We will detail the saneamiento process in the next news update.

The Puno region is Peru’s most advanced in implementing its formalization process. They will soon have the first two examples of miners completing the entire formalization process, and have another six on the way. Puno also has the first known examples of approved IGACs (13 approved), which are the specialized environmental impact studies required by the formalization process.

Peru is planning new regulations for heavy equipment used in mining activities, including possibly inserting GPS units in the machines.
- A new Supreme Resolution allows military intervention in mining protests until April 20, 2014.¹⁷
- Peru and Switzerland signed an agreement to promote the Better Gold Initiative, which appears to be a project linking responsible miners with Swiss buyers.¹⁸

**ACA contact for Comments/Questions:**
Rachel Tennant <rtennent@amazonconservation.org>

² [http://diariocorreo.pe/ultimas/noticias/8883237/edicion+punomineros-inician-desde-hoy-marcha-de-los-cuat](http://diariocorreo.pe/ultimas/noticias/8883237/edicion+punomineros-inician-desde-hoy-marcha-de-los-cuat)
¹³ [http://www.actualidadambiental.pe/?p=22043](http://www.actualidadambiental.pe/?p=22043)
¹⁵ [http://www.observatorioamazonia.pe/noticias/14/03/18/drem-cuatro-mil-operadores-mineros-punto-de-formalizarse-en-puno](http://www.observatorioamazonia.pe/noticias/14/03/18/drem-cuatro-mil-operadores-mineros-punto-de-formalizarse-en-puno)