

## Amazon Oil Drilling Approved

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — Lawmakers in Ecuador have authorized the extraction of oil from Yasuni National Park, a pristine Amazon reserve. After a 10-hour debate, a loyalist congress approved President Rafael Correa's plan by a 108 to 25 margin, with four legislators absent. In August Correa announced that he was abandoning a unique plan to persuade rich countries to pay Ecuador not to drill in the Yasuni, saying wealthy nations had failed to pledge enough money.

Environmentalists had hailed the initiative when it was announced in 2007, saying Correa was setting a precedent in the fight against global warming by lowering the high cost to poor countries of preserving the environment. Correa had sought \$3.6 billion in contributions to maintain a moratorium on Yasuni drilling, but he said Ecuador managed to raise just \$13 million.

It's unclear when drilling would begin.

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