

## Brazil Launches Popular Campaign Against Biopiracy

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The development of integrated policies and activities to combat biopiracy is the purpose of a technical cooperation agreement signed yesterday in the Ministry of Environment by the Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (Ibama), the Federal Police Department, and the Brazilian Intelligence Agency (Abin).

The Ibama will launch a consciousness-raising campaign on the harmful consequences of biopiracy. The campaign will include the distribution of printed materials in universities, schools, and airports.

The animal picked to be the symbol of the campaign is the *Phyllomedusa oreades* frog, which is mainly green in color, is only encountered in the Central Highlands, and whose skin contains an active ingredient with the potential to fight the *Trypanosoma cruzi*, the parasite that causes Chagas' disease. It was chosen as a form of symbolic denouncement, since the ingredient has been patented abroad.

The ceremony also included the publication of a decree regulating the penalties for illicit activities committed against the genetic patrimony and associated traditional knowledge.

According to the Biological Diversity Convention, the use of genetic resources presupposes substantiated prior consent and the division of benefits.

However, although it has been in force for ten years, countries with great biodiversity, such as Brazil, continue to be victims of non-authorized use of their genetic patrimony.

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