



The roads cutting through the Amazon rain forest are lined with signs encouraging people to protect Peru's natural resources and take care of the environment, but people aren't sure why the government posts them anymore.

Many rivers in Peru run orange with pollution from illegal gold mining, and trees were cut away to make room for sifting towers and excavators.

Peru, the largest gold producer in Latin America and the sixth largest in the world, has long struggled with illegal gold mining. Thousands of small, unchecked operations extracting gold from the Amazon are responsible for nearly 200 square miles of deforestation and mercury poisoning to the water so severe that several regions declared a state of emergency last year.

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