

PROVIDING A LEGAL SHIELD FOR A WARMING PLANET



CENTRO POR LA JUSTICIA Y EL DERECHO INTERNACIONAL
CÈNTER FOR JUSTICE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW
CENTRO PELA JUSTIÇA E O DIREITO INTERNACIONAL

The Issue

In the past five years, **Latin America and the Caribbean** have faced **record heat waves**, severe droughts, and extreme weather events.

In 2023 alone, climate-related disasters affected around **11 million people**, resulting in **over \$20 billion in economic losses**.

The Issue

By 2050, **millions are expected to be displaced** due to climate change, driven by rising sea levels, extreme weather, droughts, wildfires, and other extreme weather events.

The **climate emergency** has heightened the risks for environmental defenders who protect vital ecosystems and resources.

Our response:

We integrate *human rights* with *climate action*

No effective solution to the climate emergency can ignore the compounded human rights violations it imposes on vulnerable populations.

At the same time...

Human rights norms, standards, and accountability mechanisms offer a robust framework for exploring solutions. They invite **diverse, interdisciplinary voices** into the conversation and help create institutional pathways for more equitable, fair, and inclusive action plans.

The climate emergency is a human rights issue, and CEJIL has the tools and expertise to help address it.

Our focus:

Defending *The Planet's Protectors*

In 2023, LATAM
accounted for

82%

▶ of global killings of environmental defenders, with Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, and Honduras among the top five countries affected.

CEJIL represents

+10.000

▶ human rights defenders and 14 at-risk communities in national and international proceedings.

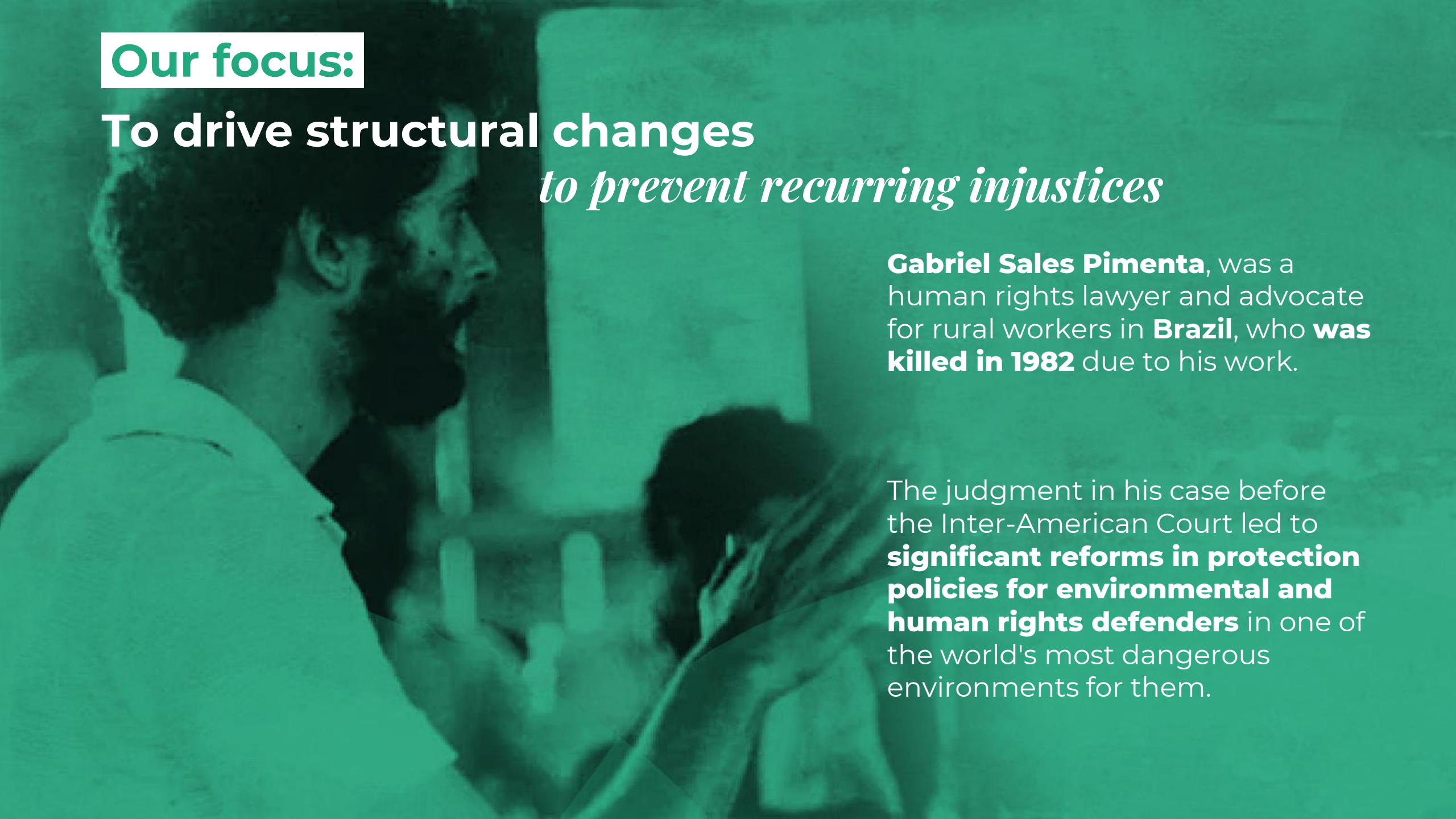
Our efforts have resulted in **protective measures, criminal prosecutions of violence perpetrators, land restitution for Indigenous peoples, and policy reforms** that strengthen accountability for environmental human rights defenders.

"My mother is
a seed that has
multiplied."

Bertita Zúñiga

Daughter of Berta Cáceres
Leader whose case is represented by
CEJIL and COPINH



A man with a beard and dark hair is shown in profile, speaking into a microphone at a podium. He is wearing a light-colored shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with other people and structures.

Our focus:

To drive structural changes
to prevent recurring injustices

Gabriel Sales Pimenta, was a human rights lawyer and advocate for rural workers in **Brazil**, who **was killed in 1982** due to his work.

The judgment in his case before the Inter-American Court led to **significant reforms in protection policies for environmental and human rights defenders** in one of the world's most dangerous environments for them.

“The Brazilian State recognizes that **Gabriel Sales Pimenta was a courageous human rights defender and his struggle side by side with rural workers in our country is also the fight of all Brazilians”**

**Public Acknowledgement
of State Responsibility by
the Brazilian State, July 2024**



Our focus:

Indigenous *Protectors of the Earth*

Indigenous communities are crucial in combating climate change, drawing on their extensive knowledge of sustainable practices and land stewardship. Their traditional ecological wisdom and commitment to biodiversity make them essential allies in this global fight.



CEJIL defends
Indigenous peoples
across Latin America,
including Brazil,
Colombia, Chile, Ecuador,
Honduras, Nicaragua,
and Paraguay.

We focus on securing
land rights, promoting
self-determination and
equal participation,
advocating for essential
services, and fostering
community resilience.



Indigenous communities supported by CEJIL include:

- The Sarayaku in **Ecuador**
- Yakye Axa in **Paraguay**
- Siona in **Colombia**
- Mayangna in **Nicaragua**
- Miskitu in **Nicaragua and Honduras**
- The Lenca people and the Tolupán Tribe in **Honduras**
- Yanomami in **Venezuela**

Our focus:

Amplifying Voices *for the Planet*

We actively promote the **participation of Indigenous communities, women activists, rural populations, and youth leaders** in legal and advocacy strategies, ensuring historically marginalized groups are heard and represented.



Children and young activists bring fresh perspectives and urgency regarding the impacts of climate change on their futures, highlighting their potential for leadership. We protect their voices through participatory processes, training programs, and protections.

Journalism is essential for sharing human stories, speaking truth to power, and fostering empathy. Our **"Clima en Movimiento"** project collaborates with journalists in Central America and Mexico to enhance reporting on climate-induced migration from a human rights perspective.

This initiative culminated in a story that earned the prestigious **Panama National Journalism Prize** in 2023.



Photo: Tova Katzman



We promote the **integration of art and human rights** to share stories about the region's territories and the people who defend them. Discover more about *“Territorios”*.

Our focus:

Ensuring that international law serves as
a powerful tool for change.

Advisory Opinion

In support of Chile and Colombia, we drafted a historic request for an **Advisory Opinion from the Inter-American Court on Human Rights.**

Climate Pollutants

Our innovative interdisciplinary initiative tackles **short-lived climate pollutants, particularly methane emissions.**

Information and consultation

Access to justice and accountability require information. **Ensuring the right to information and consultation is central to our strategy.**

THANK YOU



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