



## Researchers from around the world call for an end to the persecution of ayahuasca in Spain

-A hundred researchers, anthropologists and human rights activists mobilise against indiscriminate arrests in Spain.

-Ayahuasca is not a threat to public health and ayahuasca religions are not criminal organisations".

-Ayahuasca has numerous benefits for public and social health, as numerous scientific studies have shown.

**Madrid, 16 January 2023**

The repeated cases of **police raids on ayahuasca ceremonies** are part of an **intentional campaign of "fear, mistrust and misinformation"** aimed at calling into question an ancestral practice that offers numerous benefits for its participants, benefits repeatedly supported by science.

The harassment of Amazonian drink facilitators in Spain has raised a wave of rejection among the international scientific community. More than a hundred leading scholars, psychologists, anthropologists and activists have endorsed the article/manifesto published by the Chacruna Institute and signed by **Bia Labate, Henrique Fernandez Antunes, Galuber Loures de Assis and Clancy Cavnar** with the title ['A Call for Public Support Against the Current Demonisation of Ayahuasca Practices in Spain'](#).

Among the signatories of the manifesto are **Rick Doblin**, founder of MAPS; **David Bronner**, CEO of Dr. Bronner; anthropologist **Edward MacRae**, leading scholar of the Santo Daime cult; **Helle Kaasik**, Ayahuasca researcher; Doctor of Pharmacology **José Carlos Bouso**; psychiatrist and writer **Ben Sessa** and Spanish researcher **Carlos Suárez Álvarez**.

The arrests of ayahuasca facilitators in Spain "have reignited the debate about the use of the brew in the country, led by **sensationalist media coverage** that often ignores the available scientific data. The accusations are the same: ayahuasca groups are cults that use dangerous drugs to manipulate their followers (or 'targets'), commonly

described as fragile and gullible people, for financial gain," according to the Chacruna article.

"Amid this scenario of arrests, prosecutions, sensationalist reports and the spread of fear, mistrust and misinformation, **it is necessary to approach the issue judiciously, setting aside prejudices and preconceptions.** It is crucial at a time like this to analyse the accumulated knowledge on the **religious use of ayahuasca**, as well as to understand the contexts in which successful regulation of the drink has occurred, creating models of public policy that can be studied and adopted in other socio-cultural contexts".

### **Crowdfunding campaign**

In order to protect the good name of ayahuasca from the attacks it is suffering in Spain, the **Plantaforma para la Defensa de la Ayahuasca**, with the support of **ICEERS** and **Ayahuasca Defence Fund (ADF)**, has launched a crowdfunding campaign to finance a series of documentaries about ayahuasca and the legal defence of its good name in the courts.

<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/ayudanos-a-defender-la-ayahuasca>

For more information:

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**Plantaforma para la Defensa de la Ayahuasca**

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