Who are environmental defenders?
Anyone who takes action to protect environmental or land rights. Many environmental defenders are forced to take a stand to protect their livelihoods and ancestral lands.

Who is threatening them?
The industries driving the attacks include mining operations, agribusiness, logging projects, and water dam construction. While a culture of impunity has made it difficult to identify those responsible for the violence, criminal gangs, soldiers, local police, and paramilitary forces are typically behind the most violent threats to environmental defenders.

Why have threats to environmental defenders been increasing in Peru?
In the last few decades, Peru has become one of the world's largest producers of silver, zinc, cooper, tin, and gold. While extraction practices have increased, most of the benefits have gone to transnational corporations leaving local peoples to deal with the externalities of pollution, contaminated water, destroyed agriculture land, and deforestation. Pro-extractive policies have only exacerbated the situation by promoting and financing the transnational mining industry through favorable tax conditions and concession irrevocability. As environmental defenders protest the dispossession of their land, extractive industries have increasingly exercised force to protect their profits.

Among violent conflicts, 68% were mining-related.

Methodology
Conflicts: Using data from Environmental Justice Atlas, I geocoded conflicts points from the last 30 years with data on the type of conflict, the level of violence, and the involvement of indigenous groups. I used Kernel Density analysis to visually represent the regions with the most environmental conflict.

Mining Concessions: Using data from Peruvians Instituto Geológico Minero y Metalúrgico (INGEMMET) I used a spatial join to sum the total concession hectares of each province. A concession is a legal claim to a land area and its natural resources.

Protected Areas: Using data from the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) I used a spatial query to select conflict points within 20 km of protected areas.

Sources
Created by: Evelyn Bellew, Tufts University, UEP232 Intro to GIS, May 6, 2019.
Sources: Environmental Justice Atlas, Open Witness, Instituto Geológico Minero y Metalúrgico, World Database on Protected Areas, Tufts M Drive, and Wikipedia Commons (for images)

Projection and Coordinate System: Peru96/WGS UTM zone 18S.