

DRYADES FILMS
AND LOLENKO FILMS
PRESENT

"It's not drought, It's looting."

OJOS DE AGUA

**FREEING THE WATERS
OF CHILE**

A FILM BY

MARION ESNAULT AND MARCELO LARA

A DRYADES FILMS & LOLENKO FILMS CO-PRODUCTION IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH USHUAIA TV AND BOUTY BLANC, WITH THE SUPPORT OF LA RÉGION PROVENCE ALPES CÔTE D'AZUR IN PARTENARIAT WITH CNC, PROCIPEP-SOCIÉTÉ DES PRODUCTEURS ANGOA, FONDATION FRANCE LIBERTÉS-DANIELLE BANTIER-BRAND, FSCAL, SPANISH PRODUCTION AND ALL THE CONTRIBUTORS, PROJECT PRESENT BY DOK LEIPZIG 2022, MARKET 2022, SUNDAY SIDE GLOBAL PITCH 2023, DIOS BARCELONA 2024, INTERNATIONAL SALES: JAVA FILMS

PRODUCED BY MARION ESNAULT & MARCELO LARA • OJOS DE AGUA: FREING THE WATERS OF CHILE IN PART WITH ALEJANDRO CORTES ADVANCIO, ANAANA OLIVARES MIRANDA, MARCELO LARA, MARION ESNAULT, MARCELO LARA, PRODUCED BY JUAN LUIS RAMÍREZ, EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS AND CO-PRODUCERS TO JUAN GALIUT ALARCÓN, EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS THOMAS LAUTER, EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ADRIEN VON NAGEL, EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CHLOE LOBB, EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ANTOINETTE PRADALLE, EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CÉRICO PRUD'HOME, EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MARION ESNAULT, MARCELO LARA, PRODUCED BY CLAUDE BARON & ÉLÉONORE GROSSINOT





LOGLINE

In Chile, Alejo and Ivanna are fighting to secure access to water for their communities in their valley.

SUMMARY

In Chile, drought and water scarcity have been hitting hard for more than 15 years. While climate change plays a role, the main cause is the privatization of water, inherited from the Pinochet's Constitution and its neoliberal model. In the midst of political upheavals, sparked by the 2019 social revolt, Alejo and Ivanna fight to secure access to drinking water and to end the takeover of water resources by agribusiness and mining industry.

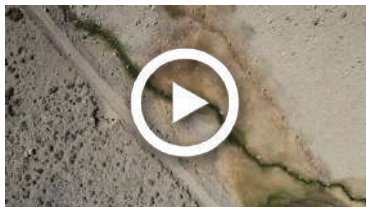
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TRAILER



FILM CLIPS



CLIP 1
Water, a private good



CLIP 2
Cleaning the canals



CLIP 3
Water at the Assembly



TECHNICAL SHEET

Title: *Ojos de Agua, Freeing the waters of Chile*

Documentary | 65 minutes | France, Chili | 4K - 2K - HD | 2025

Featuring: Alejandro Cortés Arancibia, Ivanna Olivares Miranda

Written & Directed by: Marion Esnault & Marcelo Lara

Produced by: Claire Babany & Eléonore Boissinot (Dryades Films)

Co-produced by: Marion Esnault & Marcelo Lara (Lolenko Films)

International Sales: Java Films

Cinematography & Sound: Marion Esnault, Marcelo Lara

Drone & Additional Footage: Juan Luis Muñoz

Editing & Sound Design: Galut Alarcón

Original Music: Cergio Prudencio

Sound Editing: Chloé Ebro

Color Grading: Adrien Von Nagel

Titles & Credits: Thomas Laufer

Mixing: Antoine Pradalet

© Dryades Films – Lolenko Films – Ushuaïa TV – 8 Mont Blanc – 2025

A Dryades Films production in co-production with Lolenko Films, Ushuaïa TV, and 8 Mont Blanc, with the participation of the CNC, with the support of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region in partnership with the CNC, Procirep – Société des producteurs, Angoa, the France Libertés – Danielle Mitterrand Foundation, the Proarti endowment fund and private contributors.

The project was pitched at DOK Leipzig Co-Pro Market 2022, Sunny Side Global Pitch 2023, and DocsBarcelona 2024.

International Sales: Java Films.



FILM PRESENTATION

In Chile, drought and water scarcity hit hard for the past 15 years. Water is treated as private property — it can be bought, sold, and rented. Established by the 1980 Constitution under Pinochet's regime, this system handed over the majority of water rights to agro-exporters and mining corporations.

In 2019, a major social uprising sparked a historic process: 155 citizens were elected to draft a new Constitution. "Free the waters!" was one of the key demands driving the mobilization.

Against this backdrop, the documentary follows two water defenders from the Andean valleys of north-central Chile over four years (2021–2024). Ivanna, an elected member of the Constitutional Convention, advocates for a fairer distribution of water. Alejo, a farmer, faces worsening drought and the abuses of large-scale agribusiness.

Ivanna has been fighting since childhood against the monopolization of water in her valley by one of Chile's largest copper mines. In 2021, she was elected to help draft a new Constitution that included a proposal to de-privatize water sources. However, the rejection of this Constitution in the September 2022 referendum came as a shock. In response, Ivanna chose to focus her efforts at the local level, within her Diaguita Indigenous community.

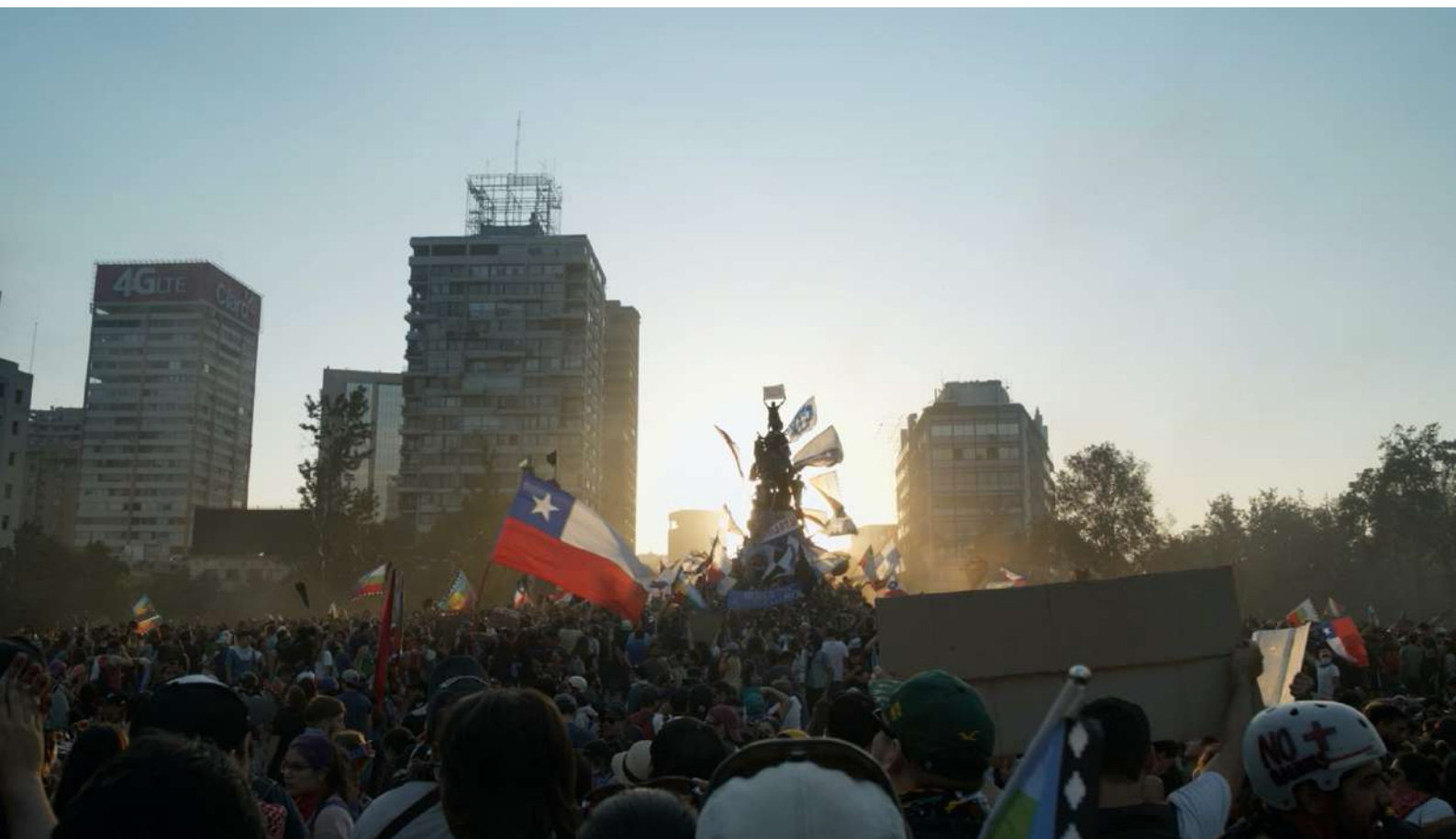
In her fight, she has a steadfast ally: Alejo, a farmer in his fifties. While he loses his crops, neighboring agribusinesses continue to flood their export-bound fruit fields using giant reservoirs. Furthermore, they control the local water committees that manage access to

water. As the valley runs dry and water trucks become the new normal, Alejo joins forces with his community to resist the agro-industry and search for alternative ways to access water.

We, the filmmakers — Marion and Marcelo — met in Valparaíso in October 2019, as the social revolt was erupting. Marion is a French journalist specializing in environmental and social issues. Marcelo is a Chilean documentary filmmaker and a member of the Diaguita Indigenous community.

With this film, we trace the journey from the hopes sparked in 2019 to the grounded, local forms of resistance that have taken root today. The fight led by small farmers, villagers and Indigenous communities—those hit hardest by drought and water privatization—is both emblematic and urgent. Chile stands as a powerful example of the environmental struggles already impacting many regions worldwide. The resistance led by our protagonists, and their vision of nature, offer inspiration for challenges faced across the globe.

Marion Esnault & Marcelo Lara



INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTORS

How did you meet?

Marion: We met on the streets of Valparaíso during the social uprising in October 2019. Like many journalists, we were covering the protests. Every day at 2 p.m., store shutters would come down, crowds would gather, and clashes with security forces would begin. This routine lasted for weeks and eventually led to the unprecedented constitutional process aiming to replace Pinochet's Constitution. Amid this upheaval, we had many conversations about politics, Chilean society, and its neoliberal model. The issue of water kept coming back, and when the idea of co-directing a documentary came up, water emerged as an obvious theme for both of us.

Marcelo: During the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, we were in lockdown for twelve months. Time stood still, and ideas were flowing. Chile was writing a new Constitution, a progressive president was about to be elected, and we asked ourselves: what could we contribute to this new chapter? We had a strong desire to document this historic moment, and that's when we began shaping the project that would become *Ojos de Agua*. Then we simply picked up the camera and started capturing these pivotal moments in the country's history.

Why this film?

Marion: There are many reasons, as always. But the very first conversation I had with Marcelo, in the middle of tear gas during the uprising, was about documentaries. I remember talking about Patricio Guzmán, who had just released *The Cordillera of Dreams*. Marcelo shared his experience working on the documentary series *Frutos del País* for Chilean television, and I spoke about my own desire to move into audiovisual documentary filmmaking.

Marcelo: For over ten years, I've been shocked to see that the river where I used to swim as a child is now just a trickle. The main culprits are large agricultural operations that have set up in the valley and export 80% of their produce abroad. Thousands of villagers receive drinking water from tanker trucks all year round, while across the road, big farms irrigate their lush avocado plantations. It's infuriating. Like many countries, Chile is destroying its countryside and exporting its increasingly scarce water. That harsh reality motivated me to make this film.

Marion: I came to Chile in 2019 to cover the Climate COP (which was eventually moved to Madrid because of the social uprising!). I was working as a freelance journalist, reporting on the socio-environmental disasters caused by Chile's extractivist model. Water mismanagement and drought were key topics. Chile is known for developing a unique system



in which river water has private owners. The main water rights holders are large-scale farmers who sustain the agro-export model. To support this water-hungry model, Chile built massive water reservoirs 20 years ago. Now, the rivers and aquifers have run dry. This is the path that countries like France are considering, but our film clearly shows it's a dangerous example not to follow. It felt essential to raise awareness on this global issue.

Tell us about the title: *Ojos de Agua, Freeing the waters of Chile* ?

Marcelo: In Chile, an *Ojo de Agua* is a natural spring, a place where water surfaces from the earth, often round in shape. They're common in the semi-arid valleys of the Andes, where we shot the documentary. At first, we used the singular form. Then we switched to plural, because both of our protagonists keep their eyes fixed on how water is distributed and fight for fairer access. They are two vigilant pairs of eyes: *Ojos de Agua*, which means *The Eyes of Water*.

Marion: "*Free the waters of Chile*" is a slogan often used in water rights demonstrations in Chile.

How did you meet your main characters, Ivanna and Alejo?

Marcelo: Alejo lives in the Limarí Valley, where I grew up and where my family still lives. We reached out to several key people in the region, asking if they knew anyone active in the fight for water rights. Alejo's name came up again and again, he was known as one of the few farmers standing up to the big landowners who control the water. We went to meet him at his small home, perched 1,300 meters high in a remote side valley. We felt an immediate



connection with this humble, thoughtful man who was deeply knowledgeable about water issues. A few weeks later, we returned with our camera for the first round of filming.

Marion: We wanted a duo of protagonists—a man and a woman. In reference to the Andean cosmovision, where everything exists in duality. Since we had already chosen Alejo, we began looking for a woman. To anchor the film in the historic process Chile was undergoing, we decided to find a member of the Constitutional Assembly—an independent woman from civil society who had come to the Assembly to defend water rights. In Chile, they are often called "water defenders." Among them, Ivanna immediately stood out. A 30-year-old woman from the indigenous Diaguita people, she was representing the very same region where Alejo lived. We conducted a short 15-minute interview with her in the garden of the Congress where she was serving. Marcelo and I left that day convinced we had found our second main character.

Where are they now, in 2025?

Marcelo: Alejo still lives and works on his land, surrounded by his goats, dogs, pisco vines, and fruit trees. He continues to meet with his community to defend their interests against the agro-exporters in the valley. The drought persists, and as summer approaches, Alejo keeps searching for ways to secure enough water for basic human needs.

Marion: Ivanna is still living in the Choapa Valley and now works for the regional government. She is responsible for implementing a program aimed at addressing the water crisis. She

remains as committed as ever to transforming Chile's water model, but now works on a more local level.

How has the situation evolved in Chile and the valley since the end of filming?

Marion: Sadly, not much has changed. The drought is more present than ever, rivers are still dry, and the massive water reservoirs owned by large landowners remain full to the brim. The water governance system—where the powerful decide how water is distributed throughout the valley—remains intact. Yet Alejo stays optimistic, continuing to defend his community's rights with the persistent hope that change will come.

Marcelo : Politically, the left is still in power, but President Gabriel Boric's progressive government has struggled to implement major social reforms. Presidential elections are taking place at the end of 2025. The idea of a new Constitution now feels far behind us. It seems like the public wants to move on. It's become a kind of collective bad memory. This rejection of our recent history, and of our society's deep-rooted problems, makes our film all the more relevant, I believe. Because a nation must confront its issues in order to resolve them. And I truly believe that documentaries are vital tools for understanding the past and shaping the future.



KEY FACTS

Chile, the Planet's Freshwater Reservoir

Chile is a mountainous country stretching 4,300 kilometers along the Andes, home to 26,000 glaciers — that is, 80% of all those recorded in South America — making it one of the main freshwater reserves on the planet.

The emergence of a “mega-drought”

According to Chile's Center for Climate Research (CR2), “since 2010, the territory has experienced a rainfall deficit of around 30%. The temporal persistence and spatial extent of the current drought constitute an unprecedented phenomenon in the country's history. This event, described as a ‘mega-drought,’ also has no equivalent over the past millennium, according to climate reconstructions based on tree-ring growth.” (Source : [CR2](#))

A legal framework inherited from the dictatorship

The 1980 Constitution, cornerstone of the neoliberal model established during Pinochet's dictatorship (1973–1990), states that “*individual rights over water (...) grant their holders ownership of it*” (Art. 19, No. 24). The following year, the Water Code (1981) specified how this principle would be applied. These rights were then granted free of charge and in perpetuity, mainly to the mining and agricultural sectors, giving rise to a regime that still structures water management and access in Chile today.

The reform of the Water Code

In 2022, a reform of the Water Code finally recognized the priority of the human right to water over other uses (agricultural, industrial, etc.): “*Access to drinking water and sanitation is an essential and inalienable human right that must be guaranteed by the State.*” The implementation of this reform in some territories remains to be carried out.

Additional sources

[OECD Environmental Performance Reviews: Chile 2024](#)

[Law No. 21.435 \(2022\) reforming the Water Code](#)

[USDA FAS – Modernization of Chile's Water Code \(2022\)](#)

[Blanco, Donoso, Camus Gayan – Water Conflicts in Chile: Have We Learned Anything From Colonial Times?](#)

THE DIRECTORS



Marion Esnault, French co-director, is a journalist based in South America, specializing in socio-environmental issues. She works in both radio (RFI, RTS, RTBF) and francophone print media (La Croix, Reporterre, Le Temps). Marion traveled to Chile in October 2019 to cover COP25, which had been relocated from Santiago to Madrid due to the social uprising — and she never left. *Ojos de Agua: Freeing the waters of Chile* is her first film.



Marcelo Lara, Chilean co-director, was born in Chile in 1979 and grew up under the dictatorship. He studied journalism at the Catholic University of Valparaíso and documentary filmmaking at the Escuela de Cine de Barcelona. Marcelo has directed over a hundred documentaries for two major Chilean TV series, *Al Sur del Mundo* and *Fruto del País*. With *Ojos de Agua*, he wanted to reach a more international audience with a subject that is especially close to his heart.

FESTIVALS

[Festival Atmosphères](#), Courbevoie:

- Friday, October 10, 2025, at 6:00 PM, Cinéma Abel Gance

[Festival Le Grand Bivouac](#), Festival du cinéma documentaire et du livre d'Albertville:

- Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 4:00 PM
- Sunday, October 19, 2025, at 1:30 PM

[Festival Traces de Vie](#), Clermont-Ferrand:

- Friday, November 14, 2025, at 8:00 PM (special screening)
- Monday, November 24, 2025, at 6:00 PM

BROADCAST DATES

Ushuaïa TV, february 2026
8 Mont Blanc, during 2026

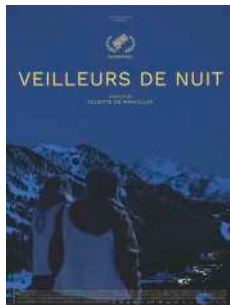


Dryades Films is a French production company founded in 2016 by Claire Babany, Eléonore Boissinot & Arié Chamouni, based in Sancerre - Paris – Marseille, France. We produce creative documentaries for the cinema, web & TV, focused on society, culture & human interest. We are keen on working with International partners and our previous experiences in coproduction with various countries comforted us in our ambition to produce documentaries across the borders.

Our Filmography includes:

- **SIRENS OF DIEPPE** by Nicolas Engel and Nicolas Birkenstock, broadcasted on France Télévisions, Fipadoc 2025, CIRCOM European Regional Program Diversity Award 2025, sales: Beliane,
- **NIGHTWATCHERS** by Juliette de Marcillac, 2023 Visions du Réel Opening film, IDFA Best of Fests, French cinemas release by Juste Doc August 2025, sales: Mediawan Rights,
- **THE PATHAN SISTERS** by Eléonore Boissinot, broadcasted on France Télévisions, RTS, Al Jazeera Documentary Channel, Premio Zonta Club Award at the 2023 Locarno Film Festival Critics' Week, Etats Généraux du Documentaire de Lussas, Corsica.doc, Documed, sales: Blooming Docs/ Cinephil,
- **PALESTINIAN WOMEN, A GUIDE TO CULTURAL RESISTANCE** by Mariette Auvray, broadcasted on LCP, ORF, DW, BBC Arabic, Figra Festival 2021, Ciné- Palestine, Documed Tunisia, sales: Beliane,
- **RADIO CONGO** by Philippe Ayme, broadcasted in 2019 on French national TV Public Sénat and TV5 Monde in 2023, Namur International French-language Film Festival, Saint-Louis du Sénégal International Documentary Festival, awarded at Traces de vie, sales: Beliane,
- **OUT**, by Denis Parrot released in cinemas by KMBO in 2019, Sheffield Doc/Fest, Busan, Warsaw, Fipadoc and Etoile de la Scam 2020 awards, broadcasted on Canal+, Ciné+, MDR/ARTE, LCP, RTS, RTBF, BETV, Amazon Prime... sales: Ampersand.

More on: <https://www.dryadesfilms.com/>



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