

Bolivia probes deaths of 35 endangered condors

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Bolivian authorities are investigating the death of 35 condors, who were believed to be poisoned and are part of an endangered species

Bolivian environmental authorities on Sunday announced an investigation into the apparent poisoning of 35 Andean condors in a rural

community, one of the most devastating such cases for the endangered species.

"It is an irreparable injury to our nature and the [species](#)," the environment and water ministry said.

Deputy environment minister Magin Herrera confirmed 35 dead condors had been discovered in the [rural community](#) of Laderas Norte, in the southern department of Tarija.

"This loss is extremely serious, because we are talking about condors that could represent 0.5 percent of the world's condor population," said Diego Mendez, a biologist linked to a raptor research program, according to the news site Pagina Siete.

The massive Andean condor (*Vultur gryphus*), which calls the South American mountain range home, has a 3.5-meter (11.5-foot) wingspan, making it one of the largest flying birds.

Globally, there are some 6,700 condors but numbers are declining. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classifies the [condor](#) as "near threatened" on its watch list.

Authorities believe the birds were poisoned, possibly several days ago, though it is not clear if the species had been targeted.

"There is a probability of poisoning directed at them or other animals, but since condors are scavengers, they still succumb," Mendez said.

This is the largest case of its kind known in Bolivia and against an [endangered species](#).

"We condemn the act, we want it to be investigated. It is an act that hurts

us. In this department, condors live and coexist with the (rural) communities without any problem," Tarija governor Adrian Oliva told reporters.

The case was initially reported via social media.

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