

ANNEX 1B

Sustainable development in the local communities and conservation of the biological diversity in the Nanay-Pucacuro Biological Corridor (western Peruvian Amazon)

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Background and justification

The Peruvian Amazon Research Institute IIAP is impelling a long-term strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity of the western Peruvian Amazon by presenting a proposal to establish a biological corridor in the Nanay-Pucacuro region. The corridor would introduce a network of areas with different levels of protection (protected forests areas, communal forestry areas and reserves of restricted communal use). The proposed *Nanay-Pucacuro Biological Corridor* is situated between the *Allpahuayo-Mishana National Reserve* (close to the city of Iquitos) and the Peruvian-Ecuadorean border. The establishment of a Biological Corridor would help to secure long-term usufruct rights of the indigenous and riparian communities of the biologically unique Nanay-Pucacuro region.

The build-up of the Corridor would strengthen the newly established (31 May, 2004) *Pucacuro Reserved Zone* and would favor biodiversity conservation by presenting a continuous biological corridor linking the transborder Ecuadorean *Yasuni National Park* to the wider Amazonian PA system.

The proposed project seeks to establish sustainable methods for the use of biological diversity and forest resources in the Corridor area, including methodologies of integrated river basin management and the Ecosystem Approach, both of which are thematic areas under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Corridor, would have an area of 2 millions ha. that would include the richest sites on Earth in terms of species numbers and biodiversity. In *Allpahuayo-Mishana National Reserve*, the number of trees per hectare reaches up to 300 species; in the adjacent area of Yasuni, 312 species have been detected in a one-hectare plot.

At least two indigenous groups live in voluntary isolation in the Pucacuro-Arabela area. The establishment of the Biological Corridor would support the opportunity of these groups to continue with traditional livelihoods.

During 2004, first forest concessions have been established in the Loreto Region of Peru. This development brings both new opportunities and threats to the sustainability of the forests in Loreto. The Management Plan of the Biological Corridor Proposal should include development of new methodologies to promote sustainable forestry within the Biological Corridor and the surrounding areas. Furthermore, the Ecological and Economical Zoning Program (*Zonificación Ecológico Económico, ZEE*), currently being extended to the Loreto Region (Department) may provide helpful in establishing sustainable, forest-based livelihoods in the area.

I. Biological diversity of the *Nanay-Pucacuro Biological Corridor*

The river basins of the Nanay and Pucacuro rivers are strategically located in the "Humid Forests of the Napo Ecoregion" ("*Ecorregión Napo*"), that includes the northern sector of Loreto and part of the Ecuadorean Eastern Amazon. The ecoregion has been identified as one of the most important global areas for the conservation of the biological diversity because of the extreme species richness and endemism (Dinerstein *et al.* 1995). The Corridor harbors the greatest diversity of bird species on Earth and probably also of mammals (Ridgely and Tudor 1989; Voss and Emmons 1996). Several records of global biodiversity have been identified. In addition to the Allpahuayo-Mishana and Yasuní tree species records (Gentry 1988), 140 species of reptiles (Dixon and Soini 1986) and 122 species of amphibians (Rodríguez and Duellman 1994) have been recorded in the region of Iquitos-Napo-Pucacuro, as well as 16 species of primates between the river basins of the Napo and Tigre (Aquino and Incarnation 1994). Also this ecoregion is well-known being as an important center of current speciation and endemism.

Cultural richness

The population of the Nanay river basin belong mainly to the Iquito ethnic group and the Cocama-Cocamilla, Kichwa and Bora groups although there are many descending inhabitants of other ethnic groups, like Yameos, Orejones, Omaguas, Asháninkas and Chayahuitas. The majority of the population, mainly in the low river basin of the Nanay, is ethnically mixed, but conserving several ancestral cultural characteristics and indigenous customs. In the Tigre river basin several communities of Kichwa Alama are present, as traditional users of the river basin of the Pucacuro river. In the river basin of the Arabela there few communities of the Arabela. Between Arabela and Pucacuro there is evidence of the presence of several indigenous groups in voluntary isolation, that have not had contact with the civilization, presumably belonging to the ethnic groups Huaorani or Arabela.

The IIAP has proposed, consequently, that the area in the Proposal of Biological Corridor would be excluded from the Map of the Forests of Permanent Production of Loreto, subject to concessional forestry. The INRENA has accepted to exclude the Corridor from the process of public bidding of concessions for the 2004. This decision will not exclude commercial use of forest resources or the non-timber forest products in the area, but will limit the practices to selective extraction of low impact, carried out by the local communities within their titled territories and in the communal and/or extractive reserves.

Local support to the initiative

The initiative to establish upper Nanay Reserved Area within the influence of the Corridor has originally been presented by local indigenous communities and farmers during the consultations of macrozonification of the Nanay area (*Zonificación Ecológico Económico 2002*). The communities of the river Pucacuro formally proposed establishment of Reserva Comunal Pucacuro, resulting into establishment of Pucacuro Reserved Area in 2004.

II. Proposed activities

- To consolidate the proposal of creation of the Biological Corridor as presented by the IIAP to the INRENA, and to integrate it in a binational strategy of conservation and sustainable development in the frontier Peru-Ecuador.
- To promote strategies of conservation and integral management of the biological diversity at the level of river basins (Nanay and Pucacuro), based on local management of the natural resources and the territory.
- To make complementary studies of the biological diversity and the socioeconomical conditions that sustain the creation of the Biological Corridor, to serve as base for the proposals of conservation and use of natural resources.
- To finalize the Ecological and Economic Zoning study in the area to identify optimal land and resource use.
- To promote sustainable silvicultural and forest management.
- Implement tools of integrated floodplain management to promote sustainable use of the aquatic resources of the floodplains.
- To support the recovery of degraded ecosystems in the low part of the both major river basins, where the impact of the human intervention has been great.
- To seek ways and means to alleviate the extreme poverty in the indigenous/riparian communities.
- To identify mechanisms to add value to the forest/non-wood forest products in the area by promoting their processing, commercialization and marketing.
- To implement participative methods to introduce management plans for the conservation areas/reserves.
- To identify long-term financial mechanisms to support the Biological Corridor.

III. Map: Nanay- Pucacuro Biological Corridor

