



Advancing Landscapes in the Andean Amazon (ASLAA)

Quarterly Report

FY 2014 - QR2

1 PROJECT COVER SHEET

1.1 NAME OF THE PROJECT:

Advancing Landscapes in the Andean Amazon (ASLAA)

1.2. DATES (START/FINISH):

AGREEMENT/ CONTRACT

Sun, 30/09/2012 - 00:00 to Tue, 29/09/2015 - 00:00

REPORT PERIOD

Tue, 01/01/2013 - 00:00 to Sun, 31/03/2013 - 00:00

1.3. PRIME PARTNER:

Rainforest Alliance

1.4. NAME OF PROGRAM MANAGER:

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1.6. NAME OF ALTERNATE AOR OR COR:

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1.7. MECHANISM NUMBER:

AID-OAA-A-11-00055

1.8. OVERALL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Our strategy is premised on addressing the principal threats to biodiversity and their drivers identified in two landscapes that have the most significant impact and can be countered directly given the experience of RA and its partners to optimize impacts locally. The threats include habitat degradation and loss due to wholesale deforestation or land-use conversion, while the drivers of these threats can be grouped into three areas: a) limited institutional capacity by local governments and communities for natural resource management; b) limited participation in and access to programs by local groups for resource management and sustainable production chains; and c) weak organizational capacity and market linkages of local producers and operators to grow local economic opportunities. RA and its partners, AIDER, and ECOLEX, designed this project to conserve biodiversity in two landscapes, Sucumbíos/Napo, Ecuador and Cusco/Madre de Dios, Peru. In the first landscape we work in the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve (CWR), the Limoncocha Biological Reserve (LBR) and the buffer zone of Sumaco – Napo Galeras National Park. In Madre de Dios (MDD), we work in the district of Tambopata in the communities of Tres Islas, Palma Real, Infierno, Sonene, and Puerto Arturo. We also work with the Brazil nut gatherer associations RONAP, located alongside the interoceanic highway, and ASCART, in the Tambopata National Reserve. In the Cusco, we work in La Convención and Calca Provinces. Within CWR, we work in the tourism area and with the Siona communities of Tarabeia, San Victoriano, and Puerto Bolívar, for a total of 130,000 ha. The LBR is located in the Shushufindi canton close to Yasuní National Park. In the buffer zone of Sumaco-Napo Galeras National Park we work in the Hatun Sumaco parish, which includes the Hatun Sumaku, Wawa Sumaku, Wuamaní, Patco Sumaku, Pucuno Chico, Volcán Sumaku and Challuayacu indigenous communities. In Tambopata, we work with the Ese Ejas, Shipibos, Yine, Amahuaca, and Kicharunas ethnicities representing 75,000 ha approximately. In upper and middle Tambopata, we work in the Filadelfia area with tourism operations, representing approx. 3,000 ha. The combined land area managed by ASCART and RONAP totals forest concession areas of approx. 70,000 ha. In La Convención Province we work in Quellouno and Echarate districts and in Calca Province in Yanatile district, within the Ivochote and Laco-Yavero watershed and cover 13,500 ha of the following cooperatives: Bioazul, Jose Olaya, Chaco Huayanay, Paquivo, Alto Urubamba, and Mateo Pumacahua and Asociacion Agricultura Ecologica.

2. STRATEGY OVERVIEW

2.1. INTERMEDIATE RESULTS

2.1.1 IR1 - Selected Landscapes Managed Sustainably:

The following main achievements will allow us to work toward addressing the principal environmental threats and their drivers of habitat degradation and loss due to wholesale deforestation or land-use conversion.

Under AR 1, *sound landscape planning and use of sustainable natural resource management (NRM) practices:*

- In close collaboration with the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment (MAE), we significantly advanced in the development of the methodology for a protected area visitor management plan, which includes components related to an inventory of tourism attractions, zoning, visitor activities, acceptable limits of change, monitoring and evaluation, and tourism projects. Implementation of the methodology has already begun in Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve (CWR), Yasuní National Park (YNP) and Limoncocha Biological Reserve (LBR), and the MAE will be expand the activity to seven other protected areas with high visitor numbers (Pululahua Geobotanic Reserve, National Park Cotacachi Cayapas, National Park Cotopaxi, Ecological

Reserve Churute, National Park Machalilla, Chimborazo Wildlife Reserve and the Santa Elena Puntilla Reserve).

- To continue the development of the risk management plan in CWR, we coordinated inter-institutional processes between ministries partnering with the NGO Peace Nexus.
- In coordination with the Cuyabeno parish and financed by the Fondo Italo Ecuatoriano (FIE), seven communities (Cofán, Kichwa, Shuar, Siona and Secoya) were trained in the management of inorganic waste, and a waste collection system has been developed based on the data collected.
- The sustainable forest development strategy for timber and non-timber products and the sustainable agriculture strategy was developed to reduce deforestation and improve natural resource management.
- After a supporting participatory processes with communities and institutional and governmental actors, we delivered the final draft of the Hatun Sumaku parish land use plan to the Autonomous Decentralized Government of Hatun Sumaku Parish.
- To advance in the community legalization process in the Jatun Sumaku parish, we helped the 10 de Agosto and Wawa Sumaco communities develop a community limits report and an updated land use map for their management plans; the plans are the key requirement for achieving legalization.
- The communities of Sonene and Palma Real approved their land-use zoning strategies in their respective communal assemblies.
- The community of Puerto Arturo approved their five year forestry plan, which was developed based on the results of forest inventories. They also established a timber committee responsible for ensuring adequate timber extraction.
- In Cusco, we completed the geo-referencing of 350 farms covering more than 6,500 hectares, an important input for planning and implementing sustainable land use.

Under AR2, *improved environmental governance*:

- To support the regulation of access, use and exploitation of natural resources, regulations for each Jatun Sumaku community have been drafted, and subsequently will be reviewed and approved by the communities.
- Responsibilities for providing technical support for the implementation of best management practices and other actions in the Napo province were defined between the institutional actors of the naranjilla round table.
- The MDD forestry roundtable incorporated community forest and Brazil nut management into their scope, and representatives for each group in their assembly.
- The community of Infierno updated and approved their communal statutes and zoning to coincide with their land-use plan and control actions.
- The community of Sonene adopted actions for controlling timber activities similar to those being implemented by other project communities.

Under AR3, *improved sustainable livelihoods and ecosystem resilience*:

- Potential alternative timber species identified in the forest inventory we carried out were validated with the seven Hatun Sumaku communities.
- We supported the producers of "naranjilla limpia" or clean naranjilla producers in the sale of 5,000 bottles of naranjilla juice at \$1.40 a bottle at a Napo province fair providing a net increase in income of about 50% for the group.

- A best management practices manual for clean naranjilla was developed, using the Sustainable Agriculture Network and government Agrocalidad criteria.
- For the first time, the community of Sonene established a collective commercial agreement for Brazil nut sales through AFIMAD. With support from AIDER and ACCA, they also now have a collection area for drying and storing Brazil nut, which will significantly improve the post-harvest management of the product.
- Three new Brazil nut harvesting areas have been incorporated in the RNTAMB and PNBS, allowing the Palma Real and Sonene communities to legally harvest in the projected areas following environmental regulations included in the Brazil nut management plan we supported.
- The community of Infierno completed their first forest harvest under the supervision of a renewed and strengthened timber committee, and have a small sawmill that is providing production value added.
- Infierno, Puerto Arturo, Palma Real and Boca Pariamanu have increased their timber harvesting yield by 5 to 10 percent through improved harvesting and low impact logging techniques.
- The Brazil nut organizations RONAP and AFIMAD finalized commercial agreements with international buyers and restaurants in Cusco to sell their product with additional value added.
- Demonstrating strengthened institutional capacity, for the second year in a row, Agrobanco approved a development loan for RONAP and ASCART to finance their Brazil nut harvest, equivalent to \$11,000 and \$17,000 respectively.
- In the community Tres Islas we supported the pilot harvesting and processing of ungurahui and aguaje (palm fruits), although production this year was affected by climate variations that damaged the fruits. The palm extraction techniques have been improved and we supported the transformation process in the pulp and oil extraction plant.
- In Cusco, we implemented model farms for five beneficiaries in Yaco Llaveru and Quellouno.

2.1.2 IR2 - Key Elements of Natural Resources Governance Functioning in Critical Landscapes:

Line of action 2 - *Promote the application of territorial conflict management mechanisms*

- To help strengthen the governance of the communities (Wawa Sumaco, Hatun Sumaco, Volcán Sumaco y Challwayacu) in the Hatun Sumaku parish and support the regulation of land tenure, trainings were held and community leadership committees were updated and presented to MAGAP and the Ecuador Peoples and Nationalities Development Board (CODENPE) to comply with a requirement for legalizing the communities and qualifying for fee exemptions, and obtaining recognition as ancestral lands.

Lines of action 5 and 6 - *Build capacity of civil society and indigenous organizations to influence the environmental decision-making and providing access and dissemination of environmental and natural resources information.*

- As part of our support to the Napo provincial government Environmental Leadership Schools, we imparted seven modules related to facilitation and planning, rights, identity, citizenship and gender, management of natural resources, climate change, organization and leadership and conflict management.
- Under the guidance of the naranjilla roundtable, the legal framework for the formation of a clean naranjilla producer organization was clarified and coordinated with MAGAP and the

National Institute for Economic Solidarity (IEPS). The association of the producers will help achieve better conditions for product sale, thereby increasing income.

- The Ecuadorian government entity in charge of agricultural product quality, Agrocalidad, shared the results of a phytosanitary analysis of small sample of naranjilla crops from the communities Jatun Sumaku with the roundtable. The results indicated a chemical concentration well above the allowed rate, thereby supporting the need to adopt improved management practices in order to continue selling their crops and reduce the existing negative environmental impact.
- The naranjilla round table adopted the project proposed naranjilla best practices based on the Sustainable Agriculture Network Standards and some criteria defined by Agrocalidad, thus standardizing the criteria promoted by the various institutions working in naranjilla.

2.1.3 IR3 - Increased Capacity to Utilize Payment for Environmental Services (PES)-like and other Economic Incentive Programs:

We supported the Pucuno Chico community in Napo in preparing for the requirements for entering into the Socio Bosque program, which included the participatory definition of their conservation area.

2.1.4 IR4 - Greater Understanding and Solutions for Key Environmental Issues:

The first registration of the bird species *Chauna torcuata* was documented in Peru during the fieldwork for the biological monitoring base line at the Pastora Grande Lake located in the Tres Islas community. The responsible biologist Andy Rodrigo Arcco Mamani who is working as bird specialist at the Natural History Museum of the National University San Augustin of Arequipa found two individuals.

2.1.5 Support Unit Services:

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2.2 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES AND USAID KEY ISSUES

2.2.1 Improve Policies and Policy Implementation

Our work mainly contributes to the line of action 1: *Develop, adopt and support the implementation of policies, laws, agreements and environmental regulations.*

- The environmental regulations for tourism operations in CWR are being implemented by 13 tourism companies. Twelve of the operations achieved the minimum required score of 90 compliance needed for obtaining 2014 patents, an improvement from an average 59 in the initial evaluation.
- Four risk management plans for tourism operations in CWR were approved by the National Secretariat for Risk Management, bringing the total approved plans to five.
- Regulations for administration and financial management in the communities of Hatun Sumaku were developed and are being reviewed by the communities.
- Regulations for palm fruit harvest activities in MDD were approved, thereby providing the legal backing for sustainable extraction of the NTFP.
- The Quellouno municipality agreed to include the principles of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard promoted by the project in their agriculture assistance programs, thereby extending project impacts beyond its principal beneficiaries.

2.2.2 Increase Gender Awareness and Gender-related Program Outcomes

We are implementing an action plan to incorporate a gender perspective in the field activities and thus facilitate the recognition of women as agents of change and emphasize the importance of their active participation in decision-making and natural resource use and management. For example, in Ecuador during the development of new statutes for the Wamani community (parish Hatun Sumaku), women were included as members of the community, meaning that they are now included in the land title, and can be elected as a part of the community governing council. Whereas in Peru, the female leaders of communities of Madre de Dios are being trained to actively participate in resource use roundtables and the management of their natural resources.

An average of 35% women participated in our 142 trainings and workshops, while in Ecuador 18 events and in Peru 24 events included 40% or more women. Topics like the regulation of the territory and institutional strengthening at the community level and waste management in indigenous communities in the CWR reached an average participation of 44% of women in Ecuador. In Peru the community with equal participation between men and women was Infierno, while other communities like Sonene and Palma Real had a little less than 30% of women participating on average. In the natural guides training for the Yasuní National Park only 10% women participated, likely due to the fact that tourism guides often have to stay with the tourism groups several days away from home.

We had only 6% of the participants that didn't want to indicate their age, 3% of the participants are younger than 18 years, 26% of the participants are between 18 and 30 years, the main age is between 31 and 60 years (65%) and 7% are older than 60 years.

2.2.3 Strengthening of Selected Regional Organizations and Institutions

2.2.4 Improve Region-wide Capacity for Conservation Through Training

- Communities in CWR acquired knowledge for solid waste management as the basis for the care and protection of natural resources and biodiversity.
- The Schools of Environmental Leadership have promoted the participation of leaders in training in a broad range of themes like management of natural resources, climate change, organization and leadership and conflict management.
- An environmental education plan that incorporates principles of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard were accepted by the education and agriculture schools in Echarati and Quellouno.

2.2.5 Increase Indigenous Peoples Participation

- Capacity events in the Hatun Sumaku communities increased the knowledge of the indigenous people in natural resource management and biodiversity conservation, the basis for their active participation in roundtables and planning processes.
- We supported the participation of Tres Islas and FENAMAD in the II National Forum for Community Forest Management.

2.2.6 Climate Change - Adaptation

The School of Environmental Leadership included a climate change course lead by Rainforest Alliance, focusing on adaptation and mitigation.

2.2.7 Climate Change (REDD+, Sustainable Landscapes)

At the end of October 2013, in coordination with MINAM, ISU, REDD+SES secretariat, CI and WWF, a three day workshop was held in Puerto Maldonado to facilitate knowledge-transfer and sharing lessons learned from REDD+ SES experiences in San Martin, Acre, and Ecuador, for regional Madre de Dios government representatives, as well as stakeholders from FENAMAD and other government actors involved in the design and implementation of REDD projects. Approximately 45 people attended the workshop. We plan to continue to coordinate with other organizations to provide training on safeguards to government stakeholders, and extend training to other communities and local actors. This workshop provided a basis upon which we can cement a good working relationship with FENAMAD and the MSAR of GOREMAD on REDD+ issues.

Seventy-five representatives from 22 indigenous communities in Madre de Dios participated in a regional workshop focused on REDD+ in the indigenous Amazon, safeguards and REDD+SES. The workshop was implemented jointly with the ICAA Support Unit, WWF and the Native Federation of Madre de Dios-FENAMAD.

8.SUMMARY

8.1 Achievements:

The methodology for a MAE protected area visitor management plan was developed, including components related to an inventory of tourism attractions, zoning, visitor activities, acceptable limits of change, monitoring and evaluation, and tourism projects. Implementation has begun in CWR, YNP and LBR, and the MAE will expand the activity to seven other protected areas with high visitor numbers.

Regulations for palm fruit harvest activities in MDD were approved, thereby providing the legal backing for sustainable extraction of the NTFP.

We supported the producers of "naranjilla limpia" or clean naranjilla producers in the sale of 5,000 bottles of naranjilla juice at \$1.40 a bottle at a Napo province fair that an increase of about 50% net income for the group.

8.2 Challenges and Adjustments:

The new USAID restrictions on activities supporting the government of Ecuador present a lost opportunity to have region and country-wide impact on biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism activities in protected areas and other natural resource use activities in project the buffer zone communities. We have submitted proposed adjustments to relevant activities to USAID that we hope will minimize this impact somewhat.

Also, the imminent departure of USAID from Ecuador will be a significant obstacle for continuing ICAA activities in the country, particularly considering that we are only in the second phase of the four phase ICAA program.