



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE: USAID/LAC REGIONAL PROGRAM

MAY 2006



*Through its leadership and support, particularly with the Parks in Peril program, LAC/RSD has conserved important biodiversity and improved management of natural resources. These ongoing efforts in the Latin America and Caribbean region are helping countries overcome development challenges and confront serious environmental issues.*

**Background.** The Latin America and Caribbean Bureau's Office of Regional Sustainable Development (LAC/RSD) has held a long standing commitment to protecting Latin America's biodiversity and improving the management of its protected areas. By means of the Parks in Peril (PiP) Program, implemented in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), USAID is supporting biodiversity conservation in 17 countries throughout the region. Parks in Peril 2000 focuses on empowering and strengthening local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), government organizations, communities, and municipalities to manage biodiversity and ecosystem functions, primarily those protected by national parks and other types of reserves. PiP has been a well-recognized leader in mitigating carbon emissions through its conservation of natural habitats. In the region, its direct "consolidation" activities have improved management of individual protected areas covering nearly eight million hectares.

Over the 16 years of the PiP Program, USAID and its partners leveraged from the United States Government and other public and private sources approximately \$402 million for conservation in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Because this funding supports the conservation of natural habitat, it contributes to the mitigation of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, whether the funding is designated for a PiP site, for other sites, or for conservation policy change.

### **Sector-Specific Climate Change Activities.**

**Conservation Policy.** Conservation policy work plays an important role in the PiP Program, helping identify national and local policies that undermine conservation. In 2004, PiP conservation policy accomplishments included:

- Creation of a network for information exchange in Ecuador among the Ministry of Environment, environmental NGOs and the National Private Reserves Network to initiate discussions of protected area practices and standards in Ecuador.
- In Colombia, PiP, in association with the Encino Municipality city council and the Fundacion Natura, supported the development of a tax exemption for conservation.
- As a result of PiP's evaluation of the pilot tourism fee system at the Eduardo Avaroa Reserve, the Bolivian National Parks Director approved the fee system to be implemented in the four national parks that receive tourists – Eduardo Avaroa, Amboro, Noel Kempff, Madidi, Sajama and Cotopata.
- In May 2004, with assistance from the PiP Program, the Guatemalan Conservation Fund (FCG) completed a fundraising plan. With the plan

**USAID's partners in climate change activities in LAC/RSD include\*:**

- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Collaborating Country-National Protected Area Services
- Collaborating Country – Local NGOs
- Collaborating Country – Local Governments
- Private Land holders

\* Because partners change as new activities arise, this list of partners is not comprehensive.

For more information on LAC/RSD, visit USAID's Web site at:

<http://www.usaid.gov/>

in hand, the FCG embarked on an intense process of developing proposals for potential donors.

*Protected Areas Management.* The PiP Program works to strengthen local capacity to address the challenge of global climate change by transferring carbon sequestration technologies to developing countries to promote sustainable development and minimize their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In 2004, PiP Program accomplishments included the following:

- In Guatemala, PiP supported a forest fire prevention campaign in the Motagua Polochic region that helped reduce fires by 30% over the previous year. Community members and local fire brigades built 81.74 km of fire lines and carried out 2,350 ha of prescribed burns, helping reduce the effect of forest fires.
- In Ecuador, PiP facilitated a private donation of 3,955 hectares to the Cayambe-Coca Reserve, marking the first non-compensated private donation to a public protected area.
- In the Central Selva region of Peru, PiP has supported the creation of the 1,500 hectare "El Pajonal" Municipal Conservation Area in the district of Villa Rica. The municipal park borders the Yanachaga Chemillén National Park and contains a unique mosaic of humid grasslands, and cloud and dwarf forests.
- In Mexico a lack of coordination between institutions in the region has been a limitation for conservation in the Maya Forest region. With PiP support, nine local, national, and international institutions took part in a participatory planning effort to shape a common vision for an area of 2,889,257 hectares within the Maya Forest. This vision, established by key conservation stakeholders, includes strategies and activities to mitigate critical threats, maintain target health and strengthen regional capacities for long-term conservation.

In 2005, among other achievements, PiP supported the development of guidelines for gap analysis national protected area systems that were adopted by the International Secretariat to the Convention on Biological Diversity and supported titling of indigenous territories to 21,000 indigenous people in the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve in Nicaragua. Additionally, PiP helped establish more than 1,200 hectares of municipal reserves around Lake Atitlán in Guatemala. In Peru, PiP is leading the effort of municipal and state authorities to declare the Central Selva Biosphere Reserve.