

ISA 89607

BOSCOSA:

**The Forest Conservation and Management Project
Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica**

Implemented by the Neotropica Foundation

Project Evaluation Report

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PRESENTATION

The purpose of the present evaluation is to determine the overall impact of the BOSCOA Program in the Osa Peninsula taking into account the history of the organization, but with emphasis on the activities carried out in 1993. Nine specific subjects of study were stipulated. The intent was to quantify the impacts in each area to the extent possible, in addition to a qualitative analysis.

Two major evaluations of the Program have been carried out previously. The first, in 1989, was a joint World Wildlife Fund/USAID Costa Rica project. The second, in November, 1992, was carried out by the Biodiversity Support Group for USAID/Costa Rica. These evaluations are quite thorough and detailed. It is not the intent of this evaluation to replicate those studies. The limitations of personnel (one person) and time available to complete the project (one month) make inevitable the relative superficiality of this work. The current document should be seen as a compliment to the earlier evaluations, and an update of the situation through March 1, 1994.

The work was carried out during the month of February, 1994, and included a one week visit to the Osa Peninsula. The methodology consisted of review of documents by and about the BOSCOA project, and interviews with Program staff, members of groups working with BOSCOA and other local residents. Staff members from each Program Area provided the information on activities realized from January, 1993 through February, 1994.

I wish to thank all the people in the Osa and in the Neotrópica office in San José, who assisted in the recollection of information. Special thanks to Director Juan José Jiménez, who patiently went over the minutia of project history and activities hour after hour.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACOSA	Osa Conservation Area
ADESCAB	Asociación para el Desarrollo Sustentable y Conservación de la Cuenca de Agua Buena
APROFISA	Asociación de Productores de la Finca Sándalo
ASGUACA	Asociación de Guanabaneros de Cañaza
ASOFEF	Asociación Femenina de La Palma
ASOPRAQ	Asociación de Productores de Rancho Quemado
ASOPROSA	Asociación de Productores de la Osa
CJT	Tropical Youth Center
COOPEAGRO- MUEBLES	Cooperativa Cogestionaria de Productores Agroforestal e Industrial de la Península de Osa
CEDARENA	Centre for Environmental and Natural Resources Law
DGF	General Forestry Directorate
INA	National Training Institute
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture
MIRENEM	Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mines
PRODERE	Refugee Development Program, United Nations Development Program
RFGD	Golgo Dulce Forest Reserve
SIPRAICO	Sindicato de Productores Agrícolas Independientes del Cantón de Osa

INTRODUCTION

Project Setting

The Osa Peninsula, approximately 175,000 ha in size and located in southwestern Costa Rica, contains the only remaining lowland wet forest on the Pacific coast of Central America. The Peninsula, which began as a volcanic island between 65 and 135 million years ago, now includes within its limits the Corcovado National Park, the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve, the Guaymí Indigenous People's Reserve, the Isla del Caño Biological Reserve, the Sierpe-Terraba Mangrove Reserve, Golfito Wildlife Refuge, and other non-protected lands.

Of the roughly 50,000 inhabitants of the Osa Peninsula, approximately 10,000 live within the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve. Most are recent immigrants; very few families have lived on the Peninsula for more than 20 years. A socioeconomic study conducted for the Osa Peninsula revealed that 99.9 percent of the population is mestizo, and 40 percent are illiterate.

Project Goal and Purpose

The goal of the BOSCOA Project is to maintain forest cover for productive and natural resources conservation purposes in the "buffer zone" surrounding the Corcovado National Park in the Osa Peninsula.

The purpose of the Project is to develop and demonstrate natural forest management, sustainable agriculture, ecotourism and biodiversity technologies which are economically productive and contribute towards the maintenance of forest cover.

Project Components

The BOSCOA project consists of 8 technical components: Forestry, Agriculture, Training and Commercialization, Land Titling, the FIPROSA trust fund, Nature Tourism, Environmental Education and Environmental Protection Measures.

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Local Community Organization

1.1 In concrete terms, BOSCOA has been instrumental in the formation of at least 10 organizations in the region, and has given assistance to at least 18, including productive associations, cooperatives, youth and conservation groups, and community banks. The degree of involvement with each group has differed, but BOSCOA can easily be said to be the institution which has had the greatest impact on community organization on the Osa Peninsula.

1.2 BOSCOA / Community group context

* From its inception, BOSCOA's policy has been to work with organized groups, as a way to have greater impact in the region. All services, from technical forestry assistance and agricultural extension to environmental education were free of charge. It has been, and continues to be, difficult to balance direct intervention and guidance with the promotion of self reliance.

* Issues outside the control of the BOSCOA project affect the performance of the groups, such as financing for productive projects, internal conflicts and official government policies on issues relating to project success.

* As of 1993, BOSCOA policy has changed to work not only with groups, but with individuals within groups and independent persons. They will also be charging a (subsidized) fee for forestry and agricultural services to groups and individuals.

To evaluate the impact of the BOSCOA project on local community organization, it is not enough to enumerate the number of organizations which have received assistance or were formed under its auspices. In reality, it is a story of relationships, perceptions and processes. Has the relationship with BOSCOA been beneficial to the groups, their individual members and their communities? Do the groups exist just to work with BOSCOA, or would they continue independently without its presence. Has BOSCOA learned from its successes and failures, and modified methodologies for working with local groups?

The answer to the first two questions varies according to the case being studied.

Examples:

COOPEAGROMUEBLES: A showcase project for BOSCOSA and the zone. Recently failed due to internal mismanagement. Some skills and land management practices have stayed with the community, but organizational training and direct assessment was obviously not adequate to the need.

ASOFEP: Women's productive project. Working slowly, continues to receive assistance from BOSCOSA, but is also obtaining technical and training assistance from other institutions.

ADESCAB: Organization formed directly by BOSCOSA in Auga Buena. Conservation projects bringing in income, but group is dependent on BOSCOSA for administration and direction.

Cerro Brujo Environmental Association: Differing interests within the group caused it to divide into two organizations.

SIPRAICO: Group formed to protect interests of producers in the region. Antagonistic relationship to BOSCOSA despite its emphasis on projects with producers.

1.3 RANCHO QUEMADO

One case stands out as particularly important in the history of BOSCOSA and the zone; that of the Rancho Quemado Producer's Association (ASOPRAQ).

When BOSCOSA initiated activities in the Osa in 1988, Rancho Quemado was chosen as its pilot community. ASOPRAQ was formed specifically to work with BOSCOSA in conservation and productive projects. Each of BOSCOSA's areas carried out projects with the group: reforestation, agricultural production (pejibaye plantations), environmental education, organizational training, artisanry, and eventually land titling and forest management plans. For four years ASOPRAQ received more concentrated attention from project staff than any other group. Then, in November of 1992, BOSCOSA was in no uncertain terms asked to leave.

A full analysis of the reasons for the failure in Rancho Quemado is outside the scope of the present evaluation, but a brief look at the issue will illustrate many difficulties which BOSCOSA has encountered in its work with local groups. Issues of community dynamics and project methodology both come into play in this instance.

One informant, Carlos Gutiérrez, former president of the Association, offered his opinion: "BOSCOSA is a good organization, but maybe it came too soon. People weren't really prepared; they haven't really understood some concepts like conservation and resource management, or working cooperatively".

He also felt that BOSCOSA's projects did not sufficiently address people's immediate need for cash income. The reforestation and pejibaye projects are long term ventures; what people perceived was that they were working hard and going to a lot of meetings, but not seeing any income.

In relation to the artesanry training project, Yolanda Carrillo also reports that divisions within the group were an important obstacle. "The artesanry project was good, but there was no unity within the group. Without unity you can't do anything."

Nevertheless, the general attitude toward BOSCOSA in Rancho Quemado is one of bitterness and resentment. BOSCOSA's problems with the group SIPRAICO influenced the situation, creating suspicions and conflicts. However, if the members of ASOPRAQ and the community had been receiving enough direct and concrete benefit from the projects, the SIPRAICO conflict would not have found fertile ground in Rancho Quemado. The bottom line perception of local residents and others in the region is that BOSCOSA's projects failed, left useless and expensive pejibaye taking up space in the farms, and then they left.

The project in Rancho Quemado has left both positive and negative impacts in the community. There is now organizational and cooperative experience. A conservation/youth group was formed within ASOPRAQ, which will continue working in the community. Consciousness of the benefits of resource conservation has increased, and large areas have been reforested. On the other hand, suspicion toward outside groups has also increased. ASOPRAQ will probably cease to exist once its remaining loans are paid off, and people are discouraged about working in groups. There is no adequate market for the pejibaye crops, and much is being lost.

BOSCOSA staff was equally discouraged by the experience.

Regardless of the factors contributing to the situation, the failure of BOSCOSA's pilot project in this manner raises serious questions about its objectives and methodology. If BOSCOSA's mission is to improve living and resource management conditions in communities such as this one, how could it have failed so badly?

Did the projects address local needs?
Was BOSCOSA able to maintain adequate context-sensitive communication with residents?

The answer to these questions appears to be no.

What is BOSCOSA's responsibility to the community now?

Conclusions

1.4 The issue of group self-reliance is an extremely important one from a long term perspective. All the groups receiving assistance from BOSCOA realize that they must function independently, sooner or later, and optimistically insist that they will be able to do so. However, if a group such as ASOPRAQ which received four years of intensive assistance can not survive after breaking contact with BOSCOA, and COOPEAGROMUEBLES can not survive despite ongoing supervision, will the smaller groups fare better? BOSCOA should put emphasis on strengthening leadership and conflict resolution abilities within the groups.

While it is inevitable that some groups will be successful, and other not, BOSCOA, as the intervening institution must accept the challenge of doing everything it can to assure positive outcomes. Even in difficult situations such as in Rancho Quemado and COOPEAGROMUEBLES, BOSCOA should analyze what it can do to salvage the projects which it was instrumental in starting; for example by establishing a market for ASOPRAQ's pejibaye crops.

1.5 The interests of the community organizations and BOSCOA are generally compatible. All parties want to raise local standards of living. More groups are becoming concerned with the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources. Problems arise in the definition and implementation of specific activities. BOSCOA should improve its communication and needs assessment skills in order to assure that its methods are appropriate.

1.6 It is not clear that BOSCOA has sufficiently studied the poor outcomes of two of its most important project groups, and modified its strategies for working with other groups and communities. This is of vital importance for the future of the BOSCOA project, as well as the Neotropica Foundation's projects in other regions..

2. Employment Generation and Other Economic Indicators

2.1 While Irvine, et al. identified only 10.5 workers employed over a 9 month period in 1989, the AID evaluation led by Cabarle in 1992 identified 56 jobs created as a direct result of BOSCOA activities, the majority in handicrafts, wood processing and tree nurseries. Since that time, the employment generation panorama has changed considerably. The jobs created by the COOPEAGROMUEBLES saw mill and carpentry shop (secondary processing) have ceased to exist, as well as the employment generated by the various tree nurseries.

2.2 Agricultural activities are currently having a greater impact on employment, albeit in the form of short-term contractual jobs. Project staff reports 44 direct beneficiaries through the 1993-94 Roots and Tubers project (farmers participating directly), and 304 indirect beneficiaries as field laborers. In addition, 18 people have been employed in the packing plant through the months of January and February. Each worked an average of 30 days, at c1.200 per day, for an average total of c36.000 (\$269) per worker.

2.3 Forestry activities generate permanent and temporary employment, as well.

EMPLEO GENERADO (1989-1993) BOSCOA PROJECTS FORESTRY AREA

	TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT		total
	temporary	permanent	
Secondary processing	12	7	19
Forestry Nurseries	35	5	40
Forest Incentives	72	1	73
Forest Exploitation	6	2	8
Reforestation	282	7	289
Forest Use Fees (ADESCAB)	4	1	5
Other forestry activities	7	6	13
TOTAL	420	29	449

Source, BOSCOA staff, Forestry Area

* Note: These figures are somewhat misleading, since some individuals are engaged in distinct activities, and have been counted for each applicable area. Disaggregated figures for 1993 were not available.

The eight para-foresters remaining in the region have found employment in different forms. Four were hired in 1993 as field assistants to a biomass researcher, and continue in that employment. The other four are working in their own productive projects, are occasionally hired by BOSCOA to assist with inventories, and sell their services individually to local farmers. One is also reactivating a tree nursery with COPEMARTI.

2.4 With the change of policy to include individuals in training and assistance programs, additional employment has been created through artisanry. While exact figures are not available, this is an activity with increasing participation. For the majority of these people, artisanry is not their only income generating activity, but an increasingly important one.

2.5 An increase in income to individuals and groups can be documented by the Roots and Tubers project. The net profit generated by the commercialization of flame, yuca, tiquisque, chamol, malanga and ayote from the 1993 - 1994 growing season was c 4.856.270 (\$31.534), distributed between 44 farmers (average profit \$717).

2.6 Other economic indicators of the impact of the BOSCOA project include incentives paid to landholders for reforestation projects, natural forest protection incentives, and tree harvesting through management plans (data not available).

2.7 ADESCAB earned c80.000 (\$519) in forest users fees between June and September, 1993.

Conclusions

2.8 While BOSCOA is not having a great impact on the creating of permanent jobs, its projects have generated important sources of cash income for local residents. The outlook for increased employment in the future is good. If the Roots and Tubers project succeeds in promoting staggered planting schedules, it could generate nearly year-round full time employment. The tourism projects which are in the planning stages would create salaried positions for group or other community members.

2.9 Many of the groups and projects are in need of professional administrators. Unfortunately, these will have to be hired almost entirely from outside the zone.

3. Changes in Attitude towards Natural Resources

3.1 There was consensus among all informants that attitudes toward natural resources and conservation have, in fact, changed positively. The reason for this is not, however, a new appreciation for the beauty of nature or landscapes. The reasons are purely practical: economic benefit and legal prohibitions. BOSCOA has played an important role in communicating the benefits of conservation to a generally uninformed public.

For example, former director José Joaquín Campos influenced a change of attitude in Agua Buena through his work with ADESCAB. Eliezer Porras, group member, explained how Campos changed their minds about traditional methods of cut and burn agriculture, through the community forest protection incentive program. "We weren't raised to think about that (conservation). But now many of us really appreciate that trees are beautiful, just standing there. And the air is fresher - not like in the places where they've cut all the trees down." But, he adds, "We're conservationists, but you have to get something out of it, too. The incentive program is good. We get money for doing nothing but watch the trees grow."

Daisy Sánchez (ASOFEP) and Edwin Blanco (COPEAGROMUEBLES) expressed similar views. Sánchez explained that she and her group now believe in the conservation of nature, but people must see concrete benefits, otherwise they ask "why bother to learn about that?" Blanco asserts that "Sustainable development depends on the conservation of nature. We know that. But you can't motivate people unless they see personal benefits".

3.3 Efraim Guzmán, local director of IDA, shared another perspective. Before, people cut and burned the forest as a part of everyday productive activities. Now that it's against the law, they can no longer do that: their neighbors will report them. He says, "Yes, the change in attitude is out of fear, but they are also learning to value the forest".

Conclusions

3.4 The practical aspects involved in changing attitudes toward nature are well known by BOSCOA staff. Meeting economic needs through sustainable exploitation of forest resources has always been a principle of the project. They have by all accounts made great progress in the six years the project has been in the zone.

3.5 Nevertheless, lack of consciousness of the importance of protecting resources continues to be an obstacle to the successful completion of project goals. Trimester progress reports demonstrate repeatedly that one of the main reasons activities can not be carried out as planned is lack of response from participants. One entry, regarding a workshop on

environmental law, exemplifies this complaint; "There's some difficulty in motivating the communities, more environmental consciousness is necessary for them to participate".

Unfortunately, BOSCOA activities directed specifically to this problem have been virtually eliminated. The Environmental Education Area had used an outreach methodology to raise consciousness in communities. In 1992, with the implementation of the Tropical Youth Center (CJT), emphasis shifted from outreach to Center based activities for local, national and international children, as well as training for teachers and a radio program directed to youth. Apart from the radio program and occasional talks in support of other areas, environmental education now has relatively little impact on current resources users on the Osa. While, as Technical Director Ruperto Vargas asserts, the Forestry and Agriculture Areas engage in applied environmental education, a more aggressive consciousness raising campaign, guided by principles of popular communication/education, could increase interest and acceptance of BOSCOA's other programs.

4. Research

4.1 The BOSCOA project has always been a rich source of inspiration and support for scientific and social research. Throughout its history, BOSCOA has hosted uncounted researchers, and answered questions for an even greater number of people who were studying BOSCOA itself and its associated projects. In this way, BOSCOA has contributed significantly to the production and transmission of knowledge within the region, nationally and internationally.

As a general policy, BOSCOA does not carry out research projects, itself, but promotes investigation by other individuals or institutions, and provides services for them at the BOSCOA Center.

4.2 Over the last few years, a number of important studies have been carried out by or with the collaboration of BOSCOA. These include the studies for the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve Management Plan and the Rapid Ecological Survey. Each of these studies recommended further research which needs to be pursued, but little has been done to follow up these recommendations.

4.3 The recently combined Research and Information Management Area was in charge of oversight and coordination of these activities. The recent resignation of its coordinator has paralyzed some information management activities.

4.4 In 1993 - 1994, BOSCOA hosted a number of researchers, doing studies on the following topics:

- Evaluation of BOSCOA
- Study of COOPEAGROMUEBLES
- 6 Theses on the reproductive biology of tropical forest trees
- Non-wood forest products
- Forest regeneration
- Varios botanical studies

None of the above works have yet been published.

4.5 A consultant manages what are considered internal research projects, through the Environmental Monitoring project (a response to the Rapid Ecological Survey). Current subjects include:

- Insect populations in natural and managed forests
- Biomass production
- Rivers

4.6 Other research activities are carried out by the different Areas of the project in support of their work. For example, Agriculture technicians are working with biologists from the University of Costa Rica to resolve a problem with the insects that pollinate the Guanábana plants in Cañaza. Feasibility studies for marketing of agricultural products and tourism services are carried out by staff, students and consultants.

Conclusions

4.7 While research is not a central strategy of the BOSCOA project, the results of scientific and social studies are invaluable to its work. BOSCOA has extended itself well to encourage and support research, including the establishment of agreements with national and international centers.

4.8 One area which requires greater study is the social context in which BOSCOA operates. Staff needs to better understand the social dynamics of the communities with which it works, and place the economic and cultural changes within their historical context. This information could also be useful in influencing policy decisions of government institutions.

5. Diversification of Economic Activity

5.1 While the 1992 evaluation (Cabarle, et.al.) found few results in this area, the last year has seen an expansion of BOSCOA's impact in the diversification of economic activity in the Osa. The project's initial contributions in this area consisted primarily in introducing reforestation as an economic activity, introducing pejobaye cultivation, and expanding guanábana plantations. By the beginning of 1993, those activities had expanded to include forest protection incentives, management plans and artisanry. During 1993, projects diversified once again to include nature tourism activities, and roots and tuber cultivation along with more direct marketing of crops.

5.2 The recent project with the greatest impact in the zone is the non-traditional agriculture roots and tubers project.

AREA CULTIVATED IN ROOTS AND TUBERS / BOSCOA ASSISTED

1992	1993	1994
5 ha.	58.6 ha.	120 ha

44 farmers are participating directly in the project, most of whom had previously cultivated traditional crops such as corn, rice and beans (although some had participated in the guanábana and pejobaye projects). The number of participants will probably increase in 1994.

5.3 In a parallel project, the roots and tubers packing plant, also provides job opportunities in processing of agricultural goods. The new, larger packing plant which ASGUACA plans to develop will further expand this option, as would the fruit pulping plant under consideration.

5.4 Also related to the roots and tubers, is a pig project which will use the products discarded before commercialization.

5.5 Several organizations have initiated and are developing with BOSCOA's help income generating projects related to tourism.

- ADESCAB has established hiking trails in its community forest, and is collecting an entrance fee. The women's group within ADESCAB is marketing artisanry to visitors. The group is considering opening tourist cabins close to the forest.

- COOPEUNIORO is in the process of developing a nature tourism cabins project in Cerro de Oro.

- The members of ASOFEP will soon be opening a tourist information booth. Although they will not charge for information

services, the booth will provide be an outlet for artesanry sold on consignment for members, as well as food and drink. They also hope to sell artesanry supplies to other producers in the area.

5.6 ASGUACA has entered the shipping business, with the purchase of a truck which transports produce to San José and Limón.

5.7 Previous activities designed to diversify economic activities have been less successful, in part due to conceptual flaws. The pejibaye project, for example, is currently a disappointment for participants. Maintenance of the plants for 5 years before production begins was a strain on poor farmers, and when the expected market for the product was not there, many were understandably dissatisfied.

5.8 While the failure of ASGUACA's guanábana plantations to produce as expected is not the fault of BOSCOA (but a result of inadequate agro-chemical use in the past), BOSCOA did initiate further plantations with APROFISA. Without adequate production, a pulp processing plant is not feasible, but this leaves the APROFISA farmers with guanábana that it can't process or market.

5.9 The 3 nursery projects started with BOSCOA's support also failed, due to unforeseen events. When government funding for reforestation projects became inadequate to cover the purchase of seedlings from nurseries, farmers cultivated their own or took seedlings from the forest, and the nurseries' market disappeared.

Conclusions

5.10 The strong marketing component of current income generating projects has been vital to their success. Previous non-traditional crop projects (pejibaye and guanábana) have been a less viable alternative for local people, because of transportation and marketing problems. The current strategy of identifying the buyers and planting according to their purchasing needs eliminates this problem, and sets a good pattern for expansion to other non-traditional crops.

The example of a successful non-traditional products project, may also motivate others in the region, within the groups and independent producers, to branch out into commercial products. The demand for the services of BOSCOA staff may increase significantly. A clear policy will have to be established to prevent overextension of personnel.

5.11 In regard to tourism as an economic activity for local residents, care should be taken that BOSCOA itself does not become the competition. The Neotropica Foundation needs to establish a clear policy that all possible visitors will be channeled to local cabins before accepting them in the BOSCOA dormitories.

6. Changes in Land Use

Natural Forest Cover

6.1 Many estimates of forest cover on the Osa Peninsula concentrate on the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve, which covers 61,295 hectares of the Peninsula. Outside the reserve, there remains little forest cover except within the Corcovado National Park, which should be totally protected from deforestation.

In 1989, then project director Richard Donovan estimated that the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve was being deforested at a rate of 1,500 to 5,000 hectares per year, either through degradation or elimination of forest cover. (Corcovado 2000)

A diagnostic study of the natural resources of the Reserve estimated the 1990 forest coverage at 42,091.34 ha. (68.67% of total area). This includes natural and disturbed areas which appear as forest cover in areal photographs.

According to recent estimates by the Neotropica Foundation, the rate of deforestation has not slowed in the last few years, despite efforts to control logging and clearing. In 1992, 35,202 ha. of the Reserve maintained forest cover (57.43%), indicating a loss of 3,444 ha per year.

Annual Forest Volume Extraction (m³)

	1988	1989	1990	1993
Domestic Use	159.58	328	56	
Trees in Pasture	3,972.97	3,031	1,580	428.17
Management Plans	4,292.5	5,571	2,510	485.3
Select Trees in Forest		8,560	7,386	
Roadside Trees	11,392.50			

Source, Forestry Directorate, Rincón de Osa
(partially taken from Diagnostic Study of RFGD Resources, 1991)

6.2 BOSCOA implements several programs aimed directly at the protection of standing trees.

One is the Community Forest, which is not a project, per se, but an idea that can be applied in various forms. The basic concept is to define an area of natural forest that a group or community agrees to exempt from extractive activities, with or without monetary incentives. It was originally designed for application in Cerro Brujo, but could not be carried out for organizational and legal reasons. The structure has been put into effect on five occasions:

ADESCAB: with incentives, for environmental protection

Total Forest Area	Area Under Incentives	Number of Beneficiaries	Area Withdrawn from Program
501 ha.	231.8 ha.	13	10.6 ha.

Guaymí Reserve: for cultural preservation

COOPEUNIORO: protection for tourism activities

COOPEAGROMUEBLES: for productive purposes (project failed)

ASOPRAQ: for productive purposes (project failed)

(The area currently involved in these projects was not available for inclusion in this document)

The Community Forest is not expected to be a permanent form of protection in all cases. The project with ADESCAB, for example, is intended to buy time. During the 5 year life of the project, the FIPROSA trust fund will pay incentives to participants; half in cash, the rest into a fund which the group will receive at the end of the period. Project Technical Director, Ruperto Vargas, explains that the expectation is that the group will use the money to develop a project which depends on the continued protection of the forest, such as tourism.

6.3 The Natural Forest Management Plan project is also intended to increase the value of the natural forest in the eyes of its owners. By permitting the selective cutting of mature trees, the residents should realize that by allowing the other trees to grow to their full size, they will earn more money than by premature and illicit cutting.

MANAGEMENT PLAN STUDIES CARRIED OUT BY BOSCOA

	AREA (has.)		# Benefi- ciaries	# plans approved
	Total	effective		
1990	882.1	522.4	20	12
1991	682.93	485.96	16	1
1992	396.11	197.12	10	2
1993	no new plans elaborated			
TOTAL	1963.41	1235.28	46	15

Source, BOSCOA Forestry Area data

The impact of this project has not been that intended. First of all, the poor approval rate for the plans reflects a significant dedication of time and resources without concrete returns. In addition, while some landowners are concerned about the

conservation aspects of the management plan, many see the plan as a permit to cut trees. Once the plan is approved, many sell the rights to harvested wood to lumber companies (referred to as "selling the management plan"). The lumber companies then carry out the harvest, commonly resulting in overcutting, damage of remaining growth, wasted wood, and low profit margins for landowners.

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Aware of this unforeseen result of the management plan program, BOSCOSA is now implementing a new policy requiring the landowners receiving technical services to sign a contract guaranteeing that the staff member be the "regent", or the forester officially responsible for supervising the implementation of the plan. This may reduce demand for BOSCOSA's services, since other entities are now assisting the development of management plans in the region, such as DGF and lumber companies.

6.4 The proposed Biological Corridor could serve to slow deforestation in the effected areas, as they will probably be designated for total protection of extremely restricted land use.

Reforestation

6.5 Reforestation, in the sense of establishing tree plantations as a long term economic activity, has been a focus of BOSCOSA activities since its inception.

Reforestation:	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
	28 ha	64.25 ha	333 ha	100 ha	1 ha

The reduction in reforestation activities in 1992 and 1993 are the result of several factors:

- a. Official reforestation incentives were no longer attractive.
- b. Rancho Quemado withdraws from BOSCOSA projects and COOPEAGROMUEBLES decides not to continue with reforestation.
- c. Personnel in Forestry Area greatly reduced (see general conclusions).

The 1 hectare planted in 1993 was the demonstration plot in APTO's property.

However, the quantification of the number of hectares planted does not in itself reflect the success of the reforestation efforts. The survival rates of the plantations must also be analyzed, along with the economic benefits for the participants. As Ruperto Vargas states, "Planting 1,000 hectares is no problem. What's hard is maintaining them".

Juan José Jiménez affirms that most of the plantations are generally well maintained. He estimates that in Rancho Quemado, roughly 90 to 95% is in good shape, and of the area planted with COOPEAGROMUEBLES, 70 to 75% remains well maintained. Since

BOSCOSA is no longer working with these two groups, little direct follow-up has been done recently. Budget and staff limitations, along with the growing area planted, also restrict the follow-up that can be given to other groups and individuals that have participated in reforestation.

An unforeseen economic factor has undermined the ability of participants to care for the plantations as planned. Since the project initiated in 1989, government reforestation incentives have not increased. Originally, the incentives covered 75% of project costs, plus administration. Now, the incentives don't cover half the cost, and farmers don't always have the money to buy fertilizers, pay clearing and pruning, or buy seedlings. As one discouraged participant put it, "If the financing is free, fine. But if you have to pay it back, its not a good project. The first 2 to 3 years its a lot of hard work; you have to hire people to clear the plantation. I'll say this, reforestation isn't for a poor person".

Agricultural land use

6.6 The conversion of agricultural land from traditional crops to non-traditional crops has been the most recent impact of BOSCOSA projects in this area. Most of the 58.25 ha. planted in 1993 had previously been used to cultivate rice, beans or corn. Part represents conversion of pasture to crops. This does not indicate a reduction in cattle grazing activity, simply a more intensive use of existing pastures.

6.7 As mentioned previously, 18 hectares had been planted in Guanábana through the project, as well as 50 hectares in pejibaye, in earlier years. Most of these plantations remain in place, though in many cases not well maintained. The plantations remain standing due more to the amount already invested than to the satisfaction of the farmer. If an economic return is not achieved, the farmers may begin to clear out these crops.

Conclusions

6.8 Emphasis should not be on achieving a high number of hectares under reforestation or management plans, but rather on assuring that a smaller number of projects are well carried out. To dedicate scarce time to quantity would do a disservice to sustainable development, as potentially good projects would be mismanaged and lost. In fact, to promote the approval of a large number of management plans, only to leave follow-up in the hands of lumber companies may in fact speed degradation of natural forests.

6.9 While the government may redefine its reforestation incentive policy, and make it more attractive to farmers, BOSCOSA should consider looking for additional sources of financing to cover the costs of maintenance in the short and medium term.

7. Land Tenure

7.1 BOSCOSA has had an important impact in the land tenure situation in the Osa Peninsula. Starting from almost zero, any advance in land titling and ordinance processes is a notable accomplishment.

In 1989, Irvine, et.al. pointed out that 45% of the Peninsula is categorized as a Forest Reserve. Although families were living and working within the Reserve, none had legal title. Only 16% of land on the Peninsula is not under some kind of restrictive protection.

In 1990, Martínez reported the land tenure situation in these communities or organizations as follows:

Cañaza - 70% had legal title
 Rancho Quemado - None
 APROFISA (Sándalo) - All
 COOPEAGROMUEBLES - None
 CoopeMartí - All

In 1991, the Neotropica Foundation estimated that less than 10% of the land on the Peninsula was under secure title. (Corcovado 2000)

7.2 The lack of legal status of landholders has been an obstacle for sustainable development in the region, and for BOSCOSA projects. Without titles, farmers are ineligible for most kinds of traditional financing. They are also barred from processing forestry management plans.

7.3 Since the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mines has decided to allow titling of land within the reserve, the way is open to normalize the situation. This is what BOSCOSA has attempted to do through a consultancy with CEDARENA.

Over the last two years, CEDARENA has dealt with:

- land titling for local residents
- administration of legal matters for local groups
- directed a land ordinance strategy
- land tenure studies, current use and land capability studies
- training in legal matters for local communities

During this time, the process of legalizing landholdings has been initiated for 37 lots, representing more than 1,600 hectares. Fifteen other properties were consulted with CEDARENA staff, but not accepted for processing for lack of eligibility.

Processing of these claims may take from 6 months to 1 year, or more. Funding for CEDARENA's involvement in the project has terminated. BOSCOSA will have to look for some way to follow-up

on processing the applications, for which they will continue to require external legal assistance.

Conclusions

7.4 While the legalization of 37 landholdings is an important advance, given the area of the Osa Peninsula, BOSCOA can not hope to resolve the land tenure problem itself. Government agencies such as IDA and MIRENEM must take a more active role in generating solutions. BOSCOA's activities, however, such as information campaigns on land titling and facilitating the process itself, help set the stage for a larger campaign.

7.5 Other land tenure issues may complicate the situation further, such as the proposed Biological Corridor, which would connect Corcovado to the Esquinas section of the National Park. Depending on the scheme chosen for the Corridor, the inhabitants may be allowed to stay, under strict land use conditions, or may be forced to leave. Either way, BOSCOA will have to deal with the resentments that will be created by the further expansion of protected areas in the OSA.

8. Institutional Participation

8.1 Since the beginning, BOSCOA has developed and cultivated working or consulting relationships with other national and local institutions, promoting their participation in projects of mutual interest.

In 1989, Irvine, et.al., commented on the recognition and good image that BOSCOA had among local and national institutions. "The BOSCOA team has been the instrumental element in bringing about a certain activation and unification of the sub-regional offices of several important government agencies including: the various offices of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Mines (sic) (MIRENEM), the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), and the Agrarian Development Institute (IDA)". The report also gives BOSCOA credit for being instrumental in the formation of UNIOSA (now ACOSA).

Other collaborators mentioned at that early point in the project include Catholic Relief Services, the InterAmerican Foundation, ACORDE, the Dutch Government, US-AID, Marengo Biological Station, Ston Forestal, Proyecto Sud/Syndicate Italiano, Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Packard Foundation, along with local organizations such as SIPRAICO and ASOPRAQ.

8.2 Cabarle, et.al., identified 18 different institutions supporting projects with local grassroots groups. Many of these donors had been identified and cultivated by the Neotropica Foundation.

8.3 BOSCOA has continued to cement and expand relationships with these and other institutions. What follows is an overview of some of the current relationships between the project and other entities.

MAG, CECADE, PRODERE, and FINCA all have projects in the area, but few technicians. BOSCOA staff gives technical assistance to their projects.

ACOSA and BOSCOA coordinate on a number of technical and financial issues. They share a staff member, the coordinator of their respective Nature Tourism areas.

MIRENEM has hired BOSCOA as a consultant for studies such as the RFGD Management Plan.

The Forestry Directorate (DGF) and BOSCOA are involved in different activities. The local director of DGF would like to work more closely on the RFGD Management Plan, but not on other projects.

IDA is interested in the titling of its settlers, but not other residents.

BOSCOSA established an agreement with CATIE to serve as technical support for the evaluation of permanent lots in forests under management by COPEAGROMUEBLES.

CEDEERENA is finishing a 2 year consultancy on land titling and land ordinance for the peninsula.

The Commercialization program receives information on national and international agricultural markets from MAG and CENPRO.

BOSCOSA has consulted with IDA, DGF, IFAM, and MIRENEM with respect to the land ordinance strategy for the Osa Peninsula.

An agreement has been signed between the Neotropica Foundation and the National Training Institute (INA) to provide training to local groups.

Conclusions

8.4 While many meetings are held between BOSCOSA staff and other governmental and non-governmental institutions in order to coordinate projects and strategies, BOSCOSA has been the most likely to act on the results. As the BOSCOSA staff points out frequently, they have taken on activities which should be assumed by other institutions, especially the state. They have moved to fill in the vacuum of services on the Peninsula, and in this way have been an important force for regional development.

8.5 Project staff, however, becomes overextended in its attempt to meet the needs of local residents, thereby diluting its impact. BOSCOSA needs to find a way to transfer some activities back to the other institutions, or charge fees that permit the hiring of additional personnel. It should continue with its strategies for generating political support for regional development projects which will involve a number of institutions, such as the land ordinance plan.

9. Training and Technical Assistance

Training:

9.1 In 1992, Cabarle, et.al., reported that some 186 people (72 women, 114 men) had received training through the BOSCOA program. In 1993 and the first two months of 1994 alone, that number increased by more than 122 (54 women, 68 men). During this period, the majority of the activities reported fell into the category of Project Development, and included training sessions on project and proposal development, and direct assistance to specific projects.

Subject of Activity	Number of Activities
Organization and Accounting	6
Marketing	3
Project Development	9
Artesanry	2
Guidebook or manual development	2

9.2 Eight para-foresters continue to receive training from BOSCOA, as well as other institutions (2 participated in a course on pesticide management at the EARTH, 3 participated in an International Tropical Forestry Workshop organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature).

9.3 The Training Area also is teaching group members to marketing process, in a learn-by-doing format.

9.4 BOSCOA also arranged for the National Training Institute (INA) to give three courses to group members (administration, budgets, guanábana production).

9.5 Trimester reports also mention 1 workshop on use of agro-chemicals, and three workshops on environmental law (with CEDARENA).

9.6 A trainer has been working with groups in San Juan, COOPEAGROMUEBLES, the Guaymí Indigenous Reserve, Cerro Brujo, ADESCAB and ASOFEP on artesanry production, as well as with individuals in La Palma and other communities. In 1993, emphasis of the work was split equally between training and marketing of products.

9.7 BOSCOA is clearly a major source of training in the region, and concentrates on issues of immediate value to participants.

9.8 Several concerns were detected, however, among members of the groups benefiting from the training.

One problem that continues to come up is the scheduling of training sessions. While one participant may prefer to receive a complete training course full time for two weeks, another would not be able to abandon his/her other responsibilities. Courses in which women are participating must take into account patterns of household work for which they are responsible.

Another concern cited was the academic level of some courses, particularly the accounting component. Trainers must make basic accounting techniques accessible to people with very little background in mathematics and record keeping.

Lack of individual follow-up to courses was also mentioned as a factor limiting the benefits of Training to groups and communities. Its one thing to receive material in a classroom setting, and another to apply it in practice. Participants have lacked confidence and motivation to implement new techniques and ideas on their own.

Lack of financing for activities promoted in the Training sessions is reported as an obstacle to implementation in practice, as well.

In addition, some of the participants representing groups in the courses have not completed the training, or have left the area soon thereafter, leaving the groups without the benefit of the skills obtained.

For these reasons, BOSCOA's Training program is often perceived as not being sufficiently inclusive, or producing concrete results.

9.9 On the other hand, regardless of the immediate impact on groups or communities productive projects and organizational structures, BOSCOA has initiated an important process of human resource development within its area of influence. Men, and especially women, who may have had little access to formal training of any kind have been introduced to the concept as something that applies to them, and can improve their lives. Training generates confidence and skills that will benefit the individuals and groups in the long term. As Daisy Sánchez (ASOFEP) explains, some of the groups working with BOSCOA have failed, but the people who received training "se defiende más", are better able to protect their interests. They now know what an association is, and what it can do, she continues, and they know how to look for help when they need it.

9.10 For some, BOSCOA's Training program has offered hope for personal development. Sixteen year old Ronny Picado (Guajipal Youth Group), for example, dreams of becoming a para-forester

through BOSCOA's program and working for conservation in the region. He doesn't see opportunities for formal studies outside the Osa.

Technical Assistance

The technical assistance offered by BOSCOA staff is carried out under the distinct area headings.

9.11 In the Area of Agriculture, the 44 farmers participating in the Roots and Tubers project can be noted. Follow-up assistance was provided in other aspects of agricultural activities, such as guanábana and pejibaye.

9.12 Five groups are receiving technical advice on Nature Tourism development and marketing: ADESCAB, ASOFEP, COPEUNIORO, the Puerto Jimenez Chamber of Tourism, and Information Offices in Puerto Jimenez and ACOSA.

9.13 The Forestry Area is dedicated almost completely to the provision of technical assistance in reforestation, forest management plan development, natural forest protection.

TOTAL BENEFICIARIES FORESTRY EXTENSION, BOSCOA

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	TOTAL
Forest Mgt.	0	20	16	10	0	46
Reforest.	15	21	145	22	7	210
Forest Incentives	0	0	0	13	0	13
Forest Use Fee	0	0	0	0	7	7
Cerro Brujo Com. Forest	0	0	0	11	0	11
TOTAL	15	42	161	56	14	287

Note: Table includes only new initiatives, not follow-up to long term activities.

9.14 Fifty-two cases have received professional assistance from CEDARENA lawyers in land titling.

9.15 A problem with technical assistance cited by staff members from several Areas, is that it has always been offered free of charge in the past. They feel that this inhibits the commitment of the beneficiaries to the projects, be they agricultural

production, reforestation, or tourism development. The current change in policy toward charging a subsidized fee for technical assistance will increase its value in the eyes of the groups and communities. Care must be taken, however, not to marginalize the poorest community members, who could not afford to pay for extension services along with other inputs to production.

9.16 The methodology used in technical assistance is learn-by-doing, in which the technicians explain and demonstrate practices, and then the farmer must carry out the project on his own. With adequate follow-up, this method is effective and appropriate.

9.17 There is a perception among local residents that the technical assistance that they have received from BOSCOA is of good quality, by that it has not addressed people's basic needs. The guanábana and pejibaye projects are frequently cited as an example of this, where after much investment and labor, both crops lack adequate markets. Several informants noted the need to study the benefits that can be expected from crops before their introduction. Current project emphasis on marketing seems to be solving this problem.

From Extension to Training

9.18 A new policy will be implemented over the next few years, which will tend to limit direct technical extension services, and emphasize training activities. Project Director Juan José Jiménez explains, "The working context has changed in the Osa: environmental education has had its effect, and people now appreciate the resources more. People now look for technical assistance from other sources. The DGF and lumberers also do management plans. But there are fewer groups doing training."

This policy decision is not based on a formal evaluation or analysis of the effectiveness of Training vs. Extension in the context of the Osa. Rather, it is based on the experiential impressions of staff members, and practical limitations of funding and staff time.

Conclusions

9.19 If the emphasis is to be changed from technical assistance to training, then a thorough system of follow-up to the training must be devised, or a participatory learn-by-doing methodology must be used, with significant one-on-one coaching. The desire for more direct intervention and follow-up to current training programs is manifest among the groups. An increased emphasis on training must not be allowed to reduce contact between BOSCOA staff and the communities they serve.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

STAFF/IMAGE CRISIS

At this moment in time, the BOSCOA project is in a very difficult and delicate position. Its credibility within the communities it serves is at a low. Funding and staff capacity are insufficient to turn the situation around. The crisis that has been building for the last year and a half must be resolved quickly, if BOSCOA is to maintain effectiveness in its work.

The source of current problems may be traced back to a period of rapid growth of project activities and geographic influence. BOSCOA started with one pilot community, Rancho Quemado, and then expanded to work in 4 communities. In 1991-92, project work was extended to encompass 8 communities. New staff was hired, as new activities were introduced. Several project areas were operating simultaneously in the same community. BOSCOA was assuming a complex of wanting to be "everything to everyone".

Current Director Juan José Jiménez dates the current crisis to the end of 1992. Around that time a number of factors came into play:

- * The Environmental Association Cerro Brujo split into two groups, despite BOSCOA efforts to hold them together.
- * The confrontation in Rancho Quemado caused BOSCOA to withdraw from its work there.
- * Staff was discouraged by these events, some began to leave the program.
- * Staff productivity fell, motivation plummeted.
- * Further AID funding was uncertain, causing doubts about the future of the project.
- * The Neotropica Foundation initiated two more major regional projects. Some BOSCOA staff was transferred without sufficient transition time.
- * Bureaucratic processes within the Foundation increased, requiring more paperwork time.

Large scale turnover of staff throughout 1993 reduced ability to deal with these events. Staff loss includes:

José Joaquín Campos, Director - resigned - replaced by Juan José Jiménez
 (J.J. Jiménez replaced as Technical Coordinator by Ruperto Vargas, who's position as forestry technician was not refilled)

Hugo Alvarez, training - transferred to another project - replaced by Wagner Leiva

Ana Patricia Obando, long time project secretary and administrative assistant - after salary dispute transferred to another position in the Foundation - not replaced, duties divided between another secretary and General Services of the FN

Magda Vargas, Social Promoter since 1988 - resigned - duties with the radio program taken over by Victor Pizzaro, Training duties not replaced.

Aracelly Retana, Training - resigned after salary dispute - consultant hired for 3 months to complete project.

Walter Rodríguez, Nature Tourism coordinator - transferred to another project - replaced by Rogelio Vargas

Eliomar Vargas, Forester - transferred to another project - not replaced

Silvia Chaves, leader of legal project with CEDARENA - asked to be reassigned - replaced by another lawyer

Valentín Jiménez, Forestry Analyst, Research and Information manager, head of BOSCOSA office in San José - resigned after salary dispute - not replaced

The forestry section in particular has been decimated.

BOSCOSA Staff - Forestry Area

	foresters	para-foresters
1989	2	0
1990	4	0
1991	4	2
1992	3	2
1993	2	2
1994	1	2

A turnover of this kind over the 9 month period from May of 1993 to January of 1994 is a serious blow to project continuity and effectiveness, especially when it includes long time personnel. Juan José Jiménez agrees that "the principal resource of a project is its staff", and that the loss of personnel has intensified the crisis.

This reduction in staff size aggravated the problems mentioned above that had not been resolved. At the same time, BOSCOSA had created expectations in 8 separate communities, and expanded to work in additional project areas. Staff was unable to give the time to each one that was needed, and that each group had come to expect. Also, the quantitative goals under which the project was funded were not reduced.

At the end of 1993, the failure of COOPEAGROMUEBLES topped off the list of factors defining the current crisis.

For a project such as BOSCOSA, its credibility and reputation in the community is the base for all other work. It means the difference between carrying out a series of activities, and fomenting a regional process toward sustainable development. Currently, the perception of BOSCOSA is not generally positive.

Community perception of BOSCOSA:

* The projects its involved with fail. Rancho Quemado (its pilot project) and COOPEAGROMUEBLES failed. The pejibaye and guanábana projects failed. People are losing money. Reforestation and forest incentives didn't turn out like BOSCOSA promised; generate very little income.

* The technicians are never there when you need them. We want to consult with them about something, want them to come to the community or go look for them in the BOSCOSA office, but they're never available.

* Even the staff is leaving. Some good people left. We don't know the new people.

Regardless of whether these perceptions are accurate or not, this is the atmosphere in which BOSCOSA must work today. If BOSCOSA is to continue working effectively in the Osa, its strategies must focus on changing this attitude. BOSCOSA and Neotrópica staff are aware of the problem, and have analyzed ways to recuperate image. Jiménez prefers a personal approach rather than mount a campaign. "The best way is to succeed, and make sure people know it."

This is true, but a more pro-active approach is called for under the circumstances.

While the roots and tubers project is one example of a positive outcome, effort should be made to salvage the remains of other projects in areas under most public scrutiny. Follow-up should be given to the reforestation projects with ASOPRAQ and COOPEAGROMUEBLES. Markets should be secured for the pejibaye plantations in Rancho Quemado. Environmental education should re-initiate limited involvement with the Chocuacó Environmental Group in Rancho Quemado. BOSCOSA could assist in the resolution of remaining legal problems of AGROMUEBLES, and encourage any members who wish to reactivate projects or form a new group.

While both these organizations have principal responsibility for their own downfall, and in the case of Rancho Quemado asked BOSCOSA to leave, the project should not simply write them off. 1) The organizations were started under BOSCOSA's auspices, and undertook projects on BOSCOSA's recommendations.

2) To continue assistance to the groups now would demonstrate to other groups that BOSCOA is committed to its projects, and dispel the impression that it was "run out of town".

COMMUNICACION SKILLS

Many of the problems that have come up for BOSCOA have been out of their control; government policies, funding constraints, etc., but others have been the result of their approach to community work. Misunderstandings invade relationships between social actors when one or both parts does not know how to communicate its interests or intentions in a way that the other will understand. BOSCOA has clearly defined its objectives and strategies, and knows its limitations. It has not always succeeded in communicating these concepts to the public it serves, or been sensitive enough to evaluate the community's interests correctly.

Current project staff has almost exclusively technical backgrounds. Human resource development within the project is carried out mostly on scientific and technical subjects. More emphasis should be placed on the social aspects of the project in training and new staff hiring. A social scientist (popular communication/education, sociologist, social psychologist) could be hired for an administrative position. It would be a mistake to assume that because of its largely technical nature, BOSCOA's administrators need necessarily by technicians. This may have contributed to project failings in the past.

EVALUATION

A lack of established evaluation measures is notable in almost all project areas. Evaluation is largely understood in terms of reaching production goals, or complying with the activities financed by donors. The training area should undertake an evaluation of its methodologies based on the ability of participants to apply the contents of the courses. The forestry area should evaluate the results of its activities in terms of participant satisfaction and long term ecological impact. The environmental education area should evaluate the effectiveness of its methodologies in reaching the rural campesino population with convincing and applicable messages. The agriculture area should evaluate not only income generation, but also participant/group self reliance.

As part of the evaluation process, indicators should be established for each area and the project as a whole, and greater emphasis put on maintaining this information for comparison over time.

Funding proposals should include the costs of evaluation activities.

Special attention should be given to the analysis of unsuccessful experiences. External assistance may be needed to reach the core of experiences such as in Rancho Quemado, as staff may be too close to the matter for objectivity. Understanding why projects come out badly is vital to BOSCOA and the Neotropica Foundation in order to avoid the same mistakes, and take advantage of previously overlooked opportunities.

PRIORITIZING

Given the reduction of staff and funding available, BOSCOA will have to pull back from being "all things to all people". Project staff must prioritize its activities according to overall objectives. The Neotrópica Foundation must then secure funding based on those priorities.

This may mean limiting work within some communities or programmatic areas. If so, this should be explicitly defined as policy, and clearly communicated to the groups and individuals in question, so as to reduce expectations and avoid resentments at being forgotten or ignored. If involvement with projects is to be discontinued, provision should be made for other organizations to provide similar services to the participants whenever possible.

JIMB 22

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Each recommendation which appears below was discussed in the text of the document.

Previous Recommendations

At this time, I would like to cite some of the recommendations which were made in the previous evaluation (Cabarle, et.al.) in 1992, and still reflect concerns detected in the current study.

1. "Provide more follow-up to BOSCOSA's formal activities (training events and technical assistance) by giving "quality time" to grassroots organizations, especially to the neediest groups.

Progress has been made in this area, but the need for personal involvement of project staff in practical application is still apparent.

2. "Improve communication to grassroots organizations about all of BOSCOSA's activities and facilitate networking among groups."

Lack of precise communication between BOSCOSA and the groups, and between groups is an obstacle to a productive and efficient sustainable development process. Misunderstandings and mistrust too often interfere with projects and processes.

3. "BOSCOSA should develop a workshop/training module for all technical staff concerning methodologies for working with grassroots organizations."

BOSCOSA staff has participated in training in popular communication, but it obviously has not been sufficient. Training is still needed to increase participatory processes and accurate needs assessment. Perhaps hire a social scientist for an administrative position.

4. "Develop a program curriculum and methodology for taking environmental education to local communities. Environmental activities should target adults in grassroots organizations as well as children."

Extension of environmental education to communities has come to a virtual stand still. Renewed consciousness raising campaigns in communities are needed to increase participation in other project areas. The campaign should not focus on written materials, since 40 percent of the peninsula's population is illiterate.

5. "BOSCOSA should emphasize the economically productive activities which help to meet the subsistence and cash needs of local people."

Progress has been made in the Agricultural Area in this respect. The Forestry Area needs to find a way to make its activities respond more directly to people's needs.

Recommendations generated by the current study

6. The training component should emphasize the strengthening of leadership and conflict resolution abilities within groups.

While many group members have participated in training courses meant to strengthen their institutions, few groups have demonstrated the leadership capacity needed to carry on independently from BOSCOSA.

7. Analyze what can be done to salvage parts of BOSCOSA projects in Rancho Quemado and with COOPEAGROMUEBLES.

BOSCOSA needs to demonstrate its commitment and responsibility to projects it starts and to groups it works with. It needs to show that it won't be "run off" by conflicts or problems.

8. Concentrate forestry efforts on carrying out a smaller number of projects well, instead of looking for a large number of hectares reforested, with management plan, etc.

Involving large areas of land in projects where it is impossible to give the necessary follow-up attention is counter-productive to sustainable development in the region.

9. Define evaluation strategies for each area which will measure not only quantity, but effectiveness of programs.

Also, establish quantitative indicators, and maintain data over time.

10. Promote more research on the social context.

Most research carried out through BOSCOSA is scientific-technical in nature. A better understanding of the social context of the Osa Peninsula would help both staff and policy makers improve attention to the local population.

11. Apply marketing strategies with all new productive activities introduced through BOSCOA.

Continued application of marketing strategies should avoid problems that have arisen with earlier projects.

12. Establish a clear policy of non-competition with local tourism projects.

The installations of the BOSCOA Center and the Tropical Youth Center could, if not handled well, either be in fact, or appear to be competition for local projects, especially the upcoming ADESCAB cabins. BOSCOA can't afford that kind of conflict with the community.

13. Look for additional financing for reforestation projects.

If government incentives are not enough to cover most of the costs of reforestation projects, BOSCOA should look for other sources of funds, in order to guarantee the success of the plantations and avoid financial losses for the farmers.

14. Establish policy for offering technical assistance to those groups and individuals that can't afford to pay.

With the new policy of charging for technical assistance, which is generally sound, provision must be made not to exclude the poorest residents. An application process based on clear requirements should be established.

15. Try to transfer some activities back to the government agencies who's mandate they are.

Reduced staff and funding will make it necessary to limit some services. Those which can feasibly be passed to other institutions should be phased out.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

Despite the current problems facing the BOSCOA project in the Osa Peninsula, there is a reasonable hope that they will be resolved. If BOSCOA and Neotrópica staff are able to learn from past failures and successes, there is every chance of entering a new era of partnership with local communities and groups, based on a clearer understanding of the interests and needs of each, and on a more horizontal relationship.

PEOPLE CONTACTED

BOSCOSA Staff

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Alfredo Quintero, Coordinator, Agricultural Area

Rodolfo Quiros, Tropical Youth Center / Environmental Education

José Rogelio Vargas, Promotor, Nature Tourism

Ruperto Vargas, Technical Coordinator, Forester

Juan Domingo Vásquez, Training and Marketing

Others in the Osa

Eladio Barroso, ASOPROSA, Puerto Escondido

Edwin Blanco, COOPEAGROMUEBLES, La Palma

Yolanda Carrillo, ASOPRAQ, Rancho Quemado

Rolando Chacón, DGF, Rincón

José Chavarría, San Juan Development Association, San Juan

Carlos Gutiérrez, ASOPRAQ, Chocuaco Conservation Group, Rancho Quemado

Efraín Guzmán, Regional Director, IDA, Rincón

Haydée Jiménez, independent artisan, La Palma

Vidal Jiménez, SIPRAICO, Agua Buena

Juvenal Oviedo, COOPEAGROMUEBLES, La Palma

Ronny Picado, Guajipai Youth Group, La Palma

Eliecer Porras, ADESCAB, Agua Buena

Juan Romero, APROFISA, Sándalo

Daisy Sánchez, ASPFEP, La Palma

Sergio Umaña, ASGUACA, Cañaza

Amansio Ureña, ASOPRAQ, Rancho Quemado

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