

Universidad Nacional de Loja

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“El Bosque” Reserve an example of private incentive for the protection of natural resources in the Vilcabamba Valley in the Loja Province of Ecuador.

Vilcabamba, Loja, Ecuador
2006

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English Specialist
4^{to} level

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Recent conservation experiences show that the principal leaders of conservation of biodiversity are citizens, farmers and local communities who are the owners of the land that stores this richness. compelling participation in processes of co management of the natural resources”. ZHOFRE AGUIRRE 2001

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my teacher who has accompanied me during the process of elaborating this



1. Panorama of El Bosque Reserve in the upper canyon of San Pedro de Vilcabamba work; My husband who supported me during the preparation of the document and test; the Colinas Verdes Foundation that generously supplied the photos and reference documents and Sra Joy Horton de Hofmann who gave information about the reserve making this thesis possible

2. Sra. Jov

OBJECTIVES OF THE THESIS

Objectives for realizing this thesis are:

To investigate and communicate about an interesting case in the Vilcabamba Valley.
To better my English ability and to carry out a requirement for a Expertise certificate in the World Teach program of the National University of Loja.

METHODS

Steps for doing this work:

learn guidelines for composing a thesis with the instructions of the teacher and observing other thesis.

Collecting secondary information, the map and photos.

Direct interviews

Analysis of the information gathered and elaboration of the first copy

Translation and correction in English

Printing of the final copy.

INTRODUCTION

The Vilcabamba Valley in southern Ecuador gained worldwide attention decades ago with the discovery of the “old people” phenomenon that stimulated the beginnings of tourism for the area. Later the tourists discovered attractions intrinsic to Vilcabamba like elements beneficial for good health, beautiful landscapes, crystalline waters of Uchima and Chamba rivers..

In 1982, the Podocarpus National Park was created. Support was obtained to promote ecotourism and create an awareness to reduce the forest fires and to protect the watershed and biodiversity.

Without a doubt the Podocarpus National Park has been an icon for promoting Vilcabamba and has had a notable positive impact on the valley.

But less known are the private reserves and the efforts of residents who, in a personal way, also have had incentives for managing their properties as reserves for the protection of biodiversity and the forests that protect the springs. These private reserves really increase the rich landscape and sources of clean water the Vilcabamba Valley enjoys. One example is the case of the Horton and Hofmann families and their El Bosque Reserve¹.



3. Río Banderilla

RESULTS

In the Vilcabamba Valley you find a biological reserve that has been called “a sanctuary of endemic species” : the “El Bosque” : reserve.

El Bosque Reserve is the property of the families of Joy Horton Hofmann y her brother Timothy Horton since the mid seventies. . “El Bosque” belongs to the San Pedro de Vilcabamba Parish in the province of Loja in the upper part of the Vilcabamba Valley. According to studies done by FUNBOTANICA foundation and y CINFA² (Environmental and geomatic Information Center), the property has a surface measure of 2178 hectares (approx.4800 acres) of which about 75% is inside the limits of the Podocarpus Park. According to

¹ Bosque Protector “El Bosque” directly translates as Protec
English is conceptually clearer as El Bosque Reserve

² Centro de Información Geomática Ambiental



4. Habitat natural el El

investigations its known that this reserve is very rich in biodiversity. In one single visit an ornithologist observed visually and auditively 132 species of birds.

In total there are 335 species of birds identified as inhabitants of the area – that includes some endemic species in danger of extinction like the bearded guan, the redhead and yellow cheeked parrots, and the gray-breasted toucan. Here is also habitat of other fauna like the danta the spectacled bear, the dwarf deer and the Andean dog. Also are found forests with important ecosystems as well as patches and regeneration of Podocarpus, cedars and the only relics of protected cinchona forests in the zone (since the cinchona exists in lower altitudes outside of the limits of the Podocarpus Park).

The upper part of El Bosque Reserve is paramo and here are found four small lakes the largest covering 22 hectares. The lakes and numerous springs and rivulet supply the



Banderillas and Colanuma rivers that are the tributaries to the Uchima River and supply many irrigation ditches and canals. Uchima is affluent to the Vilcabamba river and farther down provide water to the Zapotillo canal and the Pohechos dam in Perú. This water source is not influenced by human contamination and the constant flow in the summer makes it very important to farmers below. The forests are rich in bio diversity but not only endemic plants and animals in danger of extinction mentioned earlier, but also ecosystems full of small rodents, insects, butterflies, beetles, orchids, ferns, palms, mushrooms, littler fish, all interacting in ecological balance.

5. Laguna La banderilla”

The “Forestry, Conservation, Natural Areas and Wildlife Law”¹ treats in its article 5 the



protection. The owners petitioned the state authority to legally declare the land protected forest and vegetation. So the “El Bosque” was declared as a protective forest by the Ecuadorian state by means of a ministerial agreement # 0021, of 13 of April in 1994 by the Ecuadorian institute of forest and Protected areas (INEFAN).



In compliance with the rules for protected private forests, there is a current management plan, this with the technical help of investigators of the Wageningen University in Holland and the National University of Loja.

In general terms the action lines drawn up are :

Impulse the natural regeneration and maintaining the natural habitat for the conservation of the flora and fauna species and for scientific investigation and education purposes.

Protect the vegetative cover for the water supply for the populations of San Pedro de Vilcabamba, Vilcabamba y Catamayo-Chira.

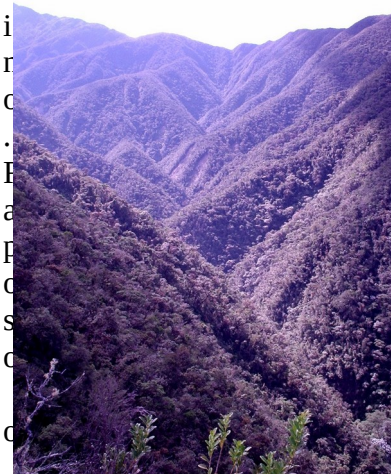
Stimulate environmental awareness,

Participate in local planning and natural resource management opportunities.

9. Investigación

The infrastructure of “El Bosque” includes a simple house with 2 bedrooms, water, photovoltaic electricity with solar panels. Also there are fenced pastures, 1 hectare of orchard with drip irrigation, 2 bee colonies with about 16 hives. 10 hectares of 20 year old pine trees planted with “Plan Bosque” and many paths and improved trails for hiking and horse riding.

All the facilities are available to the forestry students of the National University of Loja in their study programs as well as investigators and persons (national and international) doing “scientific tourism”. The owners of “El Bosque” are not actively doing tourism but there is much potential and of course possibilities for the future. The threats against meeting management objectives for protecting “El Bosque” reserve are: 1.) forest fires that pass from the neighboring farms and 2.) clandestine hunting. Also there are potential problems with laws that permit mining and developing projects in protected areas without taking in account conservation criteria or due prevention or reduction of environmental impact measures.



10. Panorama

CONCLUSION

Reflecting upon the words of Zhoffre Aguirre cited at the beginning of this paper, the principal leaders of conservation of the biodiversity are us the citizens, the farmers and community that are the owners of the land where the riches are stored. The interesting experience of the Horton y Hoffmann Families in the creation of the protected forest is one example of the participation of members of the community in the good management of the natural resources.

¹ Ley Forestal y de Conservación de Áreas Naturales y Vida Silvestre

The flora and fauna, the endemic species, the special ecosystems, the knowledge originating from the investigations in the forest, the beautiful landscapes, the clear waters generated from the forest, as well as this example of a family, El Bosque Reserve, all are part of the patrimony of Vilcabamba.

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Andrade P.; 2003 Lista de aves observados en una visita a “El Bosque:

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Panman, W. 1994, Plan de manejo para El Bosque en base a requerimientos del habitat del *Tremarctus ornatus*.

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ANEXO I

Nombres científicas de especies citado en el texto en orden de mención:

Nombre común

Nombre científico

Pava barbada

Penélope barbata

loro carirrojo

Hapalopsittaca pyrrhops

Perico cachetidorado,

Leptosittaca branickii

tucán andino pechigris.

Andigena hypoglauca

Danta, Tapir de Montaña,

Tapirus pinchaque

oso de anteojos

Tremarctos ornatus

cervicabra o chonta.

Pudu mephistophiles

Raposo o perro andino.

Pseudalopex culpaeus

podocarpus,

Podocarpus oleifolius Prumnopytis montana y otros

cedro

Cedrela montana

cascarilla
Cinchona officinalis

ANEXO II

Autoridad de fotos

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Número 1 | Curtis Hofmann |
| Número 2 | Joy Horton |
| Números 3, 5, 7, y 8: | Emil Ulrych |
| Números 4, 9 y 10 | Edwin Cabrera |
| Número 6 | CD del Programa Podocarpus |