

Servicios SinergiA Ambientales

Boletín técnico de redes de servicios ambientales en Ibero-América



Dear Readers,



Welcome to SinergiA

Dear Readers,

With the holiday season and Copenhagen in full swing, we are pleased to present you with the fourth edition of SinergiA, which will be the last for 2009. In this edition, we explore the complex legal application of PES incentives in national as well as sub-national frameworks (see the opinion of Sven Wunder - CIFOR) and the online PES contract tool of Katoomba in their respective sections). In addition, we have included a brief synopsis of the Conference of the Networks of Ecosystem Services in Latin America, which was organized by the editing networks of SinergiA, and took place in November in La Paz, Bolivia. We are also pleased to be able to share with you a series of new products and publications related to REDD and PES that are products of the ongoing COP15 in Copenhagen, among those an online spatial analysis tool for the management of environmental services in the Amazon region.

Best wishes for the Holidays and the New Year,

The Editors of SinergiA

Jan Borner
Iniciativa Amazonica

Andrea Garzon
RISAS

Pablo Martínez de Anguita
REDIPASA

Tommie Herbert
Katoomba Group

Stephanie Secomb
RACSA

OPINION

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SVEN WUNDER: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Nowadays, environmental services are on everybody's lips. But one commonly expressed fear is that they would be monopolized for private profit, leaving behind societies empty-handed: environmental services could allegedly flow out of Latin America's open veins into the hands of multinational companies and their imperialistic marionettes. Water is often looked to for comparison. There are strong political currents in Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, and beyond, trying to ensure that all environmental services are solidly held in public hands. Sometimes this is even written directly into the constitution. Consequently, only the state may also be entitled to make payments for environmental services (PES).

This populist discourse, however, ignores certain subtleties in diagnosis and strategy. Why are PES emerging on the scene in the first place? Because in spite of beautifully written laws, Latin American states have de facto proved widely unable to fulfill their titanic environmental mandates. PES is trying to change that, by actively engaging civil society in environmental management, including NGOs, water users, farmers, and the private sector. When a brewery is paying upstream farmers to reduce erosion and streamflow sedimentation, what logical role has the state vis-à-vis the environmental service generated? Frankly speaking: none whatsoever. State-claimed "ownership" of environmental services here becomes a political tool of controlling civil society, without prospects of doing society any good.

Fundamentally, environmental services are not only global benefits like carbon and biodiversity, but also watershed protection (quality, quantity, seasonality), pollination, storm and landslide protection, recreation and landscape beauty. These are domestic environmental services, fully generated, consumed and controlled by civil society -- whether that is constitutional or not... Even in countries where public PES schemes have been working for many years (Costa Rica, Mexico), national policies have continuously been cross-fertilized by co-existing private initiatives. Nationalizing all environmental management is certainly the worst we could do for the environment.

Correspondingly, lawmakers and public servants alike often face difficulties when leaving their hermetic omnipotent world to face the ugly on-the-ground realities. Deforestation in Latin America is mostly de jure illegal but de facto tolerated. Hence, governments will deny paying landholders to obey the law, even a defunct one. Yet, they are also unable to protect the environmental service. They are caught in no man's land where neither sticks nor carrots can be applied -- all the while deforestation continues. Ironically, if they on top impede civil society from taking action where they themselves have proved impotent, governments can become genuine warrantors of environmental stalemate.

However, that needs not be so. In Costa Rica, deforestation is illegal, yet PES-enrolled landholders do receive conservation payments: not primarily "for obeying the law" (i.e. not deforesting), but for not harvesting timber, making firebreaks, signposting, and active monitoring of third-party intrusion. Similar creative ways to circumvent this problem by merging incentives and command-and-control have been used in US and EU agro-environmental programs,

thus providing compliance cost-subsidies to landholders making an additional effort to reclaim legal grounds. Cross-compliance instruments can also be powerful, i.e. making everything from bank credits to public household subsidies and land-tenure regularization dependent on environmental legality -- a tool that only incipiently is being used in Latin America. To make real progress in safeguarding environmental services for the common good, we will need a public domain that is delimited with caution and realism, and policy makers who descend from their rostrum of ideological discourses to understand what pragmatic changes are needed to achieve tangible results.

Sven Wunder, Center for International Forestry Research – CIFOR, contact: s.wunder(at)cgiar.org

PROJECTS

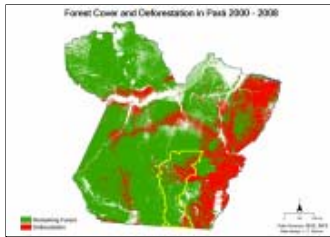
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REDD PILOT PROJECTS IN BRAZIL

The Government of the State of Pará and The Nature Conservancy are working in collaboration with various partners on a Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) demonstration project in Sao Félix do Xingu, an eight million hectare municipality located in the "Arc of Deforestation."

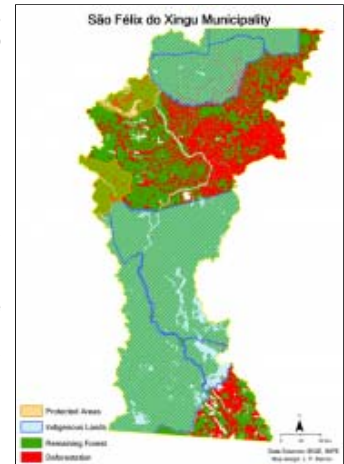
This initiative is part of a shared vision to demonstrate the effectiveness of forest conservation in the reduction of carbon emissions and climate change mitigation.

These projects demonstrating REDD at a large scale in the state of Pará, coordinated under national and regional policy and implemented in a collaborative manner by the government, private sector, rural property owners, local communities, and NGOs, can be an example of an efficient approach to reducing emissions from green house gases and generating combined social, environmental, and economic benefits.



These demonstration projects also serve as a concrete example for the national and international community in the design of rules and methodologies for the use of REDD as part of the solution to climate change.

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A STUDY OF THE VIABILITY OF A REDD PROJECT IN THE NATIONAL COFÁN (INDIGENOUS) TERRITORIES OF ECUADOR

November 2009, Andrea Garzón, EcoDecisión

EcoDecisión was hired by The Nature Conservancy to research the viability of using payments provided by carbon markets which recognize REDD as a valid form of sequestration, in order to strengthen the protection of the Cofanes territories in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

EcoDecisión analyzed six areas of ancestral lands owned or managed by the Cofán village including a biological corridor. The first phase involved the prioritizations of the five most viable areas, using a screening criteria analyzing risk of deforestation, occupancy, additionality and permanence. Subsequently, EcoDecisión completed a preliminary analysis to establish a base line, measure the potential for emissions reductions, and estimate carbon stock, all based on historical forest inventories and literature reviews.

The conclusion reached by this study is that that two of the six ancestral areas are not eligible, as they are already under long-term contract with the conservation incentives program of the Ecuadorian government (SocioBosque). The major regional potential lies in the areas of the Ecological Reserve Cofán Bermejo and Barquilla.

Figura 1: Areas under management by Cofán and SNAP in North Ecuador

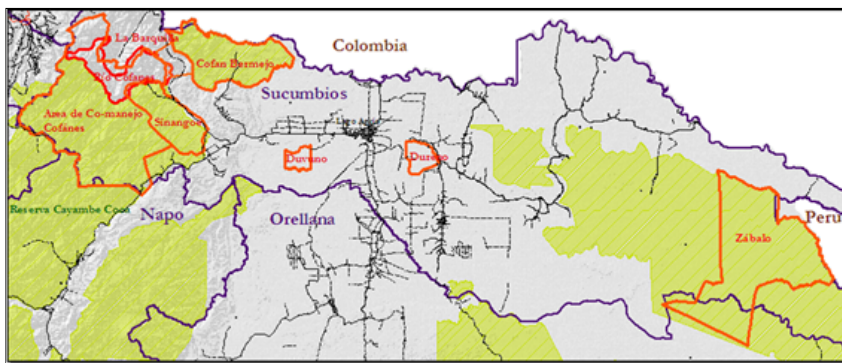
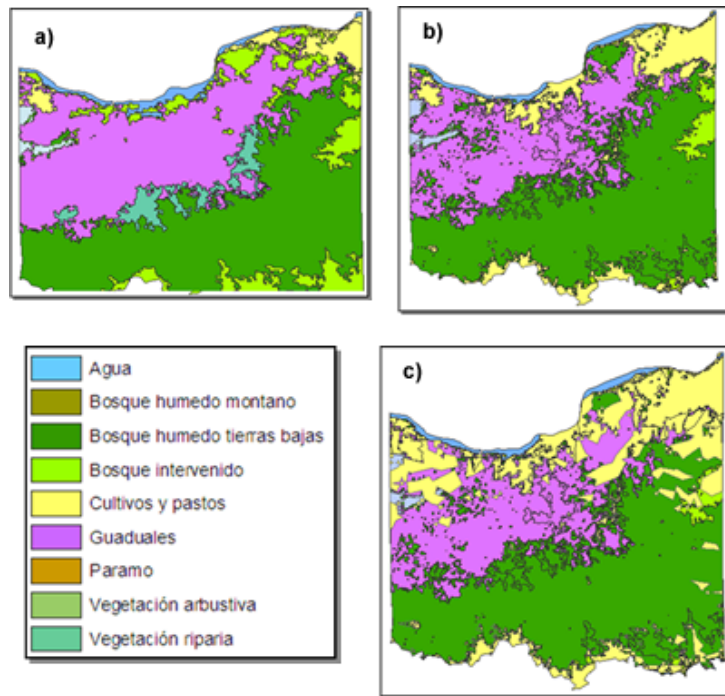


Figura 2: Mapa de uso y cobertura del suelo: **a)** año 1990, **b)** año 2008 y **c)** proyección para el 2030 del territorio Cofán Dovuno (Elaboración propia a partir de los datos de GeoPlaDes 2009).



REGIONAL WATER FUND: FORAGUA, SOUTHERN ECUADOR

Fabián Rodas, Naturaleza y Cultura Internacional



Before deforestation and degradation activities could affect their land, the municipalities of Loja, Celica, Pinal, Puyango and Macará, implemented a unique conservation initiative, issuing ordinances for the management and protection of micro watersheds and forests. They include the official guidelines for the reserves, incentives for land use change and the collection of environmental conservation taxes.

Additionally, these municipalities joined together to establish the Regional Fund for Water – FORAGUA, in order to simplify ongoing international, state, business, and donor cooperation. FORAGUA is taking a broad regional perspective on environmental issues, and is looking to include 39 municipalities in El Oro, Loja y Zamora Chinchipe and Solidaridad.

Today, 50% of the hydric zone in Loja is protected; Alamor 21%; Celica 25% and Macará 11%. More than 35,000 hectares of municipal reserves have already been created through local ordinances, and three additional municipalities plan to begin a similar process this year.

FORAGUA website: www.foragua.org



TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

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PES TEMPLATE CONTRACTS

Katoomba Group/ CARE Africa

Contractual models, tools and guidance manuals to support project developers drafting contracts for ecosystem services and REDD transactions:

The Katoomba-CARE Online PES Contract Management Center offers draft contracts and contract design guides for use by project developers and attorneys involved in transactions for ecosystem services (water, carbon, and biodiversity) and REDD. The online toolbox is updated and populated with related legal resources and tools on an ongoing basis. Our goal is to make low-cost transaction management solutions easily accessible to project developers. By housing tools at one site, we hope to build technical capacity as well as confidence in PES as a natural resource management tool.



Objectives of the Online PES Contract Management Center:

- Ensure that parties to contracts (i.e. project developers, communities) have a clear understanding of the rights and responsibilities of contractual arrangements
- Reduce transaction costs related to the development of PES and REDD projects
- Provide local counsel with expertise on the commercial and transactional aspects of PES contract design
- Help to formalize PES transactions so that essential contractual elements are standardized and facilitate a progression towards accepted norms

Enter Management Center: http://www.katoombagroup.org/regions/international/legal_contracts.php

IMPLEMENTING CDM PROJECTS: A GUIDEBOOK TO HOST COUNTRY LEGAL ISSUES

UNEP and Baker and MacKenzie

The publication primarily targets project developers and climate policymakers in developing countries, but it is of equal interest to carbon investors. The Guidebook explains through case studies how domestic laws and regulatory frameworks in CDM Host Countries interact with the international rules on carbon trading, and how they can be enhanced to facilitate the implementation and financing of CDM projects.

In particular, the Guidebook:

- provides examples of domestic laws that specifically deal with the implementation of CDM projects;^[8]
- illustrates ways in which domestic legal regimes can hinder or facilitate CDM projects, for example, the impact of property, taxation, and financial services laws and regulations on the ownership and transfer of carbon credits;^[9]
- shows how domestic environmental and permitting laws affect the local and international approval of CDM projects, as well as their operations;
- highlights how various domestic legal issues and risks are mitigated under prevailing contractual structures for CERs.

The book is a companion to the groundbreaking UNEP - Baker & McKenzie Legal Issues Guidebook to the CDM.

To read more: www.cd4cdm.org/Guidebooks.htm

INTERACTIVE MAP SERVER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY TARGETING THE AMAZON REGION



Supported by the World Agroforestry Center ICRAF and the World Bank, the Amazon Initiative and its partners are developing an interactive map server for environmental policy targeting. The tool uses spatial information from a large variety of sources and allows users to calculate land cover, biomass and conservation opportunity costs in custom polygons.

Some features of the tool can be previewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch> A beta version of the tool is available at <http://www.iamazonica.org.br/IAViewer/> Visitors are kindly asked to participate in the short online survey to help improving the tool!

PUBLICATIONS

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DATA BASE OF PES PROJECTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Organization of American States (OAS)

In recent years, the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD) of the Organization of American States (OAS) has been identifying trends in alternative, innovative, and market-based approaches such as Payments for Ecosystems Services (PES) to address natural resource management, environmental protection and biodiversity conservation among member countries.

Up to, the DSD is supporting countries of the Americas to adopt PES schemes. However, the lack of knowledge concerning the links between ecosystem management, service provision and economic activity remains as a challenge to adopt PES specially in developing countries. It is in this context that the DSD has compiled a Database of PES projects in Latin America and the Caribbean. The data base gives information about where the PES scheme takes place, the amount transacted, partners involved, area protected and duration among other details. Inquiries can be done by country, type of payment, market category (eg. Agroforestry systems, biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, ecotourism and watershed protection) or a combination of them.

The database can be accessed by clicking here: <http://www.apps.oas.org/pes/>

UNEP-SPONSORED PROJECT FINDS ECOSYSTEM PRESERVATION PLAYS KEY ROLE IN COUNTERING CLIMATE CHANGE

2 September 2009

Investing in the restoration and maintenance of the Earth's ecosystems can play a key role in countering climate change and climate-proofing vulnerable economies, says a new climate issues update by The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) project.

The issues update was launched by TEEB study leader Pavan Sukhdev, with German Federal Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel, European Commission Director-General for Environment Karl Falkenberg; and UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

The update indicates that ecosystems represent one of the biggest untapped allies against climate change, and underlines the need for an agreement on funding for forests and for addressing damage caused by rising temperatures and ocean acidification to coral reefs.

Investing in ecosystem-based measures such as financing Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) could assist in combating climate change and also be a key anti-poverty and adaptation measure. Coral reefs, on the other hand, have a key role to play in coastal defense against a predicted rise in storm surges and other extreme weather events.

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) hosts the TEEB project, which was launched by Germany and the European Commission in response to a proposal by the G8+5 Environment Ministers during their 2007 meeting in Potsdam, Germany, to develop a global study on the economics of biodiversity loss.

Link: <http://climate-l.org/2009/09/03/unesp-sponsored-project-finds-ecosystem-preservation-plays-key-role-in-countering-climate-change/http://climate-l.org/2009/09/03/unesp-sponsored-project-finds-ecosystem-preservation-plays-key-role-in-countering-climate-change/>

PAYMENTS FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES, A CIVIL LAW FOCUS

August 2009, Antonio Andaluz Westreicher

In June, a new book by Dr. Antonio Andaluz Westreicher titled "Payments for Ecosystem Services, a Civil Law Focus" was presented at an official ceremony that took place at the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AECID, Spanish acronym).

Diego Gutierrez Gronemann, who wrote the prologue and is also the executive director of the Bolivian Society for Environmental Law, the organization that sponsored the book, commended the author for highlighting the links between climate change issues and environmental law. Beyond simply describing a reality, he noted, Andaluz Westreicher presents a solution to the legal uncertainties that exist in ecosystem service transactions. The book moves beyond the fact-based, voluntary nature of ecosystem service transactions, frames them in legal contractual terms, and incorporates them into the framework of existing legal systems. Gutierrez Gronemann pointed out that these themes are relevant at the national and international level and should be debated by institutions, individuals, and agencies that work with and for the environment.

To read more: <http://www.sbda.org.bo/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/La-Compensaci3n-por-Servicios-Ambientales-2.pdf>

THE STATE OF REDD NEGOTIATIONS: CONSENSUS POINTS, OPTIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD AND RESEARCH NEEDS TO SUPPORT THE PROCESS

October 2009, Bogor, Indonesia

The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD) commissioned this report from the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) to summarize the current state of negotiations towards a decision in Copenhagen, specifically outlining areas of consensus, options for resolving areas where consensus has not yet been reached, and priorities for research to support successful implementation of an international REDD Programme following a decision at the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP) in Copenhagen.

The document can be downloaded at : <http://www.unredd.net/index.php?option>

MIXING THE REDD POLICY COCKTAIL IN THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON, COP15

December 2009

This Amazon Initiative policy brief published at the COP15 in Copenhagen provides a comparative economic assessment of PES versus command-and-control as REDD policy instruments in the Brazilian Amazon. It concludes that PES is a competitive REDD vehicle especially to reduce small-scale deforestation and should thus be targeted primarily to smallholders. Law enforcement remains the most cost-effective means to provide disincentives for large-scale, predominantly illegal deforestation.

For the full policy brief: http://www.katoombagroup.org/documents/sinergia/ai_policybrief_redd.pdf

DIRECT CONSERVATION PAYMENTS IN THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON: SCOPE AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

November 2009

This article looks into the scope and equity implications of applying payments for environmental services (PES) as a REDD implementation mechanism in the Brazilian Amazon. The analysis suggests that under current carbon prices the economic preconditions are in place to pay for avoided deforestation in over half of threatened forests over the next decade.

Unfortunately, the same optimism does not apply to institutional preconditions. Land grabbing, insecure tenure, overlapping claims, and lacking information on private tenure constitute real medium-term impediments to PES. If payments were to accrue to current landholders regardless of current tenure insecurities, large landowners who account for about 80% of all deforestation would reap the highest benefits, though per-capita benefits other tenure categories are also high. Schemes that closely align payments with opportunity costs are preferable for cost effectiveness, and not necessarily more inequitable in outcomes. Essentially, PES systems cannot substitute command-and-control measures: the former depend on the latter for basic governance systems to secure effective rights of exclusion, which land stewards essentially need in order to become reliable service providers.

To read more: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2009.11.003>

FOREST CARBON: LAW + PROPERTY RIGHTS

November 2009, Conservation International, Arlington, VA, USA

An excerpt from the executive summary:

Investments in reforestation and reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD) have the potential to mitigate greenhouse gas accumulation; sustain ecosystem services that support human and ecological communities; and generate sustainable livelihoods for poor, forest-dependent people. But as a new form of property, forest carbon presents legal complications that no jurisdiction has completely untangled.

This guide is designed to help community members, government leaders, lawyers, treaty negotiators, NGO advocates, and carbon investors understand forest carbon as property in order to support and develop sustainable forest carbon projects.

To view the entire publication: http://www.conservation.org/Documents/CI_Climate_Forest-Carbon_Law-Property-Rights_Takacs_Nov09.pdf

FAN RESPONDS TO GREENPEACE REGARDING THE PAC-NOEL KEMPFER PROJECT, BOLIVIA

From the FAN website (www.fan-bo.org): In a report released on October 15, 2009, entitled, "Carbon Scam: Noel Kempff Climate Action Project and the Push for Sub-national Forest Offsets", Greenpeace asserts erroneously that the Noel Kempff Mercado Climate Action Project (NKCAP) failed to meet its commitments in terms of reducing emissions, improving the living conditions of the local communities affected by the project, and using appropriate monitoring and accounting methodologies for addressing leakage and proving the additionality and permanence of its emissions reductions.

In its report, Greenpeace uses questionable reporting methods and relies on information that is irrelevant, disorganized, out of context, or simply false in order to discredit the Noel Kempff Mercado Climate Action Project (NKCAP) and its achievements.

To read more (In Spanish): http://www.fan-bo.org/common/files/pac/Posicion_FAN_Reporte_Greenpeace.pdf

PAST EVENTS

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MESSAGE FROM THE FIRST CONGRESS OF LATIN AMERICAN ECOSYSTEM SERVICE NETWORKS

11 - 13 November 2009, La Paz Bolivia

The degradation of the environment, which sustains human life through crucial functions, such as the regulation of water cycles, the benefits of biodiversity, and the ability to manage forest climates, represents a threat to the quality of life in many rural and urban areas in Latin American and the rest of the world.

But in the Para region of Brazil, innovative, incentive-based initiatives aimed primarily at watershed protection offer hope. The professionals from 13 countries who gathered at the event agreed that in addition to environmental policies, complementary financing mechanisms must be put in place at all administrative levels to support environmental services.

Four key challenges were identified at the congress:

- Changing current legal frameworks to allow for the adoption of flexible solutions that support the diverse activities of ecosystem services and local needs.
- Strengthening institutions responsible for formulating and implementing environmental policies with a focus on promoting their integration with civil society to ensure transparency and participation.
- Involving other government sectors responsible for formulating development policies that are environmentally friendly.
- Ensuring that conservation incentives promote sustainable and equitable local development.

The First Conference of Latin American Ecosystem Service Networks reached the conclusion that existing ecosystem service networks can collaborate on two levels – by promoting the transfer and management of environmental information and data and by supporting the decision-makers who confront these challenges.



This conference represents the first step toward the creation of a strategic collaboration network.

Link to the full event description: http://www.katoombagroup.org/~katoomba/event_details.php?id

LAUNCH OF MERCADOS AMBIENTALES WEBSITE - FROM THE ECOSYSTEM MARKETPLACE

10 November, 2009

Website Launch! Mercados Ambientales is the brother website of Ecosystem Marketplace serving the Spanish speaking public. Operated by Reforestamos México A.C., (www.reforestamosmexico.org), this site is the leading source of free information in the world of markets and payments for ecosystem services. Themes covered include: carbon, water, and biodiversity.

To view the site: <http://www.mercadosambientales.com/>

SHARING EXPERIENCES ABOUT PES IN LATIN AMERICA

20-22 August 2009, CIFOR

From 20-22 August, CIFOR and partner organisations held an international seminar in Bogotá and Villa de Leyva (Colombia) entitled: "Payments for environmental services: from pilot projects to extended programmes?" During the event, about 100 participants, including PES experts and environmental practitioners, presented pilots and consolidated initiatives in Latin America, and discussed the challenges of this conservation strategy, especially the pros and cons of focusing on larger-scale payments for environmental services (PES) programmes. "Large-scale government-financed PES programmes can potentially protect large areas at low transaction cost, but often they fall short of this potential," said CIFOR scientist and project leader Sven Wunder. "Small-scale, user-financed programmes are generally more focused and targeted, and tend to be more cost-effective. So it is not always a good idea to scale up PES schemes. On the contrary, in some cases it may be recommendable to scale down."



To read more: http://economia.uniandes.edu.co/facultad/eventos_y_noticias/eventos/realizados_por_la_facultad/Seminario_Pagos_por_servicios_ambientales

SEMINAR-WORKSHOP: LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF PES SCHEMES

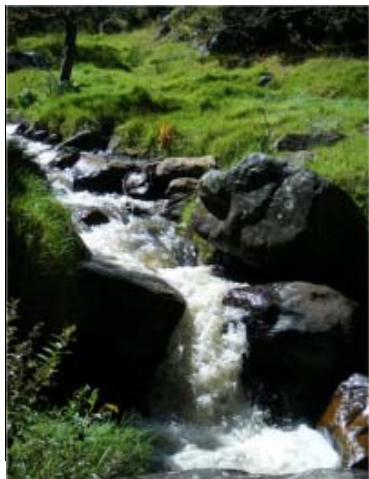
18 September 2009, RISAS, MAE, IUCN, The Katoomba Group

On September 18th, the Seminar-Workshop "Legal and Institutional Aspects of PES Schemes: Compensation for services of the ecosystems in Colombia, Perú, and Brazil" took place in Quito, Ecuador. The general objective of the event was to facilitate regional dialogue around different Latin American experiences regarding the implementation of compensation for environmental services schemes, with the intent of promoting environmental services as an effective tool for the management, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems.

This workshop was part of a series of activities sponsored by the IUCN's Regional Office in South America (IUCN SUR, the Center for Environmental Rights (CDA), and the Katoomba Group, whose research of legal-institutional PES frameworks in Colombia, Perú, Bolivia and Brazil, was financed by the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development. The workshop was sponsored by the Ministry of Environment in Ecuador and the Network of Environmental Services Practitioners (RISAS), in hopes of strengthening the capacity of organized civil society and the development and exchange of knowledge at the political-legal level related to ecosystem services in the region.

The presentations and other event details can be found at: http://www.katoombagroup.org/~katoomba/event_details.php?id

1ST INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR OF WATER PRODUCTION PLANNING



26-28 August 2009, Agencia Nacional de Aguas Brasilia - DF

The 26th, 27th, and 28th of August brought the 1st International Seminar of the Water Production Plan in the city of Brasilia. At the event, organized by the National Water Agency of Brazil with support from The Nature Conservancy, over 500 people attended from different states in Brazil. During the first two days of the event presentations were conducted about hydrological ecosystem services and experiences in Latin America; the Water Production Plan, projects in progress, new proposals, and its new web page (<http://www.ana.gov.br/produagua>) were presented; also discussed was the bill on a National Policy for Ecosystem Services in Brazil. During the third day a site visit was made to the Pipiripau River Basin on the outskirts of Brasilia

<http://www.ana.gov.br/produagua>



FUTURE EVENTS

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NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT (NCSE)

20-22 January 2010

The NCSE national conference will engage leading thinkers and doers from a diversity of disciplines, sectors, and perspectives in a structured conversation about the meaning of the green economy and how investment in green education, research and jobs can help solve both the economic and environmental crises.

Welcoming over 1000 attendees, The New Green Economy will bring together leaders in sustainable business, environmental policymakers, civil society, university faculty, students from across the nation, and educated citizens.

[Event Description Here](#)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF PAYMENTS FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

5 - 7 October 2010

The International Conference of Payments for Ecosystem Services will be organized by the Technological Forestry Center of Catalunya, the Catalunya Department of Environment and Habitat, the Latin American Network of Payments for Ecosystem Services (REDIPASA) and the Ministry of Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain. Specific themes included PES as public policy, local arrangements and PES in the context of climate change.




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Centro Tecnológico Forestal de Catalunya, Solsona, España: www.ctfc.cat

THE NETWORKS

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ABOUT US

	<p>The Amazon Initiative (IA) The Amazon Initiative International Consortium for the Conservation and Sustainable use of Natural Resources in the Amazon (AI) was launched in 2004, in line with the policy framework of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), with the objective of elaborating and implementing collaborative programs that identify and promote sustainable land use systems in the Amazon. Founding members of the AI include six agricultural research institutions of member Amazonian countries, four centers of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), and the Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Cooperation (IICA) through its Prociatrópicos program. The AI promotes and implements training and consulting activities along with its primary research foci. In 2008, the AI launched its Amazon Initiative Eco-Regional Program (PER-IA) which aims to contribute to the improvement of rural livelihoods and conservation of Amazonian ecosystems through research for development. Currently the AI coordinating office resides in the Brazilian Eastern Amazon Agricultural Research Cooperation (EMBRAPA). http://www.iamazonica.org.br/</p>
	<p>The Network of Environmental Services Practitioners (RISAS) The Network of Environmental Services Practitioners – RISAS – was established in 2005 as a partnership of organizations and professionals dedicated to discussion, analysis and research into the financial mechanisms available for ecosystem services protection and restoration. The organization's mission is to provide a network open to individuals and institutions involved in financial initiatives supporting ecosystem services conservation. Based in Quito, Ecuador, RISAS' sphere of influence extends throughout the Andean region. The network uses different tools usch as meetings, emails, workshops, the website and this newsletter, to support learning and discussion around current themes and experiences related to financial mechanisms for conservation and protection of environmental services. http://www.redrisas.org/quienes.php</p>
	<p>The Katoomba Group An initiative of Forest Trends, the Katoomba Group is a global network of practitioners working to promote the use and improve capacity for payment for ecosystem services (PES). Since its founding in 1999, the Katoomba Group has addressed key challenges to developing markets and payments for ecosystem services, from enabling legislation through establishment of new market institutions to testing methods for successful project design. The organization has held 15 global conferences and dozens of training workshops, published and contributed to key publications and tools, and supported the development of PES schemes, among them the BioCarbon Fund at the World Bank and the Mexican PES Fund. It has also advised national policy discussions on financial incentives for conservation in China, Brazil, India, Colombia, and other countries. In 2005, the Katoomba Group launched the Ecosystem Marketplace, a leading source of information on environmental markets. In 2006, the Tropical America regional Katoomba was formed to strengthen regional PES capacity and facilitate ecosystem services</p>



transactions throughout Latin America.
<http://www.katoombagroup.org/>



The 'Compensation for Environmental Services' Learning Network ((RACSA)

RACSA was established in 2006 to promote dialogue around the use of economic incentives to achieve conservation objectives and improve the wellbeing of Bolivia's poor. Through learning and networking events, and the exchange and diffusion of information in digital and print format, RACSA seeks to increase understanding of compensation for environmental services and climate change and promote the development of successful policies and initiatives. RACSA's members include governmental, non-governmental, private, and civil society actors dedicated to the development of environmental services in Bolivia. For more information, please visit the website of the Fundación Natura Bolivia, which currently coordinates RACSA, at <http://www.naturabolivia.org/>



REDIPASA

REDIPASA is a network of researchers from Latin American countries that are involved in PES, the management of hydrological catchment areas, rural development and management policies, and natural resource conservation. Researchers work together and exchange experiences to: standardize criteria, design and execute joint research projects; produce studies that propose mechanisms to improve PES and PES methodologies; and monitoring, evaluation, and methodologies of experiences adapted to different situations. REDIPASA aims to provide regional managers with tools to facilitate rural development and environmental sustainability over a wide area, by, compensating rural inhabitants (who are often impoverished) for conservation measures. The network also hopes to develop PES models that can be replicated and expanded elsewhere in Latin America.