

RAINFOREST REVIEW



COLOMBIA: One million hectare National Park created

BRAZIL: Xixuau, a new model of conservation in the Amazon

ROMANIA: First 7,000 hectares for Carthpathian Wilderness Reserve

CHILE: A research centre for the Namoncahue Corridor

FOREST CREDITS: Offset your emissions and protect rainforests directly



AUTUMN 2010

CONSERVATION PROJECTS:



Costa Rica
Coastal forest and turtle conservation



Colombia
Expanding the Pangan-Awa Corridor



Colombia
Conservation of indigenous land



Panama
Turtle conservation



Brazil
Extension of the Xixuau Reserve Foundation



Ecuador
Choco-Andean Corridor project



Brazil
Assistance for the Yawanawa



Ecuador
Lowland tropical forest on the Rio Napo



Brazil
Education project for Cristalino Ecological Foundation



Chile
Araucaria forest of Southern Chile



Peru
Threatened high-altitude forest of Peru



Romania
Ancient Carpathian forests



India & Sri Lanka
Working with local communities

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A letter from the Director



The past year has been one of the toughest but most productive in the charity's 17 year history which we hope you will enjoy reading in this edition of Rainforest Review.

2009 ended with the Copenhagen summit on climate change. High on the agenda was avoided deforestation, or in other words, efforts to curb deforestation in mainly tropical areas for their importance in storing carbon. Although Copenhagen was generally perceived as a disaster due to the US and China's inability to agree on a legally binding accord on reduction in emissions, the single issue that was consistently prominent in the discussions was that of forests. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD) has become a key part of the international negotiations on climate change. Nonetheless, this is still only an expectation with no real agreement yet, and in the meantime forests need our help more than ever. Let us hope the summit in Cancun in Mexico next summer will offer renewed hope.

As always, it is the firm belief here at Rainforest Concern that we cannot wait until governments act decisively to protect our natural environment and Copenhagen illustrates how important it is to act privately and strategically to conserve our forests and the vast diversity of life they support.

Most significantly, last October our partnership with Gaia Amazonas succeeded with the declaration of a new national park in the Caqueta Basin of Amazonian Colombia. A staggering one million hectares of pristine wilderness, the newly created area is the first park to be run by the indigenous people who still live there as they have always done. Thanks to the generosity of the Planet Foundation we now have secured funding to dramatically increase this protected area.

However conservation work should not be measured purely in terms of large tracts of protected forest. By contrast, the Pacuare Reserve in Costa Rica at just 1,000 hectares witnessed the largest number of leatherback turtle nests in the project's 20 year history. This we hope may represent a turnaround in the decline of these magnificent creatures which are still categorised as 'critically endangered'. In the following pages you will read about other success stories in Chile, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Brazil, Peru and Romania.

Thankfully and not before time, there has recently been a growth in robust certification standards for carbon forestry projects and Rainforest Concern is very much in tune with these developments. The charity's Forest Credits programme continues to gather momentum and has just launched its dedicated website: www.forestcredits.org.uk The online carbon calculator is very easy to use and allows you to calculate most type of emissions from a single flight to those of a precise model of car - this may be done as an individual or as a business. All the funds generated through the programme will go to protect and expand our first verified carbon offset conservation project in the Choco-Andean Corridor in Ecuador: the Neblina Reserve. Another two Forest Credits projects are in the pipeline for verification. If you do not already offset your carbon emissions I would urge you to see just how easy it is to become carbon positive with Forest Credits!

We are delighted to welcome Alberto Pulido Cruz as a Trustee of Rainforest Concern. Based in Santiago, Chile, he is senior counsel of the leading law firm Philippi, Yrarrázaval, Pulido & Brunner. Over the years Alberto has always shown a keen interest in the activities of the charity and his experience will continue to be a great asset to our work, particularly with the Chilean projects.

Finally I wish to pay a small tribute to a man I admired greatly. Teddy Goldsmith, champion of conservation and organic farming, died in August last year at his home in Tuscany. He was the founder of the Ecologist magazine and the Ecology Party, which later became the Green Party. Far ahead of its time, Teddy co-wrote *A Blueprint for Survival* in 1972, and more recently *The Way*, his extraordinary book on ecological thought. Teddy was a huge inspiration and encouraged me to establish Rainforest Concern back in 1993. He is a great loss to the planet which he loved so much and will be greatly missed by all who were lucky enough to meet him.

Peter Bennett

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Project partner organisations:

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Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh (UK and Chile)
Santa Lucia Co-operative (Ecuador)
Steppes Discovery (UK)
The Living Rainforest (UK)
Universidad Austral de Valdivia (Chile)
Yachana Foundation (Ecuador and USA)

A new partnership with Airmiles

The Mileage Company, operators of Airmiles, the UK's leading travel rewards scheme, is pleased to announce its new partnership with Rainforest Concern, the global conservation charity which protects threatened natural habitats and their biodiversity together with the indigenous people who still depend on them for survival.

Through its Airmiles travel rewards scheme, the Mileage Company is donating over £40,000 to support Rainforest Concern's project work. The money raised will go towards protection of the Choco-Andean Corridor Project in north west Ecuador, where the Charity has been working for the past 13 years to create a forest corridor to connect several vulnerable protected areas in a global 'biodiversity hotspot'.

The Mileage Company's donation to Rainforest Concern is the result of two of Airmiles' environmentally friendly customer initiatives: members send in their old mobile phones which are reconditioned and reused in developing countries, instead of ending up in landfill, and shopping via Airmiles Eco Shop for sustainable products like eco-kettles and organic beauty products. For both these initiatives Airmiles members collect miles and the profits are donated to two partner charities, Rainforest Concern and the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT).

Andrew Swaffield, Managing Director, The Mileage Company, operators of Airmiles, said: "As well as travelling, we know our members want to make a difference and reduce their carbon footprint. Through our environmentally friendly customer initiatives – mobile recycling and shopping via Airmiles Eco Shop, Airmiles customers can now make a significant contribution to environmental projects carried out by the Rainforest Concern to protect threatened natural habitats and the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust."



The Mileage company

We particularly wish to thank the following for their support

Good Gifts

We are pleased to be included again in the Good Gifts catalogue for Christmas 2010, a copy of which is included with this magazine. We would like to thank Good Gifts for their continued support, through which you can sponsor an acre of rainforest as a birthday, wedding, christening or Christmas gift - a wonderful and unusual gift for friends and loved ones. Alternatively go to their website at www.goodgifts.org



Boden

We are happy to announce that Boden are supporting us again this year. Their very generous contribution has assisted us in purchasing land for the Chocó-Andean Corridor Project in south west Colombia. Please see www.boden.co.uk/forestfun/

Boden

Steppes Travel and Discovery Initiatives

We are very grateful for the continued support from Steppes Travel, www.steppestravel.co.uk and Discovery Initiatives, <http://www.steppesdiscovery.co.uk>



The Australian Conservation Organisation

The Australian conservation organisation Rainforest Rescue International has been a consistent supporter of Rainforest Concern's work in Ecuador in recent years. Now I am pleased to say they have extended their help to the Pacuare Reserve in Costa Rica. We appreciate their support greatly.



Forest Credits: At last, an opportunity to offset your carbon footprint and protect threatened rainforests with confidence!

by Charlotte Jourdain and Rosana Della M ea

Carbon offsetting is fast becoming common practice among individuals and companies wishing to reduce their carbon footprint. We are all responsible for emitting carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases through daily activities such as commuting, travelling, heating our homes and offices, and therefore contribute to global emissions and the impact this may have on the climate. Rainforest Concern has developed an online calculator that helps individuals and companies quickly and simply calculate their carbon footprint.

Since the intergovernmental legal processes are notoriously slow at getting an international climate agreement off the ground, civil society is taking matters in its own hands. As a result, there has been a rapid growth of voluntary offsetting schemes. However some of these are of poor quality, and NGOs have come up with standards to help ensure the integrity of some of these schemes. Forests have an important role to play in storing and absorbing atmospheric carbon so they naturally are an option of choice for offsetting. However some forest carbon projects have come under criticism for increasing carbon uptake at the detriment of biodiversity conservation and local communities.

Rainforest Concern has come up with its own solution: Forest Credits. Rainforest Concern combines its existing forest conservation expertise to offer carbon offsetting opportunities to its supporters, while at the same time keeping a strong focus on the conservation of threatened rainforest, unique habitats, and working with local NGOs to ensure the long term success of the projects.

The first of Rainforest Concern's dedicated carbon forestry projects is part of the Neblina Reserve in Ecuador, an area of over 1,300 hectares situated in the Choco-Andean corridor North of Quito, which safeguards exceptionally high biodiversity and an important watershed for local communities. Rainforest Concern's first step was to purchase the land which was under pressure from deforestation for mining and conversion to pasture, commercial agriculture and timber exploitation. Now and going forward, carbon

Rainforest Concern website a snapshot

finance is used to pay for its ongoing conservation, keeping it safe from deforestation and degradation.

By protecting carbon stocks in trees compared to a baseline deforestation rate, the project thereby satisfies the first criterion of "additionality", the main principle of carbon offsetting. In total, the project is expected to avoid the deforestation of 366 hectares of forest and approximately 253,873 tonnes of CO₂ over the 30 year project lifetime, and is being monitored using state of the art technology of remote sensing combined with ground-data measurement. In addition, active management by Rainforest Concern will prevent deforestation being displaced to surrounding areas ("leakage avoidance") through awareness raising and the development of alternative sources of income for local people.

Following the successful application of forest carbon methodologies of the highest standard in the Neblina reserve, and as interest in carbon offsetting grows, Rainforest Concern is looking at expanding its pool of carbon forestry

projects, with new projects identified in Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica, where we have already been involved in conservation projects for a long time.

Reducing emissions and protecting rainforests is something that concerns all of us. What better way to offset your emissions than through a carbon forestry programme with integrity and with an organisation that has been protecting rainforests for over 17 years?

Simply go to www.forestcredits.org.uk and follow the step by step guide!



Hard Rain Exhibition

July, 1969: photographer Mark Edwards, lost on the edge of the Sahara desert, is rescued by a Tuareg nomad who takes him to his people. He rubs two sticks together to make a fire and produces a cassette player. Bob Dylan sings *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*: "sad forests", "dead oceans", "where the people are many and their hands are all empty". As Dylan piles image upon image, Mark has the idea to illustrate each line of the song. In the years that follow, he travels around the world to take the photographs to turn Dylan's prophetic words into images of the real world.

The result is Hard Rain, a 50-metre outdoor display and documentary presentation, which brings global challenges alive in a moving and unforgettable way. The exhibition has been viewed by more than 15 million people on every continent in city centres, botanic gardens, universities, and at the United Nations headquarters. One of the most successful photographic displays ever created, it has attracted huge public and critical acclaim, along with the support and endorsement of political and environmental leaders across the world (see www.hardrainproject.com) Rainforest Concern is partnering Hard Rain on its new project, What'll You Do Now America?, illustrating solutions from around the world to the challenges illustrated in the exhibition.



Photo: Mark Edwards

Photographer and environmentalist Mark Edwards
More than 15 million people have so far seen his highly emotive exhibition

Rainforest Concern teams up with Greentomato

The Government's new 'Clean Energy Cashback Scheme', which provides a guaranteed return for generating renewable electricity, came into force on 1st April 2010. It has made the prospect of installing your own clean electricity system at home or at work much more attractive as you will be paid for every unit of clean electricity that you generate and you will receive a guaranteed price for any excess electricity you sell back to the grid.

As an added incentive, if you install your system through greentomatoenergy or purchase any of their other services, they will sponsor an acre of rainforest through Rainforest Concern on your behalf. greentomatoenergy is the newest business within the greentomato group of companies which aims to bring practical low carbon solutions into everyday life. They design, supply and install renewable energy systems, such as solar panels and are specialists in low energy and passivhaus building. Further details are provided on their website,

www.greentomatoenergy.com or you can call them on **020 8380 8908**.



Ed Stafford walks the Amazon in 859 days!

Ed Stafford has become the first person to walk the length of the Amazon river. Walking the longest river on earth was one of the few remaining challenges left to undertake. He ended up having to walk almost 6,000 miles which took him a total of 859 days and that's about two and a third years!

When Ed walked into the office in late 2007 and told me what he intended to do, I thought he was crazy to even consider it, bearing in mind the obvious hazards such as disease, hostile Indians, getting lost and the long diversions needed to be made to cross countless tributaries. This may all sound like something from the Victorian era of exploration, but in the Amazon basin the same dangers still apply today.

Surely even the obsessed Francisco de Orellana would have been impressed, who was the first person to do practically the same journey by raft and boat in 1541 but with the loss of dozens of his travelling companions. Sir Ranulph Fiennes described Ed's expedition as "mad but marvellous"!

Ed raised funds for Rainforest Concern and has kindly offered to do some talks to raise awareness of our work, particularly with the projects we have in the Amazon basin in Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador (about which you can read in the following pages).

I am sure before long Ed will find a new challenge and this time I will certainly be taking him more seriously! *Peter Bennett*



Photo: KeithDucatel.com

Ed Stafford's gruelling challenge

Caught in the act! Camera trapping elusive wildlife on our website

Wildlife such as spectacled bears, pumas, ocelots and deer are difficult to see in forest environments but there is the urgent need to assess their conservation status to determine the effectiveness of conservation efforts.

Our camera trapping project at the Santa Lucia Cloud Forest Reserve in Ecuador captures images and provide scientific information on the status of endangered species using a network of camera traps set up in the forest. These cameras detect movement and allow us to take digital photographs of wildlife in the reserve that is then uploaded to an online database.

Just go to http://www.rainforestconcern.org/camera_traps/ to see the latest images.



Whitley Gold Award goes to Angela Maldonado

For several years Dr Angela Maldonado, the Director of the Fundacion Entropika in Colombia, has been determined to end the illegal trade in Amazon night monkeys for biomedical research. She has now become the winner of the prestigious Whitley Gold Award.

Angela, a graduate of Oxford Brookes University received her award in London in May from HRH The Princess Royal, Princess Anne who is Patron of The Whitley Fund for Nature (WFN), the UK charity behind the international awards scheme. The prize recognises her work with rainforest communities around the Colombia - Peru border to stop the loss of an estimated 4,000 wild night monkeys a year for use in biomedical experiments, a trade outlawed by international agreements.

Dr Maldonado's project includes developing new ways for local people to earn a sustainable living from rainforest resources as well as finding out more about night monkeys, the world's only truly nocturnal monkeys. She received a project grant of £30,000, donated by HSBC Private Bank together with £30,000 in additional project funding. We wish her every success in achieving her goal.

Rainforest Concern with the Holly Hill Trust has co-funded Angela's research work for the past 3 years and proposed her work for consideration for the Whitley Awards.



Dr Angela Maldonado with HRH The Princess Royal, Princess Anne

Photo: WFN

Angela received a project grant of £30,000, donated by HSBC Private Bank together with £30,000 in additional project funding.



Colombian night monkey

Photo: Angela Maldonado

London Marathon



Thom Herzmark

A big thank you to Thomas Herzmark, Jonathon Nicholls and Katie van Dop who chose to support Rainforest Concern as their fundraising charity for the gruelling London Marathon.

Feeling fit enough and up for the challenge? Then perhaps you would like to join our team in 2011? Even if you are lucky enough to receive a place through the London Marathon ballot system, why not use this to run for Rainforest Concern? Please contact Helen Sampson on 020 7229 2093 or helen@rainforestconcern.org for more information. Then get training... running is a great way to ward off the winter blues!

For the less energetic you can of course sponsor our runners online through www.justgiving.com, or contact us for further details on how you can support them on the big day.

Increasing tropical rainforest protection for over 5 million hectares of the Colombian Amazon

by Natalia Hernández and Martín von Hildebrand, Fundación Gaia Amazonas

Colombia's Amazon region occupies 42%, almost 50 million hectares, of the country's land surface and forms part of the Northwest Amazon region where, according to 75% of models on the impacts of climate change in South America, the Amazon biome will be conserved. Protecting the Amazon forest in Colombia should not just be a national but a global priority.

Since 2007 Rainforest Concern has partnered with Fundación Gaia Amazonas, to promote the shared socio-environmental management of the Caquetá River basin in the Colombian Amazon, and baseline research in this region has made it possible to identify main threats to the Colombian Amazon in general. In particular, Rainforest Concern supports the expansion of protected areas and indigenous resguardos over 5 million hectares and the building of local capacity of the indigenous people to manage these territories based on their traditional knowledge and practices.



Photo: Annamaria Guerra, FGA

La Pedrera on the Rio Caquetá

The Caquetá River basin occupies 44% of the Colombian Amazon (21 million hectares) and, with the neighbouring Putumayo and Negro River basins, they form the country's entire Amazon region.



Photo: Rodrigo Botero, DTAC

Stunning panorama of Serranía de Chiribiquete - proposed area for the project's expansion

For that reason, from the baseline research on the Caquetá River basin carried out with the support of Rainforest Concern, it has been possible to identify the main threats to conservation of the Colombian Amazon, and to establish guidelines for promoting its protection and sustainable development.

At present, the Colombian Amazon is in danger due to three interdependent and structural problems: (i) the lack of articulated public policies, (ii) undervaluing of the region and its indigenous people and (iii) the lack of spaces for articulation between government and non-government actors. This scenario of limited environmental governance has meant that the expansion of the agricultural frontier, the exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons, mining (legal and illegal), and the development of infrastructure, are now the greatest threats to conservation and the main vectors for deforestation.

To tackle this situation, some priority lines of action have been drafted, aimed at consolidating the protection of the Amazon forest through the expansion of indigenous resguardos and protected areas, and the strengthening of environmental governance based on local processes and institutional articulation.



Photo: Rainforest Concern

Dr Martín von Hildebrand and friend

The main achievements during 2009 and the first half of 2010 are:

1. Creation of a Protected Area over the Yaigojé Apaporis resguardo

Gaia Amazonas played an active role in the negotiations, studies and necessary documentation for the declaration of this new protected area, together with the indigenous organization ACIYA (Association of Indigenous Captains of the Yaigojé Apaporis), the National Parks Administration (UAESPNN – Unidad de Parques Nacionales) and its Amazonia-Orinoquía Division (DTAO – Dirección Territorial Amazonia Orinoquía), the Natural Sciences Institute of Colombia's National University, and the Office for Ethnic Affairs of the Ministry for the Interior and Justice. This required the preparation of a socio-economic and cultural description, a biophysical description, maps showing the boundaries of the area, a comprehensive proposal to the Colombian Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences for its declaration as a new protected area, and prior consultation in the region.

As a result, the Yaigojé Apaporis National Natural Park, which will be managed by the local indigenous population and covers their ancestral territories, was created and formally declared on 27th October 2009 (Resolution #2079 of October 27th 2009, Ministry for the Environment, Housing and Territorial Development) with an area of 1,056,023 hectares within the Vaupés and Amazonas departments. This is the first National Park created with the purpose of protecting the material and immaterial values of the indigenous peoples, which are associated with the conservation, use and management of the territory and the protected area.

This new National Natural Park will also ensure the protection of ecosystems and sacred sites,

including the sub-soil, against mining exploration and exploitation that is permitted by Ingeominas and carried out by the Canadian company Cosigo Frontier Resources. A great success! See box 1 for more information.

2. Development of a “Strategy for Environmental Governance for the conservation and sustainable development of the Colombian Amazon”

The Caquetá River Basin management strategy promoted by Gaia Amazonas, provided a common platform for Gaia Amazonas, the Amazonía-Orinoquía Division of National Parks and the Natural Patrimony Fund (FPN - Fondo Patrimonio Natural), to build a strategy for the conservation and sustainable development of the Colombian Amazon, with environmental governance as the central focus. The strategy has six components or specific objectives, as follows:

- a. To consolidate conservation of the Colombian Amazon forest through expanding the Chiribiquete National Natural Park by 5 million hectares.
- b. Pilot project in local governance and territorial ordering in the zones most affected by colonization in the Colombian Amazon.
- c. Pilot project for conservation incentives and environmental governance over 4 million hectares of indigenous territories under the jurisdiction of Associations of Traditional Indigenous Authorities, ACAIPI, ACIYA, ACIMA and PANI.
- d. Formal spaces for trans-boundary articulation, built between States and with civil society participation, to implement agreements aimed at territorial ordering.

- e. To develop and strengthen social and institutional capacities at the local, regional and national levels, to implement strategies for conservation and environmental governance over 35 million hectares of the Colombian Amazon, for conservation and environmental governance over 35 million hectares of the Colombian Amazon.
- f. To formalize the areas for discussion and cross-sectoral policy-making on development and conservation of the Colombian Amazon.

The strategy supported by the Ministry of the Environment, the National Department of Planning, the International Cooperation and Social Action - Presidency of the Republic Agency, as well as to the International Table of Donors for the Amazon. The strategy has been well received by indigenous organizations, NGOs and local government entities; and various international cooperation agencies have expressed an interest in financing the initiative.

3. Expansion of two indigenous resguardos (Mirití Paraná and Nonuya de Villazul)

Gaia Amazonas accompanied the requests for expanding the territory covered by Mirití Paraná and Nonuya de Villazul resguardos, and supported the required studies and documentation. The requests for increasing the coverage of these resguardos were handed to INCODER (Colombian Institute for Rural Development), the government entity responsible for establishing or expanding indigenous resguardos. In December 2009 the Board of Directors of INCODER approved the expansion of these indigenous resguardos by 420,000 hectares. This decision was recently officialised and will be published soon in the Official Journal.

Colombia's Amazon region occupies 42% (almost 50 million hectares) of the country's land surface and forms part of the Northwest Amazon region.



Photo: Pete Oxford

A spider monkey

Yaigojé-Apaporis: protecting the “Jaguar’s haven” from mining

by Natalia Hernández and Martín von Hildebrand, Fundación Gaia Amazonas

On 27th October 2009, the Yaigojé Apaporis National Natural Park was officially declared Colombia’s 55th, and the third largest, national protected area - Resolution #2079, Ministry for the Environment, Housing and Territorial Development. It covers more than 1,056,523 hectares of forest at the intersection of the Amazon Basin and the Guiana Shield, and will be managed by the indigenous inhabitants.

This vast swathe of tropical forest, which straddles the Caquetá River and its tributary, the Apaporis River, is teeming with tropical forest biodiversity - 1,683 vascular plant species, 362 bird species, 443 different types of butterfly, more than 200 fish species, and at least 16 species of mammal that are threatened or at risk of extinction, such as the giant ant-eater, squirrel monkey, jaguar, manatee, and the pink dolphin. It is home to the Macuna, Tanimuca, Letuama, Cabiayari, Barazano, Yujup-Macu and Yauna – ethnic groups, each with their own language but a shared cultural identity, who continue their traditional practices for safeguarding the forest. For them, the many streams, lakes, natural springs, salt licks, rocks and other natural features of their territory are considered ‘sacred natural sites’, each with its own spirit guardian.

Yaigojé means “Jaguar’s haven”, referring to a spiritual figure that gives the local indigenous people wisdom about their culture and their natural surroundings.

Since 1985, this stretch of forest around the Apaporis River has been legally recognised as one of the many indigenous territories, or ‘resguardos’ (collectively owned areas of ancestral land) of the Colombian Amazon. However this status, under existing Colombian legislation, does not provide the indigenous communities with rights to the sub-soil; nor did it provide them with legal recourse when Cosigo Resources, a Canadian gold-mining company, began prospecting in the area three years ago.

The idea to create a national park was, to a large degree, a last resort. Faced with increasing pressure from Cosigo Resources and other companies to access the minerals and petroleum found in the Colombian Amazon, and a flood of permissions being handed out by the Ministry for Mines, the traditional indigenous authorities (elders and traditional knowledge holders) saw it



Photo: Rodrigo Batlero, DTIAO

View showing the advance of colonisation in the Caqueta basin

as the most viable strategy to protect the forest and their territory. Gaia Amazonas enabled their local organization ACIYA -Asociación de Capitanes Indígenas del Yaigojé Apaporis – to begin talks with National Parks of Colombia and to prepare a comprehensive proposal to the Colombian Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences for its declaration as a new protected area.

The Yaigojé Apaporis National Natural Park will be managed by the local indigenous population

and covers their ancestral territories. This is the first National Park in Colombia with the purpose of protecting the material and immaterial values of the indigenous peoples, and enabling them to continue as protagonists in the conservation, use and management of the protected area.

We wish to specifically thank Rainforest Concern and the Planet Foundation for their continued enthusiasm and support in assisting Gaia Amazonas to protect this huge and pristine region of the Colombian Amazon.



Photo: Rainforest Concern

An evening on the Caqueta river

ECOAN's activities in Peru

by Martin Stanley, Holly Hill trust

2009 was a very busy year for ECOAN, which has expanded its operations beyond the original Polylepis reforestation program in the Vilcanota Mountains. Rainforest Concern continued to support the community reforestation program of Polylepis, and ECOAN has set up more tree nurseries to grow a local variety of alder, which has been planted around the villages and along streams etc., with the idea that in time it will provide firewood and timber (and so help protect the slower growing Polylepis woodlands typically further away from the villages, as villagers will have a source of wood closer by). However, as an endemic species it is preferable to plant alder to more eucalyptus. ECOAN continues to help the communities in practical ways by installing chimneys in some homes to reduce smoke pollution inside their houses, by extending the vegetable production project, and helping build a community hall, which is also used for a local handicrafts market.

With funding from the Moore Foundation ECOAN has set up a nature reserve with a research station at Abra Patricia in the cloud forest region in North Peru. The reserve has many endemic and rare birds and woolly monkeys.

ECOAN organised expeditions over the Andes near Marcapata in the cloud forest region on the Eastern side of the Andes going towards the Amazon, where the Trans-Oceanic Highway is being built connecting Brazil with Peru. The road is known as the Trans-Amazonica in Brazil. This is a huge World Bank funded project and while it



Photo: ECOAN

Reforestation with Polylepis seedlings. Community of Rumira Sondormayo

may bring some positive development for some communities and massive profits for both governments and a few companies, it will also cause widespread exploitation of the forests, loss of biodiversity and very probably, the disruption of indigenous communities.

ECOAN has identified some sites of cloud forest near this road under construction, where there are forested areas with endemic birds, and is helping a few interested land owners to register their land as private nature reserves to get better protected status. Often more damage is done after the roads are newly completed with strip development of houses with more destruction of

forests and wildlife. Rainforest Concern has also been helping ECOAN with this initial work.

In early 2010 there were devastating flash floods in the Cusco region of Peru, where tens of thousands of peoples homes were destroyed and many people drowned. These flash floods were probably made worse by the extensive deforestation, which has occurred over the years on hillsides above many towns and villages.

One of the areas badly affected is a wetland area south of Cusco called Huacarpay. ECOAN got this site registered as a RAMSAR wetland site because of its importance for birds, and has been running conservation education programs in the area, and has started working with the local communities to reforest the hillsides around the lake with Polylepis. Unfortunately there has been uncontrolled development with many houses built on the flood plain close to the lake and road, which were destroyed in the floods.



Photo: ECOAN

Tree Nursery at Huilloc

Rainforest Concern recently provided funding to help with the education program ECOAN is running at local schools. ECOAN is also encouraging people to rebuild their homes higher up the hillsides, further away from the road and lake. Interestingly, the Inca ruins are at a higher altitude overlooking the lake – presumably they knew about these flood risks and planned accordingly.

Xixuau-xiparina Reserve: A model of conservation in the Amazon Rainforest

by Chris Clark, Director of Amazon Association

The Xixuau-Xiparina Reserve is an area of 450,000 acres of pristine rainforest within the Roraima State of Brazil. It is located 450km north west of Manaus, on the confluences of the Xixuau and Xiparina creeks and the Jauperi River.

The reserve is under the management and protection of a Brazilian NGO, the Amazon Association (AA), formed by and for the benefit of the native inhabitants of the region. The Association was founded in 1992 on the premise that it is only possible to preserve the remaining intact areas of the Amazon rainforest through poverty relief and the active participation of the local inhabitants, the true guardians of their natural environment.

The association was born through the casual meeting of a group of people from the Amazon and Great Britain. I had been travelling in the Amazon since 1984 with a local native he met on his first trip. Plinio Encarnacao is now the president of the Amazon Association and it was the friendship between these two men, which led to the creation of the Association and the Xixuau-Xiparina Nature Reserve. In fact on their joint travels to many parts of the Amazon they always took the time to make a return visit to the Rio Jauaperi, which they discovered on the first trip together back in 1984.

Over the years they got to know the local people and one day in 1990 a group of village elders asked them to a meeting where they stated that in view of the number of years the two of them had been coming to the area, and in view of the problems the local people were facing, some form of cooperation should be established between them.

The locals suffered from total lack of infrastructure for health, education, transport and any form of economic possibilities. Many of them were being forced to emigrate to the slums of cities like Manaus, Novo Ayrão and Barcelos where at least they could earn a meagre living as manual labourers and have their children enrolled in a school and treated in the event of illness.

Thus was born the Association with the explicit aim of proving that it was possible to live in a dignified manner while preserving the incredible natural environment of the Xixuau and Xiparina rivers. The locals would take care of the



Photo: Rainforest Concern

Emanuela Evangelista and members of the Xixuau community

environment and quickly made rules for its conservation, such as no hunting, logging or commercial fishing in the area. They even went as far as forbidding motorised transportation inside the reserve in order not to disturb the animals and fish. In exchange Plinio and I went looking for resources to improve their standard of living.

Within a few years two schools had been built. A health post and project with the University of Siena in Italy and the National Health Foundation of Amazonas, saw the virtual elimination of malaria from the river. Until then a population of 450 people had been recording an average of 2,000 cases a year. In 2009 there were 13 cases.

In 1996 the Association made a formal legal request to the government of Roraima state for the Xixuau-Xiparina area to be declared an official conservation unit. The request was turned down due to the uncertainties regarding legal ownership of the land in the area. As often occurs in the Brazilian Amazon there is confusion between federal, state, local government or local people ownership. In 2001, once it became clear that the land belonged to the Federal government the Association approached them in Brasília and began the process for the creation of an Extractive Reserve based on the model created by the murdered rubber tapper and Nobel Prize winner, Chico Mendes.

IBAMA, the environment administration institute accepted and began the legal process. In the meantime the Association continued improvements in the area finding funding to purchase river boats for the local communities, to install village wells, the first solar powered satellite internet link in the Amazon, and consequently a multi-media school in the reserve.

Within a few years two schools had been built. A health post and project with the university of Siena in Italy and the National Health Foundation of Amazonas, saw the virtual elimination of malaria from the river.



Photo: Rainforest Concern

In 2009 a trust was formed in London to help the work of the Association and possibly other projects in the Amazon. The Amazon Charitable Trust was brought into being on the strength of an idea by ex-City banker Robert Pasley-Tyler and has as trustees Peter Bennett of Rainforest Concern, Dr John Hemming, ex director of the Royal Geographical Society, Bianca Jagger, human rights activist and environmentalist, Sir Ghillean Prance, ex director of Kew Botanical Gardens and Virgilio Viana, now director of the Sustainable Amazonas Foundation and ex state secretary for the environment. Plinio, president of the Brazilian Association took advantage of an invitation to receive an international environment award in Rome, to attend the inauguration of the Amazon Charitable Trust in London immediately afterwards.

Enjoying a caiparinha on the long journey from Manaus to the Xixuau Reserve

Opposition from local politicians to the creation of the Extractive Reserve led to a large number of delays and problems, but at the same time brought in other actors like the WWF with the ARPA (Amazon Region Protected Areas) project. The reserve is inside the planned mosaic of conservation units, which forms the Central Amazon Ecological Corridor that is financed by the World Bank and is part of the G7 Pilot Project for the Protection of the Amazon. The association was also joined by the Social Environment Institute, the Vitoria Amazonica Foundation, The Amazon Working Group and a number of other Brazilian government and civil society institutions.

In 1993 I moved permanently to the reserve and had been coordinating the process for the creation of the Extractive Reserve and the activities of the local community ever since. An ecological tourism activity was begun, as well as a craftworks cooperative of local women. Recently the inhabitants of the Xixuau have created their own cooperative to enlarge their sustainable commercial activities to also include harvesting and packaging of brazil nuts and other forest products as well as increasing tourism.

In 2000 a young Italian biologist, Emanuela Evangelista, came to the Xixuau to do her thesis on the giant river otters of the reserve. She subsequently joined the Association and became the president of the Italian branch. Ever since then Emanuela has lived between Italy and the Amazon and has become an integral part of the organisation as well as continuing her research and even expanding it to other species of aquatic mammals, such as the fresh water dolphin.

The incredibly clear waters of the Xixuau and Xiparina rivers and the abundance of aquatic fauna due to nearly 20 years of integral protection, have led to the reserve becoming the foremost destination for underwater documentary makers in the Amazon. In the words of Jean Michelle Cousteau "I have seen other rivers in the Amazon with the same clarity of water as the Xixuau, but none with a similar abundance of aquatic wildlife." The cooperative Xixuau is thinking of developing a restricted form of diving tourism in the reserve. Photographers, film makers, birdwatchers, fishermen and nature lovers can get a unique view of Amazon flora and fauna in the area as well as seeing how a model community lives and preserves its natural heritage.



Photo: Rainforest Concern

Giant river otters can frequently be seen on the Xixuau river



Photo: Rainforest Concern

Canoeing, the only transport at the reserve

This Trust is based in Berkeley Square in London and is, together with Rainforest Concern, actively supporting the work of the Association and the creation of the Extractive reserve, which will enlarge the protected area from 178,000 to 630,000 hectares.

The process for the creation of the reserve is now completed and it is undergoing legal analyses in the Casa Civil, Interior Ministry, in Brasilia. Once this is completed it will be placed before President Lula for him to sign the decree bringing it into being.

Responsible and carefully controlled tourism represents an important source of income for the local community and offers a unique opportunity for visitors to see an unspoilt and practically unknown part of the world. The local cooperative is in the process of building a new visitors structure in the reserve.

Now begins a new challenge for the Amazon Association, which is to provide services and a standard of living comparable to that in the Xixuau to a further 800 traditional inhabitants in another 8 villages in the new reserve. The model has proven to work in the Xixuau and it needs to be expanded to the entire 630,000 hectares of the Extractive Reserve.



Photo: Amazon Association

Caimans living in the reserve's lagoon are accepted as part of the scenery!

Once the local people are convinced that conservation provides them with a means of survival they will abandon commercial fishing, logging, illegal turtle hunting and other activities, which damage the ecosystems of the region and will take up their role as guardians of the forest. In the opinion of the Amazon Association this is the

only realistic way the forest can be saved for current and future generations

It is possible to visit the reserve to see first hand the activities of the Association. Small groups of from 6 to 15 people travel by riverboat from Manaus along first the Rio Negro and then the Jauaperi. The visitors stay in the local village in maloca lodges built from wood and thatch in the style of the local Indians. The days are dedicated to outings by canoe, walks in the forest, bird watching and animal sightings, fishing and getting to know the local customs and life style. Among many other species it is possible to see in the Xixuau are sloths, giant otters, river dolphins, manatees, caimans (type of alligator), several species of monkey, anteaters, armadillos, macaws and toucans and even a jaguar if you are lucky! On his recent trip to Xixuau, Peter Bennett and I witnessed a melanistic or 'black' jaguar from our canoe.



Photo: Rainforest Concern

Chris Clark, Director, Amazon Association (left) and Robert Pasley-Tyler, Director of the Amazon Charitable Trust (right), with Niyaji

If you are interested in supporting this project or visiting the wonderful Xixuau Reserve please contact us at Rainforest Concern or contact Chris Clark directly at xixuauxiparina@hotmail.com

Record nesting season for Leatherback turtles!

by John Denham, Trustee of Rainforest Concern

All the Leatherback turtle projects we either manage or supervise had record nesting numbers this season, a wonderful turnaround from the recent years when the beaches were unprotected and littered with the carcasses of slaughtered turtles.

Soropta beach counted over 550 nests, the highest yet. Poaching was less severe this year owing to the absence of 'The Prince', a famous poacher from further along the beach who was drowned in the floods in the early part of the year. His demise was unfortunate but has certainly made our job a little easier.

Managing Soropta is a difficult and demanding job and we were fortunate to have such a good leader and biologist as Ana Maria Vasquez from Colombia. It is excellent news that she is coming back to Soropta in 2010. As usual, we employed guards from a nearby banana plantation and eight locals were employed by the project.

While we were being flooded at Pacuare, heavy rains were also causing devastation in Panama. The Changuinola River, which reaches the sea near to our Soropta station, was so powerful that it washed away the big spit of sand that formed a large part of the nesting beach we protected. We therefore had to commit to covering a further 3 kms of patrolling to achieve the same result.

Volunteers and visitors to Soropta come mainly from the nearby resort town of Bocas del Toro, many at short notice and usually just for a night or two, which is not really long enough to be of any support to the resident team.

Soropta is a difficult project to manage. It is isolated, and bringing food or people from Bocas is very expensive but it is so important that we maintain it. Soropta was the worst of the 'killing beaches' for Leatherbacks until we set up the project to protect and patrol the beach in 2001. Its success led the way to the protection of the adjoining beaches San San and Sixaola, both of which are subsidized by Rainforest Concern and supervised by our Mexican biologist Cristina, though run by the local communities.

Sixaola beach is isolated and inaccessible and a reliable man, Huascar, has been trained to work with turtles. He has now recruited and trained 6 men from local communities to work on the beach during the season and they are paid for



Photo: Katie Honey

A Leatherback hatchling's mad dash for the open sea

each night they patrol. They are glad of the chance to earn a small salary in an area where otherwise no work is available. Huascar and his team counted 520 leatherback nests this season, the highest number since we started protection 9 years ago. San San recorded nearly 450 leatherback nests, making a total of over 1,500 nests for the 20 kms of the three mainland beaches, which stretch South-west from the Costa Rican border.

Playa Larga is the fourth beach we protect and is quite separate from the others as it is on an island called Bastamentos. It is a lovely short golden beach facing onto the open sea and is visited by Hawksbill turtles as well as Leatherbacks.

Isobel Petersen from the US ran the project this year, supported by a local research assistant. Life is pretty basic on Playa Larga. Unlike Soropta, there is no cook or flushing lavatories and food must be brought from Bocas once a week. However volunteers love this simple Robinson Crusoe style of life and they recorded an impressive 135 Leatherbacks.

Panama continues to be a great success story and vital to the survival of the Leatherback. May I ask you to please think about making a donation to Rainforest Concern to help fund this essential work.

Soropta was the worst of the 'killing beaches' for Leatherbacks until we set up the project to protect and patrol the beach in 2001.

*Of course if you want to get really involved, you might even consider volunteering! All you need to do is go to www.turtleprotection.org for detailed information and then email **Carlos Fernandez** at carlos57fer@yahoo.com to check on availability.*

A year of extremes - 2009 at the Pacuare Reserve

by John Denham, Trustee of Rainforest Concern

2009 was best Leatherback turtle season in our 20 year history but also the worst in terms of flooding. The nesting figures were a cause for celebration, the floods for real concern.

Heavy rains throughout January and February flooded the countryside, burst the riverbanks and raised the canal by several feet. Inevitably, the Mondonguillo lagoon burst through to the sea and quickly became a 10-knot river 100 metres wide as the floodwaters poured into the sea. It was a bad start.

However, we were about to have the best ever Leatherback season, with 1,172 nests counted and negligible loss to poachers. 80% of the turtles were 'worked', i.e. they were tagged if not already tagged, measured, inspected for injury and, if feasible, the eggs counted. This meant long nights on the beach, especially during the peak months of April and May, for our leaders and a great team of research assistants. They were supported by 34 student groups both US and Costa Rican, brought by Ecology Project International (EPI), and 10 other groups, giving a total of nearly 650 visiting students who came to support the project.

The Leatherback nesting season peters out during June but patrolling is still intense and continues until the end of September, as the hatchlings are emerging after their two-month incubation, and the green turtles beginning to nest, albeit in much smaller numbers.

While the leatherback season was getting under way, our shoreline around the south station was being pounded by the sea. The beach sand had been washed away earlier and there was no protection against the waves. The sea got behind the gabiones (barrier cages filled with rocks) we had previously built and we could only watch and pray as the waves broke nearer and nearer to our two main buildings. We were losing a metre a day of the reserve's precious land and the sea got within five metres of the main house before a big tree was so undermined by the waves that it crashed sideways into the sea, thus providing us with a 'lifesaving' breakwater.

The flooding did not affect the working of the reserve in any way, and the turtle programme was unaffected. However, it forced us to doubt whether the south station could survive another



Peter Bennett, John Denham and Carlos Fernandez at the Pacuare Reserve

Photo: Rainforest Concern

such flood, and perhaps the next one could be even worse. We were fortunate to have the support of the British Civil Engineering company Halcrow, who kindly sent, at their own expense, an expert on coastal erosion to assess our problems. His conclusion was that, while we might take some temporary measures to buy a little

time, sooner or later we would have to relocate the south station.

I am pleased to report the new student/volunteer facility has just been completed and now located some way up the coast where there is no threat from coastal erosion".



Carlos Fernandez with the 2009 Pacuare team

Photo: EWT

We would particularly like to thank Rainforest Rescue International (Australia), Martin Stanley and the Scotts Hill Trust for their contributions towards the construction costs.

The Research Assistants, though working most nights on the beach, are also expected to do a small individual research project of their own choice – any subject with the exception of turtles – and to present it at the end of the season. The presentation took place during the last week before a small select audience. A wide range of subjects was an indication of the activity in the reserve and included an environmental plan for the Reserve, the nesting season of the rare and elusive Agami Herons, a small reforestation project (in which the local community school participated), working and teaching in the school, and a guide to the local reptiles and amphibians.

The accent last season was on turtles and coastal erosion, but our 1,000 hectares of forest, though small compared to other reserves, continues to reward us with sightings of rare animals.

Spectacular examples included jaguar (seen for the first time this year), puma and ocelot, mammals normally associated with much larger reserves.

Once again an American researcher studied the white-faced capuchin monkeys at the reserve, which with howler and spider monkeys are easily seen. The great number of animal and plant species found in the reserve being bordered by the sea on one side and the canal on the other, make it ideal for research.

The end of September marks the end of the turtle season. Wonderfully organized by the Reserve Manager Carlos Fernandez and brother Arturo, the customary party was held on the last Saturday for everyone connected in any way to the reserve. Together with family and friends, around 100 people were ferried along the canal to the south station to enjoy music and dancing on a still, dry, mosquito-free night. It was a fitting closure to an eventful season. Let us hope the 2010 nesting season will be at least equally successful as last year.



Creativity at the Reserve's North Station

Photo: EWT



A volunteer interacting with local children

Photo: EWT



The newly rebuilt and greatly improved South Station

Photo: EWT

With thanks to Halcrow for their assistance.



Paso Alto starts to see a new future

by José Cueva, Consorcio Toisan

After almost three years of continuous work in the Paso Alto region, the positive results are beginning to show. Our first big task was focused on the diffusion of an agro-forestry production model which includes coffee as the primary product, and is also associated with various species of fruit and timber trees. Bearing in mind that the Bellavista, Pamplona and Barrio Nuevo communities are made up of colonists who have been dedicated to cultivating sugar cane and establishing pastures in forested areas, the option of a mixed production which only starts to generate income after 3 years, didn't look an easy one. However, it is great to report that after this period of time, we can now enjoy seeing the people who first adopted the model, starting to harvest their first grains of coffee and other fruits.

It hasn't been easy to convince people of this new system, however there are now more than 40 farms that have established these parcels. The process has involved people adapting to a new and more integral system of farming. This change in many people and their families has also enabled them to move forward with certainty in the communities' commitment towards the conservation of the important remaining ecosystem of Paso Alto. Finally in December 2009 we handed in the official management plan, carried out with the communities' full participation, to the Ecuador Ministry of Environment and we have since received the official declaration of Protected Forest Status.



Coffee, the principle crop at Barrio Nuevo

Photo: Jose Cueva



Photo: Jose Cueva

Agroforestry. Coffee planted by the Media Villa family

The process has involved people adapting to a new and more integral system of farming.

For the communities, the most important is to now understand the multiple advantages that the forest has under conservation. It was their decision in the current Paso Alto project, funded by Rainforest Concern and its donors, to redirect the project to carry out a general mapping of the area and its farms. With this mapping finished, the people will be able to start sorting out the community lands and the state lands, which will become property of the community and local Government. With their lands legalised it opens up the possibility of entering into the formal financial systems and obtaining funding for investing in their productive systems, whose viability they have now been able to witness with their own eyes.

This legalisation will also allow them to enter into new initiatives of environmental services which the Ecuadorian state is offering, and in a not too distant future, this could also be through international co-operation. Other important economic activities, such as ecotourism and the mini hydro scheme are also planned by the communities in Intag.

Every day we are closer to the moment in which Paso Alto becomes a privileged place to be, with an integral production of coffee and fruit to provide important sources of income for the communities and the more than 5,000 hectares of Andean cloud forests being well conserved, regenerating and offering their own benefits.

Choco-Andean Corridor Overview & Progress

by Fiona Pérez, Manager, Rainforest Concern, Ecuador

All tropical forests are currently threatened by climate change and human activity but none more so than the cloud forests. Their unique and fragile ecosystems support an amazingly high number of endemic species. Their importance also lies in their ability to produce and store water. These forests are becoming highly fragmented due to human activity such as roads, logging, agriculture and mining and they are also highly sensitive to climate change, which drastically affects the species they support.

Rainforest Concern has witnessed these problems first hand in Ecuador and would like to draw your attention to our continuing work on the Choco-Andean Corridor Project where urgent measures are still needed to protect these incredible forests. Our focus this year has continued to be on forest protection, sustainable activities with communities and the recognition of the environmental services they provide through our Forest Credits programme (*see page 5*).



A jaguarundi

Photo: Pete Oxford

The Santa Lucia Co-operative continues to be a model community tourism project and we endeavour to support their work in a number of ways. This year Rainforest Concern will fund training workshops for the young people of the Nanegal and Marianitas communities, in a joint programme with the Santa Lucia community. This will create a pool of locally trained people to help in the sustainable eco-tourism and conservation activities of this area.

We are closely monitoring conservation threats arising in the area. In particular there is a strong likelihood that a new road will be built through forested areas between Santa Lucia and Paso Alto as a massive Government hydroelectric power project is planned on the Guayllabamba River. We are working with other organisations in the area in an attempt to prevent this.

We are delighted there have been so many sightings of Spectacled Bears in areas that Rainforest Concern has protected, particularly the Maquipucuna and Santa Lucia Reserves. Seventeen individuals, including juveniles, were seen during the months of August to October. Their presence seems to be attributed to a particular fruiting tree called pache, and their reproductive behaviour. These bears have had their extensive range greatly fragmented by agriculture and this illustrates how important it is to create these forested corridors. Two dedicated local scientists are carrying out studies in the Maquipucuna, Santa Lucia and Intag areas. The information they find will be invaluable for understanding the conditions needed to maintain viable populations of these magnificent creatures.

As mentioned in José Cueva's article on page 18, we are waiting for the Ministry of Environment to declare 5,000 hectares of the Paso Alto Mountain Range as Bosque Protector or 'Protected Forest'. If we take into account the two other adjacent protected areas belonging to other communities and supported by local organisations, Quinde and Cambagan, the total under protection will be around 15,000 hectares of cloud forest. This is no mean feat in an area so fragmented, and represents a significant block of forest in the middle of the corridor.

In 2009, Rainforest Concern managed to buy two more strategic parcels of land to extend the Neblina Reserve with much thanks to all our members and supporters. We would specifically like to thank Boden, Rainforest Rescue International (Australia), Good Gifts, the Rowse Family Trust and the Kilverstone Trust for their continuing support. The reserve now consists of 1,312 hectares, a significant increase on last year and has been declared as Bosque Protector in the national system. There are now four priority purchases, one of which will provide a connection to the 200,000 hectare Cotacachi Cayapas Ecological Reserve and Paramo region, a major breakthrough for the connectivity of the corridor and benefitting the free movement of all its species.

With the commitment of our local DECOIN colleagues, Armando Almeida and Sonja Dillman and the dedicated community forest wardens, we have continued to protect the reserve and also succeeded in reforesting old pasture lands with important funding from Good Gifts.

At the end of 2009, Ecometrica, the greenhouse gas assessment specialists came from the UK to carry out carbon measurements, and Carbon Auditors undertook the remote sensing analysis in the Neblina Reserve for Rainforest Concern's Forest Credits programme. We hope the resulting environmental service funds will enable us to undertake increased protection for the reserve and to carry out much needed community work in the buffer zones in the future.

The only way that we can succeed in the long term with the conservation of these wonderful forests is to balance conservation and the local economy, which means involving the local people who know these forests so well.

After 13 years we are getting steadily closer to our goal of creating a forest corridor stretching from a few miles north of Quito to the Colombian border, a distance of approximately 140 kilometres which connects private reserves, state protected forests and national parks. We hope we can rely on your continued support to achieve this.

The strengths of a long-term partnership

by Carlos Zorrilla, Executive Director, DECOIN

One never knows what ones actions may lead to. My experience with Rainforest Concern is a good example.

When, in 1993, I denounced to the Ecuadorian authorities that a Spectacled Bear had been shot on my property and that its gall bladder sold to a Korean national, little did I suspect that years later it would lead to Peter Bennett getting in touch with me. The contact would develop into a long and fruitful relationship with Rainforest Concern.

The shooting incident was reported on prime-time television in Ecuador, and the video from the show made the rounds until, somehow, it ended up in Peter's hands. A few years later there was that symbolic knock at my door, and the desire to work together to save some of the most threatened, biodiverse, and beautiful, of the world's forests. Ten years later, here we are, still at work and with much left to do.



Photo: Luis Die

Spectacled bears will be a victim of mining

DECOIN's work still focuses on finding ways to conserve Intag's forests, biodiversity and water resources. This implies many strategies and activities. The most successful has been our Community Biodiversity and Watershed Reserve Project, which has been supported by Rainforest Concern during the past ten years. The project reflects our central principle that one of the best ways to protect natural areas is by involving surrounding communities that can derive some direct benefit from the areas (clean water, ecotourism). To date, forty-one community reserves have been created, protecting thousands of hectares of native cloud forests, their threatened wildlife, and providing clean water to thousands of residents. As far as I know, there are no other areas in Ecuador with as many community forest reserves. The initial strategy was to use water conservation as a central theme to rally support for forest and biodiversity

conservation. The project has been so successful that our small organisation has been overwhelmed with requests from communities and local governments to help them establish new, and expand existing reserves.

One of the biggest threats to biodiversity is unsustainable land use. Thus, in the past two years, and with support from Rainforest Concern, DECOIN has delved deeper into this field. In April, a two-year project will end that supported 130 families and eight groups with materials and training to help their productive activities be more economically and environmentally sustainable. Several thousand forest and fruit trees went to the 130 families, and eight grain mills were donated to communities so the small-farmers can add value to their grains in-situ, including transforming it into animal feed instead of selling the grain at reduced prices to middlemen. In one of the most troublesome and divided communities by the mining issue, the project is supporting the construction of classrooms for a distance high-school education group made up of 66 young adults that come from both mining and anti-mining families. In addition, funding from the project made possible the opening of a fair-trade store in the nearby tourist town of Otavalo, which is helping to market the goods and services produced by Intag's groups (see www.lacascadeintag.org). Three nurseries producing fruit trees, ornamental plants, and native forest trees for reforestation, also benefited from the project. One of the most popular of the project's activities was establishing dozens of family vegetable gardens. For many families this was the first time in their lives that they had their own garden, and they discovered that it wasn't that difficult to produce their own vegetables (it was especially popular with women and children). The project also focused on training and environmental education, producing and distributing hundreds of manuals on agro-ecological farming and pesticide reducing strategies. In order to strengthen and support the project's long-range strategies we contracted air time in a local radio station to produce and broadcast programs on the main topics covered by the project.

One of the project's most important activities was implementing pesticide-reducing strategies. This was accomplished through research into the most

widely used pesticides - including finding safer alternatives- carrying out several workshops on the health effects and environmental dangers of pesticide use and handling, and introducing thousands of pest-resistant stock of the most heavily sprayed crops, which will form part of a long-range trial in Intag. If the trial is successful, farmers in the area will not only significantly reduce the environmental contamination from pesticide and its impact on human health, but will end up saving thousands of dollars presently being invested in toxic chemicals.

As can be seen, the Rainforest Concern/Decoin collaboration has yielded some extraordinary results. And yet, the above is only a small part of this very successful story. It's a story that is still being written, for there are thousands of hectares of unprotected forests, innumerable micro watersheds and wildlife that need protection, and many communities and local government genuinely desiring to be part of that story. There is also much to be done to slow and reverse the degradation of soil that leads to deforestation and loss of wildlife. On the other hand, the copper lying underneath these primary cloud forests protecting pristine rivers and streams as well as jaguars, spectacled bears and plate-billed mountain toucans, has not vanished. And neither has the short-sightedness of politicians.

There are aspects of this alliance that cannot be seen with the naked eye, nor measured in any meaningful way. Much like the successful family gardens the project supported, there are seeds planted in Intag's collective consciousness that are just now starting to show their first set of leaves. Some, like our Tura trees with their strong, deep taproots are in full flower. Others are bearing fruit, and will continue to do so for a long time.

I say this because our collaboration - and conservation work in general - is about so much more than protecting forests, water and biodiversity, and giving people the tools and know-how to produce food sustainably. If our work is to be judged, using the standard of hectares protected is a vastly inadequate one, although we've excelled at it. It is in establishing and sustaining the desire to conserve that this collaboration excels. Without it, conservation is just another word.

Here's to another ten years of collaboration!

The mining threat - the nightmare starts all over again?

Because of a geographical accident, we happen to sit next to the Toisan Range, a small mountain range rich in copper. The threat has forced us to spend an inordinately large amount of time and energy (and funds) to fighting two transnational mining companies and winning!

However, sadly the fight now seems set to continue. After initial success in persuading the Ecuadorian government to cancel the mining concession once and for all, it seems to have done a complete u-turn. The government's 'Pre-investment National Institute' is planning on spending \$180,000 this year for "social and environmental studies" to evaluate the feasibility of the Junin copper mine. Incredibly, they are repeating the exaggerated copper deposited, invented by the last maverick mining company, Ascendant/Mesa - saying it may be the second largest undeveloped copper deposit in the world!

The government is now the owner of the Junin mining concession, and wants to take up where Mitsubishi and Copper Mesa failed. If it proves profitable, and that can only be ascertained after years of exploration work- which includes drilling dozens of bore holes- then it plans on developing the mine with the help of the newly created National Mining Company. Ecuador has no expertise and not enough money to open an open-pit copper mine, so that it will inevitably have to partner with one of the private transnational mining companies, or a state-owned one.

For us on the ground, it matters little who violates our rights, or under what ideology or whatever justification it is done. For the dozens of species of endangered animals and plants, it matters not at all who bulldozes their forests down. If the streams had a language we could understand, their cry would be identical if killed by heavy metals from a national, or a private mining company. Likewise, the lead and arsenic leached from the mines, leach in exactly the same way, and kill people and wildlife identically.

What makes this so incredulous is the way the government appears to be violating its own Constitution, in particular the rights of local government to plan the use of its land.



Photo: Pete Oxford

Sparkling Violetear hummingbird

As I've written before, the Junin mining project threatens much more than our communities and Intag's primary forests, pristine rivers and dozens of endangered animals and plants. For the people opposing a government-owned mining project, it will likely mean harsher criminalization of the protesters, and more human rights violations. This, in spite of the right to protest guaranteed in Ecuador's Constitution. The communities of Intag have managed to stop two transnational mining companies. It has done so against overwhelming odds. But we won, and emerged stronger. Perhaps exhausted, but stronger. And, there is no way we could have never been able to do it without your help.

Do I think the communities of Intag will prevail against a government mining project? The question is not if, but what the financial costs will be and I'm also concerned about the social, political and other costs. If we share the burden, the costs will not be so great. Intag's communities again will be counting on your support.



Photo: Rainforest Concern

Carlos Zorilla and Polibio Perez at Junin

After 13 years we are getting steadily closer to our goal of creating a forest corridor stretching from a few miles north of Quito to the Colombian border, a distance of approximately 140 kilometres which connects privates reserves, state protected forests and national parks. We hope we can rely on your continued support to achieve this.

Nasampulli: Work in progress for conservation

by Montserrat Lara & Enrique Cruz



Photo: Christian Little

Professor Antonio Lara

The last news you had from Nasampulli Reserve in Southern Chile was the purchase of 160 hectares during 2008, in order to enlarge the area of Araucaria forest under protection and enable greater connectivity with Villarrica National Reserve. During 2009 a lot of work has been done and we are looking forward to accomplish important results in 2010.

Construction started in November 2009 of a cabin that should be completed by autumn of this year. This will give greater accessibility to the Reserve and the opportunity for researchers, students and sponsors to spend a longer and more comfortable time there. The cabin has been built in the middle of a Southern Beech forest (*Nothofagus*) and in harmony with its surroundings, in order to disturb the area as little as possible. Also a special effort has been made to involve the local community in the construction, hiring of carpenters from Cunco (a small village 40 km away from the Reserve) and buying the wood from dead trees from Mr. Joel Balboa, our neighbour.

Research is being carried out by Universidad Austral in order to establish a base line of the natural resources of the Reserve, update and produce cartography and develop a connectivity and management plan for the future. The base line results and maps are ready, with important findings regarding animal biodiversity such as a high number of bird species (22) from different guilds, existence of different mammals, and most importantly presence of important endangered species such as the Magellanic Woodpecker (*Campephilus magellanicus*), the Pudu (*Pudu pudu*) which is the smallest South American deer and the Slender-billed Parakeet (*Enicognathus leptorhynchus*), all of them endemic to Chile and Argentina. In terms of ecosystems the most important one is the Monkey Puzzle (*Araucaria, Araucaria araucana*) forest, a species listed in CITES Appendix 1 and also protected by a national law that bans its exploitation. A considerable proportion of the Reserve is covered by this type of forest that was overexploited in the past and continues to be threatened. Thus conserving the monkey puzzle ecosystem and hopefully restoring them in the future is a major challenge.

This study has also focused on the threats to the Reserve, with introduced wild boar and cattle found to be the main one's, affecting and reducing plant and forest regeneration. We hope to implement a mitigation plan as soon as possible, together with the connectivity and management plan for the Reserve.

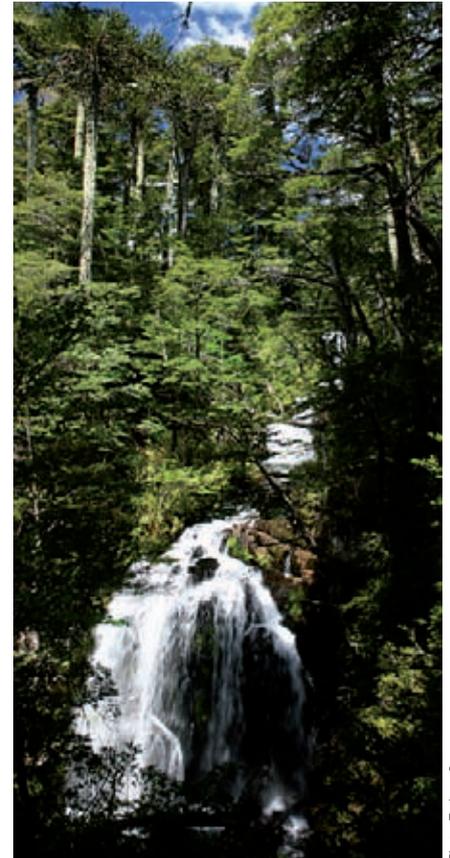


Photo: Enrique Cruz

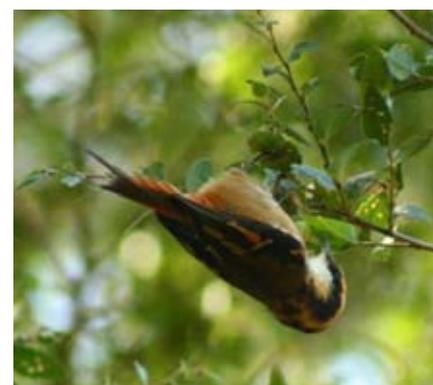
The recently discovered Trafampulli waterfall

There have also been new findings in terms of landscape and natural attractions done by the Universidad Austral Team in the context of the study mentioned above. We have discovered two waterfalls more than 15 meters high, a lagoon and viewpoints to lakes and volcanoes. This opens the possibility of building lookouts and new trails to access these landmarks, as well as connecting the existing trails that go through *Araucaria* and *Nothofagus* forests towards the west slope of Sollipulli Volcano in the Villarrica National Reserve.

During December 2009 Peter Bennett and Fiona Pérez from Rainforest Concern visited the Nasampulli Reserve to check on the construction of the cabin and discuss the guidelines for work during 2010. They visited different areas of the Reserve from the Universidad Austral team.



Viewpoint towards the Llaima Volcano and Monkey Puzzle forests from Nasampulli Reserve



Thorn-tailed Rayadito (*Aphrastura spinicauda*)

Photo: Enrique Cruz



Christian Little at the reserve

Photo: Rainforest Concern

In the future we face important challenges to assure the long-term success of the Nasampulli Reserve. The most urgent one is assuring the Reserve's connectivity with the public protected lands that surround it, such as the Huerquehue National Park (to the south) and the Villarrica National Reserve (to the North), as well as private protected lands. Achieving this objective would enable the connection of a substantial area of Monkey Puzzle forests and the possibility to generate a corridor for important endangered wildlife species. This could be possible by

purchasing new parcels of land and through conservation partnership with neighbouring landowners, which implies a greater involvement of the local community in this project. Regarding this, we are planning to come into closer contact with the local people so they get to know the conservation work we are developing at Nasampulli Reserve and generate collaboration and more opportunities for them.

Summarising, the work done during 2009 generated important results such as beginning

the construction of the cabin and the development of a Base Line Study for the Nasampulli Reserve. These, in addition to the achievements expected by the end of 2010, such as the Management and Connectivity Plan, are only possible due to the trust, partnership and close relationships between Rainforest Concern, Universidad Austral de Chile and the Forecos Foundation, which together with hard work will allow the future collaboration required for the protection of the Araucaria forests and ecosystems.

A new research centre for the Namoncahue Biological Corridor

by Karl Yunis Kretschmer, Director of Parques Para Chile

During the past year, Parques para Chile has focused on building a research centre within the Namoncahue Biological Corridor. This centre is called Aldea Namoncahue. The concept behind this project is to create a place where post-graduate university students can study and put into practice methods for management, research and use of protected areas in Chile. Aldea Namoncahue will focus research in the areas of sustainable forestry and silviculture, biodiversity monitoring, native species horticulture, rural development, protected area management and green architecture. By establishing the research centre, Parques para Chile, alongside Chilean and international universities are establishing a new way of protecting public-private biological corridors. By building a permanent presence in a remote pre-cordillera forest, we hope to create an example of how conservation and local development can go hand in-hand. As campesinos and local students take part in the Aldea's conservation agenda, they will learn new ways of working with their own forest parcels through sustainable management.

Thanks to a generous donation from Rainforest Concern and the Planet Foundation, Switzerland, we have been able to completely restore the site where the Aldea is being constructed. This site was once an enormous sawmill and collection area used to harvest thousands of old-growth temperate rainforest trees. With local campesinos and landowners, the restoration process has not only mitigated severe erosion, it has also generated a keen interest in the community. Several local farmers have recently expressed support for this type of ecological restoration and surely this will have an impact on how they will mitigate soil erosion in their own land parcels.

We have completed the construction of horse stables, a large workshop and storage area, and a mountain refuge, which will be used by local university and school students. We are also building a much needed residence for two CONAF National Park rangers. This is an important step forward for the Namoncahue Biological Corridor, since it represents public-private cooperation for protection of both National Reserve lands and private protected lands owned by Parques para Chile, Rainforest Concern and local partners. By placing CONAF employees within Aldea Namoncahue, rangers will benefit from being able to use our research centre as a place to train local landowners and



Karl Yunis and Fiona Pérez during her visit to Chile

Photo: Rainforest Concern

participate in training and educational activities that the centre will host in the coming years.

A master plan for design of Aldea Namoncahue is being completed and a research tower has been designed and is ready for construction. This research tower will house 6 scientists and contains a meteorological station, observation deck, and a biomass heating system that will use wood chips and sawdust from the enormous amount of discarded wood mass left behind from the sawmill. From near the research tower, insulated pipes will send hot water for personal use and heating throughout the research centre. A high-efficiency water turbine system has also been designed and will be installed in the coming months in order to produce enough energy to power laptops, LED lighting systems and power the meteorological station among other uses. By developing and maintaining a comprehensive system for heat and electricity, we hope to put into practice a self-sustaining model for development of protected areas in Chile.

Two important institutions have joined our project recently, these are; The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and The Man and the Biosphere programme -UNESCO. These alliances will work toward the following goals: research and monitoring of red-list species and innovations in protected area use and management. Both of these projects will involve working with local

landowners and government institutions in order to promote protection of biodiversity and support sustainable use of natural resources.

We are, as always, grateful for the generous support that Rainforest Concern and Planet Foundation have given to the Namoncahue Biological Corridor. Through building Aldea Namoncahue, we are creating a place where biodiversity conservation and research is becoming a real-life model for the Araucarias Biosphere Reserve management. Namoncahue is becoming the centrepiece of how public-private conservation efforts can effectively protect biodiversity whilst at the same time create employment and training opportunities for the local community.

All the best from Parques para Chile to our partners at Rainforest Concern and their loyal supporters.



Namoncahue tarantula

Photo: Rainforest Concern

Saving the Carpathian Forests

by Christoph Promberger, Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Since we reported in last year's Rainforest Review, we have made a large step forward in the conservation of these magnificent forests. Not only have we established and registered the Foundation Conservation Carpathia, we also have been successful in purchasing additional forests for the project. More than 6,000 ha of forests have now been purchased through our network of supporters and will be permanently protected. We have also been able to raise enough funds to secure all management costs of the Foundation until the end of 2011.

Since 2007, the extensive forests of the Romanian Carpathian Mountains have come under severe threat as a direct result of the Romanian government's decision to 'restitute' forests to the heirs of former owners, which had been nationalised during the decades of communism. In reality, hardly any of these were interested in the reinstated ownership of their forest, much more in the cash this policy would produce by a quick sale. As a result, those forests that had been given back very rapidly ended up in the hands of logging companies. Widespread clear-cuts even on the steep slopes soon became a common sight. Without intervention it became obvious that tens of thousands of hectares would disappear within a short time. Tragically, even forests within the existing National Parks have been restituted and are also in severe danger. The Romanian government has so far done very little to address this problem and it is precisely because of this that our work is so essential.



Photo: Promberger

The stunning landscape of the Carpathians

Two years ago a group of dedicated conservationists and philanthropists got together to face this daunting challenge and to develop a conservation strategy based on the creation of a large European wilderness reserve of at least 50,000 hectares. We first needed to identify a large contiguous area of pristine wilderness – but as you might imagine, this is a difficult task anywhere in



Photo: Promberger

Viable packs of wolves roam these forests

Europe. A threatened area of approximately 50,000 hectares was targeted either side of the Piatra Craiului National Park. The area is rich in wildlife: there are still 3 packs of wolves roaming these hills, a healthy population of brown bears, chamois deer, wild boar and even the elusive lynx is still occasionally seen.

With the help of two generous private donors, we started buying parcels of forest, which came on the market, and after a while new owners recognised us as serious purchasers and started to sell to us rather than to the logging companies. Despite the risk of price escalation we managed to keep land prices to a reasonable level. We have so far secured over 6,000 ha of forests and we will continue to purchase forests and alpine pastures in order to create what will hopefully become one of Europe's largest wilderness areas.

In December of last year, our network registered the Foundation Conservation Carpathia as the legal entity to further implement the project and through which to purchase land. Since then, we contacted a variety of businesses and individuals to support the project. A pledge from Rainforest Concern also brought significant funding which helped to continue the purchase of forests. Current negotiations are encouraging and we expect a further push to expand the core area over the next 2 to 3 years. We aim to complete the purchase the first priority block of 35,000 ha of forest within the next 12 months. In doing so we will more than double the area of the existing National Park plus safeguard all the forests inside the Park which up to now, have had little protection.

It is clear that we need to receive support at all levels. A large private Foundation has pledged a substantial donation on the basis we can find matching funding. This is a big challenge, and we must now work hard to achieve it. Of course at the same time, we must attract smaller donations as in such a big project every penny counts!

Our next big step is to set up our own protected area administration. Surprisingly Romania is the only country within the European Union, where the government allocates no money from the state budget to the administration of protected areas. Currently, the protected area administrations receive only some small funding from the State Forest Administration, but as the responsibility for protected areas has recently shifted to the Ministry of Environment, there is little hope that things will improve in the short term. Many managers of protected areas have to face such financial difficulties that even normal running expenses cannot be met, with cases of salaries not being paid for months on end. For this reason, we have decided not to rely on the state institutions but to develop our own administration. This will hopefully become an example of how to establish a model of a modern, efficient and cost effective protected area management. According to Romanian law, we need to have 7,000 ha in order to have our own administration and we plan to have reached this goal in a short time. This summer, we hired Mihai Zotta, one of Romania's leading conservationists in the field of protected areas with extensive experience of protected area management both on a local and on a national level.



Photo: Promberger

European bears are widespread in the area

It is 10 years since Peter Bennett met me back in 2000 when he first visited Romania. Then, he expressed an interest in doing something to protect these wonderful and ancient forests but at that time, post-communist bureaucracy prevented any meaningful conservation and we had to wait until now before we could act.

We are delighted that Rainforest Concern provided the project with €100,000 earlier this year. Much of this was raised with last year's appeal and with thanks to you, the Charity's supporters, these funds have now been used to purchase the most recent additions to the reserve.

Children take a lead on climate change

by Anna Karlsson, Rainforest Concern

This past year has been a year of environmental talks on climate change. And why do we talk about climate change? It is because of all the greenhouse gases we are emitting everyday. Scientists and leaders of the World met up in Copenhagen, Denmark in December last year to discuss what they are going to do to try to reduce the greenhouse gases that cause the Earth to get hotter. Around 160 countries were there to talk.

Children really got involved in Copenhagen. There was a children's forum where about 160 children from different countries participated, met the politicians, talked to them, and wrote their own Declaration on what they want to do to protect the planet and what they want the politicians to do. You can read more about what children said to the politicians in Copenhagen here:

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/denmark_52005.html

<http://www.google.co.uk/search?q=copenhagen+climate+children&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&aq=t&rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&client=firefox-a>

Rainforests have an important role in addressing climate change. They are often called the lungs of the Earth. They help stabilise the World's climate by storing carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) from the atmosphere.

2010 is also the international Year of Biodiversity (<http://www.cbd.int/2010/welcome/>). Join us in celebrating life on Earth and all the wonderful things on it.

Learn more about the rainforests and all the animals and plants that live there. Rainforest Concern has an education and activity pack that you can download from our Education Section on our website (http://www.rainforestconcern.org/education_resources/resources_for_schools/) We can also send a hard copy to you for free. Contact us on info@rainforestconcern.org, or see contact details on the back cover of this newsletter.

As usual we are extremely thankful for and impressed by all the support we have had from schools and students, who have also been acting as ambassadors for the rainforest.

Your contribution means that over 200 acres of rainforests have been protected!

- An amazing **£3,193.88** raised by the Cheltenham Ladies' College.
- **£600** raised by PHGS Yr 9, 2010 at the Prince Henry's Grammar School.
- **£190** raised via market and non-uniform day by Widney Junior School.
- **£157.61** raised by pupils after studying the rainforests, by Marchwood Junior School.
- **£145** raised through cake sale by Goodrich Community Primary School
- **£100** collected at weekly Assemblies by pupils at Stanley Primary School.
- **£91.68** raised by Middleton St Mary's Primary School.
- **£50** raised on Green Day by West End Primary School.
- **£44.88** donation raised through a sponsored 'Readathon' and Rainforest Café, by Dorrington Primary School.
- **£41.21** raised through holding a cake stall and organised by Scott Grantham and Callum Kneapel at Priory Junior School.



Gendros Primary School 2010



Goodrich Community Primary School, Yr 6, March 2010



Pictures sent in 2010



Turtle drawing

Why not sponsor your own acre of tropical rainforest? This will help Rainforest Concern to save the lives of thousands of trees and plants as well as the animals that depend on these forests for their survival. It costs £50 to sponsor one acre of rainforest and in return we will send you a certificate recording your sponsorship to hang in your classroom or at home. We will also keep you updated with our progress through our newsletter Rainforest Review. Go to page 27 or find more information on our website www.rainforestconcern.org or have a look at our Virtual Jungle at www.virtualjungle.co.uk/



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