



**GLOBAL CONSERVATION
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
& LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

Perspectives on Programs and Project Implementation in Latin America

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I. Introduction¹

Relations between protected areas (PAs) and traditional peoples² have long been a source of contention. The history of strictly protected parks started in the United States. The first great national parks such as Yellowstone and Yosemite were established not long after the areas were abandoned by indigenous peoples forced out by pressures from expanding European occupation (Stevens 1997). Some also argue that the ecosystems contained in the new parks had been shaped by millennia of human presence. The exclusion of traditional human uses, therefore, as well as the introduction of modern parks and, later, ecosystem management, introduced a new element into ecosystem evolution (Chase 1987). As the strictly protected areas movement expanded into the less-developed countries (LDCs) beginning in the 1950s, it quickly encountered environmentally valuable landscapes still occupied by traditional peoples. This has led to a turbulent history and sharp debates in the conservation, academic and traditional peoples' communities, varying according to the nature and magnitude of the problem at different times and in different world regions.

The rise of the large Global Conservation Non-Governmental Organizations (GC-NGOs)³—a term that refers principally here to Conservation International (CI), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)—has focused attention on their policies and strategies with relation to traditional peoples, although the issue also encompasses a much larger universe of other large emerging GC-NGOs, smaller international and national conservation and development NGOs, and, most importantly, national government and multilateral agencies and policies. It should also be pointed out at the outset that, although much of the literature and policies have focused on traditional peoples, conservation NGOs frequently have to contend with the even more challenging human presence of recent colonists who populate the boundaries and invade the interior of established protected areas. These colonists are usually traditional farming peoples, who may also be indigenous, displaced by poverty and land scarcity from agricultural regions to forest and protected area frontiers. Their farming practices and high population densities can create much more environmentally deleterious consequences than low-population density traditional peoples with diversified subsistence portfolios. In an earlier period, conservationists tended to blame “shifting cultivators” for environmental damage done to frontier forest areas, but this gave way to recognition in some quarters of the larger political economic that forced “shifted cultivators” into these frontier areas (Myers 1996).

In this context, this working paper attempts a very general review of current trends in the relationships between protected areas, traditional and colonist peoples

¹ The authors would like to thank the Ford Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for support in the elaboration of this study. The views expressed in this article are the sole responsibility of the authors.

² Defined as both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples with long occupation of forest lands, low population densities, and relatively low-impact subsistence patterns.

³ These organizations have also become known popularly in foundation circles as BINGOs, for Big International Non-Governmental Organizations, but this acronym is not used here both because it lacks the crucial modifier “conservation” and because it lacks dignity.

(glossed as “local communities”) in Latin America, and Washington, D.C.-based GC-NGOs. This study explores, without attempting to definitively answer, the following questions:

- 1) Is there an increasing concentration of control over conservation funds by the big conservation NGOs? What is the nature of this “gatekeeper role” and does it induce local governments to adopt measures that inhibit local participation in protected areas?
- 2) Are GC-NGOs directly managing conservation areas in developing countries? If so, does this make local conservation and development groups unequal partners and hinder locally based visions of appropriate conservation activities?
- 3) What is the impact of the relatively new landscape level approaches to protected area planning (e.g. ecoregions and hotspots) on local communities? Do landscape level approaches lose local context and harm local well-being?
- 4) Do current PA programs in general displace local communities? Do they allow for the participation of local communities, security of tenure and/or access rights?
- 5) To what extent do current PA strategies contribute to, or detract from, the ability of impoverished and/or traditional communities in those regions to build livelihoods from the sustainable management of natural assets?

This study is limited to responding to these questions in an initial and exploratory way. Given the vastness of the organizational and geographic landscape, most of what is presented here must be taken as a first approximation. These are difficult and complex issues, and the policies and positions of conservation NGOs and conservation and development academics shift in a subtle fashion depending on the context, the audience being addressed, and the particular issue at hand. Advocates of protected areas and advocates of local communities frequently seem to agree with each other, and just as often fall into sharp disagreement. For example, NGOs and scientists who have called for greater conservation attention to indigenous reserves have noted that “We all agree that nature reserves with minimal human influence are an important component of any conservation strategy in any country” (Schwartzman, Nepstad and Moreira 2000: 1370), while protected area advocates and scientists have accepted that “Effective in-situ biodiversity conservation... must entail consideration of the vast areas of land outside protected areas. As a result of this realization, conservationists and land-use managers increasingly appreciate the importance of working with indigenous peoples” (Redford 1996). On the other hand, some indigenous advocates seem to go a step further to suggest that conservation organizations should abandon a focus on strict protected areas altogether and should “no longer aspire to be managers of other people’s lands but rather aim to be advisors to indigenous peoples to help secure their futures” (Colchester 2000: 1367). Protected area advocates and academics agree that “Traditional and indigenous people can claim incontrovertible rights to their land. As morally responsible humans we must support their struggle.” They draw the line, however, by noting that “speaking on behalf of those peoples as if their interests were identical with conservation, biodiversity, and parks is disingenuous” (Redford and Sanderson 2000: 1362). Another academic refers to indigenous peoples within parks as “the danger within” (Terborgh 1999). Few within the mainstream conservation community would disagree with the assertion that “People-free parks are an essential element of a comprehensive conservation strategy. It

is crucial that protected areas without people exist to guarantee the natural function of pristine ecosystems.” And yet the same author is quick to concede that “This notion does not contradict the right of local peoples to participate in the design and management of such areas” (Chicchon 2000: 1368).

There are indeed differences between the goals of indigenous peoples living in large forested landscapes and those who see themselves as advocates for nature strictly protected for human use. For many indigenous people, biodiversity includes people and conservation implies “use or sustainable use” (Redford 1996). For them, biodiversity conservation basically refers to natural resource management. Native peoples “see no incongruence between exploitation and a desire to protect resources, and in fact often fail to understand why one would be motivated to protect resources that were never going to be exploited” (Redford 1996). As Richard Chase Smith has represented indigenous attitudes, “Biodiversity won’t feed our children” (Smith 1996). Stearman (1996) also notes, “Biodiversity is not a goal [of traditional peoples] that is separate from other aspects of preserving homelands and the lifestyles they support. Conservationists must be willing to accept this and use it as a base on which to build better communication... While traditional peoples may not be able to meet all of the demands of conservation interests, they are still the main hope for maintaining large landscapes intact.”

The possibility for conflicts between protected areas and indigenous/local peoples are also strongly tempered by the larger historical dynamics around the protected areas. In short, and to state the obvious, there are likely to be sharper conflicts around protected areas in the path of colonization movements and/or where there is higher population density around the protected area.

To the extent that the establishment of protected areas may restrict access to the resources of that area for traditional peoples, the economics of the issue have been well stated by Ferraro and Kramer (1997: 193): “The ecosystems designated for protection are valuable precisely because of the prior depletion of biodiversity elsewhere, regionally and globally. The residents around protected areas in developing countries are being asked to forego benefits because people elsewhere have already depleted their local biodiversity. Thus, residents in the region of a protected area are being asked to incur costs that the majority of humans did not have to bear. One could argue that in order to mitigate the unfairness of this situation, compensation should be paid to the residents.” As we shall briefly review below, these compensations may range from paying local peoples to be park guards, supporting local income-generating projects—commonly known as integrated conservation and development (ICDP) projects—or even, an option that is increasingly being explored, so-called “conservation concessions” that directly compensate or pay local people in exchange for resources lost to the PA.

But what is happening on the ground in Latin America today? This is very difficult to characterize or quantify without using survey instruments and extensive fieldwork. This working paper is intended only to offer a quick sketch of the current state of play and to encourage more systematic research in this important area. Many

caveats apply to this report. It is based on interviews (recorded only in handwritten notes) in the home offices of conservation NGOs in Washington, D.C., a limited number of brief visits to field offices and field sites, and reviews of documents, website materials, promotional publications, and some academic studies. We have attempted to maintain some anonymity for sources of direct quotes by not directly identifying them in most cases, but a list of all interviews for this study can be found in the concluding section of this paper. A short-term qualitative study such as this one is subject to many errors of perception and incomplete data. It is thus far from comprehensive as research, and borrows to some extent from journalistic techniques. However, there has been relatively little systematic research into the actual practices of large conservation NGOs in their relationships with local communities, particularly conducted by researchers not connected with those organizations, so this exploration is intended to provoke more detailed and systematic studies. The study did provide some opportunities for triangulation, or seeing the same subject from multiple points of view, making it possible to draw some tentative generalizations and provide the foundation for more detailed research in the future. The reality researched here emanates both from the main offices in D.C. and field offices and project sites in Latin America and all over the world. The subject area is an unstable and complicated mix of programs, strategies and attitudes that shift over time, depending on overall NGO policies, strong individuals in particular positions, and local context.

The remainder of this paper presents some basic background information and concepts for the study, a quick review of the history and programs of the NGOs, and a closer examination of selected programs in Mexico, Central America and Brazil. Case studies are not necessarily representative and every organization discussed here is not equally represented in the case studies.

II. Background Data and Conceptual Mapping

In this section we will look at protected area classifications, give an overview of landscape level approaches and “landscape-level” financing, provide background on the hot-button issue of peoples displaced by protected areas, and discuss the dominant sustainable use strategies now pursued in the conservation community.

In 1994, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) revised its categories of protected areas, consolidating them from 10 to 6 (See Appendix I). Categories I-IV are usually considered to be the categories of stricter protection (Strict Nature Reserve/Wilderness Area, National Park, Natural Monument, Habitat/Species Management Areas), while categories V-VI (Protected Landscape/Seascape, Managed Resource Protected Area) are considered more sustainable use categories. Nonetheless, in this recasting, the wording was carefully chosen to allow for the possibility of human use or occupation in all but one category: Strict Nature Reserve. For example, the Wilderness Area designation calls for an area “without permanent or significant habitation,” leaving open the possibility of very low-density non-permanent habitation or very low-impact use. Thus, the “IUCN’s Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas now recommends recognition of indigenous peoples within all six categories of

protected areas, including national parks and wilderness areas, as long as this does not undermine the basic goals of protected area management” (Stevens 1997: 15).

Most indigenous, communal and extractive reserves can be considered as either Category V or VI. In all categories, the “protectionist paradigm” in the inclusive sense of all IUCN categories has boomed globally since 1990. At the September 2003 World Parks Congress (WPPC) in Durban, South Africa it was announced that the 1990 goal of achieving 10% of the planet’s terrestrial surface under some form of protection had been surpassed, reaching an estimated 12%. For Latin America, Table I below shows the tremendous growth in all of the IUCN categories taken together as a percentage of national territory for selected Latin American countries in 1990-2003. These data refer to areas that are designated as protected by IUCN and exclude marine areas.

Table I

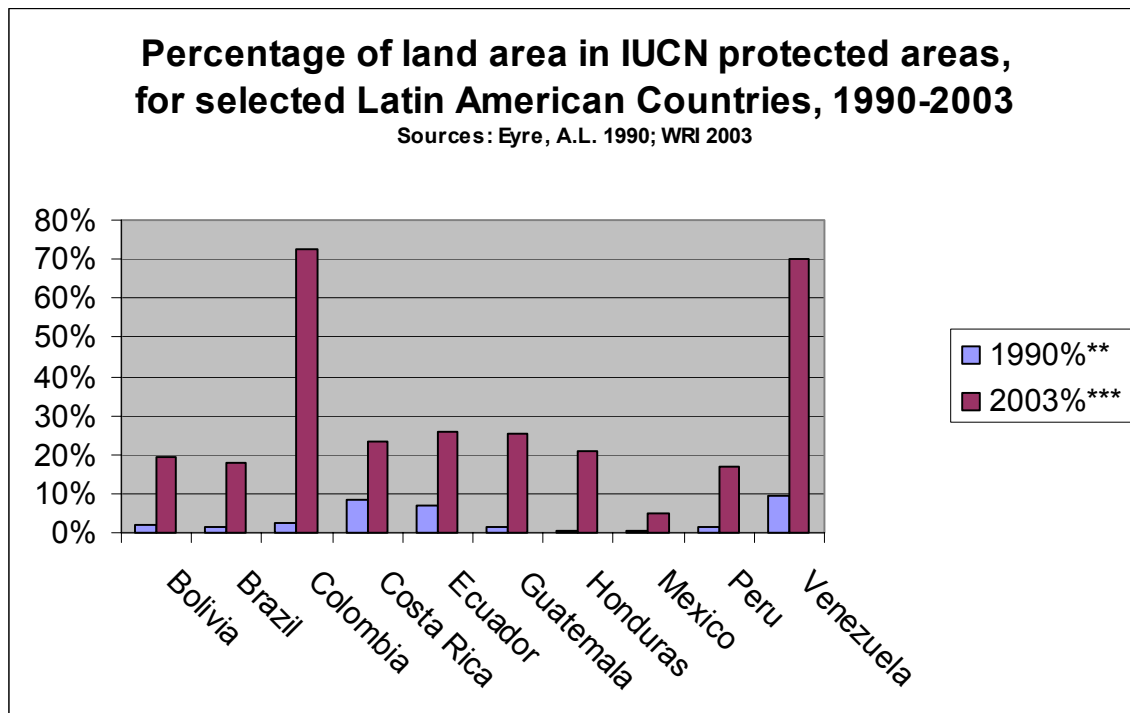
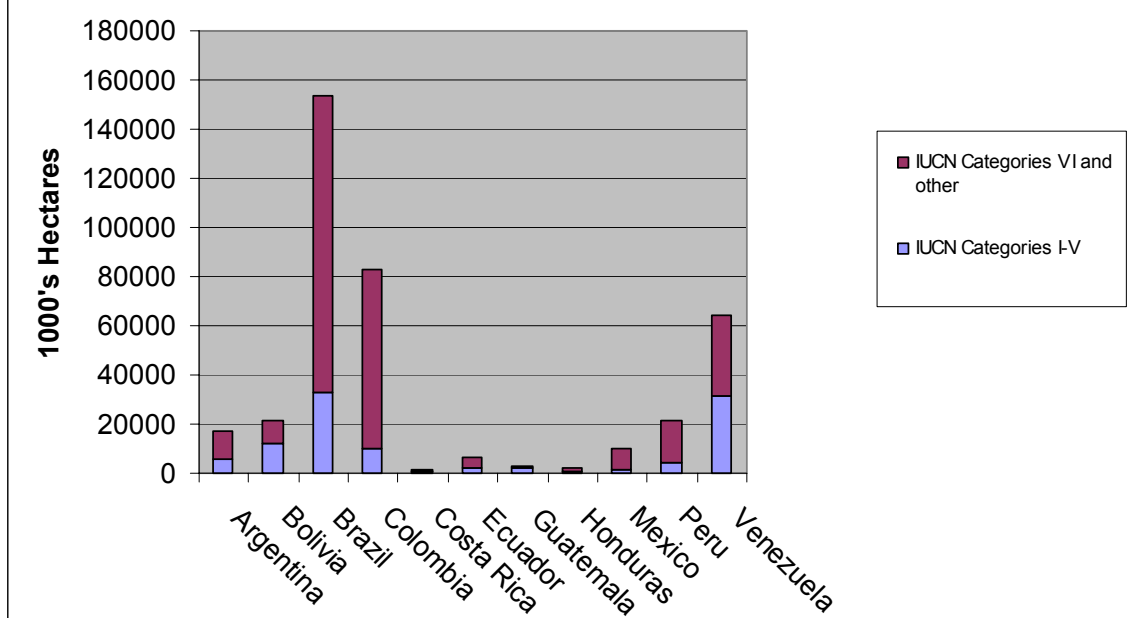


Table II shows that as of 2003 growth in the IUCN categories has been considerably stronger in the “sustainable use” categories V-VI than in the more protected categories I-IV.

Table II: 2003 IUCN Protected Areas by Type

Source: WRI (<http://earthtrends.wri.org/>)



For example, some 22% of the Brazilian Amazon is now in indigenous reserves, five times the amount of land in nature reserves, and half of the Colombian Amazon is in indigenous reserves (*resguardos*) (Schwartzman, Moreira, and Nepstad 2000). More broadly, it has been suggested that as much as 85% of the world’s protected areas are inhabited by indigenous peoples (Alcorn 2000), a fact used by indigenous advocates to point out the inevitability of working with local/indigenous peoples. Some have suggested that few national governments are likely to support further expansion of protected areas beyond current levels, and that greater attention now needs to be given to consolidating existing protected areas and working on sustainable use in larger landscapes, including indigenous and extractive reserves.

III. Large-scale Landscape Approaches

The two major landscape-level approaches, taken as conservation priority-setting exercises, have been the “hotspots” approach developed by CI and the “ecoregion” approach developed by WWF. TNC is also developing landscape level approaches which are similar to and frequently derived from the ecoregion approach. Although these are the best-known approaches, a recent article reviews conservation strategies in general and finds 21 different approaches by 13 organizations (Redford et. al 2003). Here, however, we will limit ourselves to hotspots and ecoregions.

Hotspots feature “exceptional concentrations of endemic species and experience exceptional losses of habitat.” The argument is that 44% of all species of vascular plants and 35% of all species in four vertebrate groups are in 25 “hotspots” on only 1.4% of the earth’s land surface, thus representing a “silver bullet” strategy. With reference to degree of threat, a hotspot is defined as having lost 70% or more of its primary vegetation. In fact, hotspots have lost an aggregate of 88% of their primary vegetation, even though 38% of their total area is already in protected areas. In one of the major works on the subject, the principal reference to human communities to the 62% of hotspot regions outside of protected areas notes, “These areas could receive a measure of protection as ‘conservation units’ that allow some degree of multiple use provided that species safeguards are always paramount” (Myers, et. al. 2000). It has recently been argued that hotspots represent an important pioneering effort in conservation priorities but that the approach runs the risk of losing sight of “whole ecosystems, habitats and the needs of people” (Kareiva and Marvier 2003).

An ecoregion is defined as “a geographically distinct assemblage of natural communities that share a large majority of their species, ecological dynamics, and similar environmental conditions and whose ecological interactions are critical for their long-term persistence” (Dinerstein et. al 1995). More than 200 ecoregions have been defined globally. WWF is developing a method for setting priorities “among habitat blocks within ecoregions.” It proposes four “core analyses” to form the method, the first three encompassing analysis of ecological issues and existing protected areas and the fourth representing a “land use analysis” that incorporates human communities. This analysis determines “the feasibility of creating new reserves and managing habitats adjacent to protected areas in a manner more compatible with conservation of biodiversity. This step assesses other uses or demands for resources by stakeholders who have access to or heavily utilize blocks with high conservation potential” (Dinerstein et. al 1995: 47)

Statements such as the quote from Myers et. al above about permitting “some degree of multiple use provided that species safeguards are always paramount” have raised concerns as to whether or not these larger landscape level planning regimes can lead to new restrictions on use by local communities. Apparently, there have been few studies of how these landscape-level approaches affect local communities, although concern has been expressed that they signal a retreat from communities (Brosius and Russell 2003). One of the few empirical studies is Gezon (2003), for Madagascar. She found that the move toward a more regional approach also signaled a move away from ICDPs in buffer zones. An evaluation of USAID-supported landscape level projects in Madagascar found that “ICDPs are not a sustainable answer [to the alleviation of poverty which exacerbates the spiral of environmental degradation] as they are too costly for the limited population reached,” and local ICDP projects tended to be paralyzed by bureaucratic conflicts. “As an intellectual construct, the regional model has considerable merit for both biological and socioeconomic reasons,” Gezon writes, but she concludes by noting that “the everyday situation is that the (landscape level approach) seems to have been more about the institutional dissolution of the integrated conservation and development approach than about the extension of these ideals to a regional scale of application.” The impact of landscape level conservation programs on local communities

in other regions remains a very open empirical question, particularly since landscape level approaches are still in a preliminary stage in most regions of the world.

Finally, it should be pointed out that other forms of environmentally influenced planning, and in fact any kind of planning, will entail certain kinds of restrictions. A zoning of uses is involved with any landscape planning; for example, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) criteria call for restrictions on uses of forests that go beyond logging, such as hunting.

IV. Landscape-Scale Financing⁴

As the GC-NGOs move into landscape-level planning, their level of financing looms ever larger on the landscape of conservation. Between the mid-1990s and the turn of the century, available funds for conservation globally have declined by almost 50%, but the funds available to the large NGOs have grown precipitously. The finances available to the three largest GC-NGOs have increased in both relative and absolute terms. Analysis of publicly available records of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF USA), Conservation International (CI) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), shows that their combined revenue and expenditure (investment in conservation) in the year 2002 were \$1.28 billion and \$804 million, respectively. This snapshot of GC-NGO finances is not an unusual phenomenon but rather part of a continuing trend since the mid-nineties toward increasing revenue, expenses and asset accumulation. Combined revenues of these three NGOs increased from \$638 million in 1998 to \$899 million in 1999 and \$965 million in 2000. During the same period, their investment in conservation increased from \$377 million to \$475 million and \$527 million in 2000. Making adjustments for their conservation spending in the US, combined GC-NGO investments in developing countries doubled from 1998 to 2002, from \$240 million to \$487 million. Comparatively, these investments are either equal to or higher than those made by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) except for those in 2001 (an unusual year for GEF), and more than double of the investments made by US foundations.

The GC-NGOs have adopted a mix of instruments to access finances from multiple sources. The main sources of funds globally consist of multilateral and bilateral financial agencies, philanthropic institutions and individuals, the corporate sector and the US government. The large conservation organizations have been successful in raising funds from all these sources and in the process have also become the main channel of funds from these sources to local conservation organizations, accounting for another big change in the structure of conservation finance. Approximately 30% of centrally managed USAID funding for conservation goes to these three NGOs (\$31.47 million in 2001). Total US government grants to the three NGOs between 1999 and 2001 vary from \$45 million to \$58 million. More recently, USAID has decided to channel its funding in developing countries exclusively through six partner NGOs (it excludes the funds managed through in-country missions), which include the three large NGOs whose finances are analyzed in this section. The large NGOs in turn are obligated to fund

⁴ This section is adapted from Khare and Bray (2004)

national NGOs. The present structure of conservation financing, in which the large NGOs play a dominant role, is unlikely to change in the near future, as long-term commitments have been made.

V. Displaced Peoples

There have been egregious cases in Latin America of local peoples being displaced by the establishment of protected areas. When the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve in the Mexican state of Chiapas was established in 1976, thousands of people were resettled and suffered considerable hardships. At least 2,000-3,000 people were resettled due to an expansion of Los Haitises National Park in the Dominican Republic in the mid-1990s (Geisler 2003), and there are reports that 80 families were relocated from headwaters of Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve in Honduras when it was established.

However, a recent review of cases of “removals” because of protected areas listed only African and Asian cases, suggesting that “conservation refugees” are relatively rare in contemporary Latin America (Fortwangler 2003). “Removals” or forced displacements should also be distinguished from “voluntary or negotiated relocations,” where those relocated are given sufficient compensation or incentives to induce them to move voluntarily. Perhaps more typical of contemporary relocations in Latin America, and apparently a model case, is the community of Vega Larga in a cloud forest in the Guatemala’s Sierra de las Minas Biosphere Reserve. Residents of the community moved to new lands outside the reserve after eight years of negotiations, receiving land titles and new homes in the resettlement area, and were reportedly convinced that they would have a better life there (Margoluis, Beavers, and Paiz 2000). There appear to be few if any cases in recent Latin American history where indigenous peoples have been removed from protected areas. The documented cases are almost all negotiated displacement of recently arrived colonists, perhaps some of these under some duress. Recent concern has been raised about “soft eviction” strategies, especially in Asia and Africa (Adamson 2003 [<http://skoll.socialedge.org/?293@242.iakvaNaOb8b.0@.1add7746>]), and there are human rights groups in Latin America that hold that no community, even recently arrived ones, should ever be displaced from protected areas. Critics of this position suggest that it continues failed development patterns at the expense of biodiversity and violates the rule of law. We will look more closely at some of these issues in the local-level case studies below. In any event, it remains an open empirical question how many peoples are actually being displaced by protected areas in Latin America, although available evidence suggests that it is not a major problem, particularly with regards to previously resident indigenous peoples.

VI. Approaches to Working with Local Communities

The policies and practices of conservation NGOs with reference to local communities, whether traditional or colonist, can have a wide range of methodologies. The methods may vary depending on whether the local people: 1) reside within the PA or

in a region being considered for a PA and were long resident in the area before the PA was established; 2) moved in after the PA was established (a fact that has important implications for tenure rights); 3) reside near or on the boundaries of the PA; or 4) occupy a larger landscape not near a protected area but within a corridor, ecoregion or hotspot defined as having conservation interest. Methods of working with local communities may include: 1) paying them to be park guards and carrying out environmental education programs; 2) mapping community lands to strengthen or establish tenure rights using both participatory and remote sensing/GIS methods; 3) organizational strengthening and training; 4) integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPS) with a variety of foci; 5) more specifically market-oriented approaches, such as shade tree coffee, community logging, and ecotourism; 6) in marine situations, sustainable fishing and marine reserves (not further discussed here); or 7) direct payments or “conservation concessions.”

A strict protection approach would be primarily associated only with strategy 1, paying local peoples as park guards and conducting environmental education programs. The remaining strategies all imply steps beyond strict protection approaches. All of the GC-NGOs engage in varying community approaches to different degrees. None can be said to do only strict protection. Strategy 2, mapping of community lands, is primarily associated with developing land claims for indigenous reserves or for planning and zoning purposes in established indigenous or extractive reserves (Chapin and Threlkeld 2001). Strategy 3, organizational strengthening and training, is more commonly used to strengthen local conservation NGOs than community organizations, although there are also some examples of the latter.

Strategy 4, ICDPs, will be examined at somewhat greater length because of their centrality as a strategy for community-based conservation over the last 15 years. There is increasing evidence that many ICDPs, especially those that focus on non-timber forest products, have shown little signs of success. It has been suggested that “natural forests may lack comparative advantage for poverty alleviation.” One researcher has put himself in the place of conservation NGOs by noting that “As a large NGO with a mandate exclusively in natural forests and biodiversity conservation, I would downscale my expectations and change the design of my ICDPs....I would be extremely suspicious if they told me that forests are felled because the local people are poor. In my project portfolio, I would cut back on large-scale planning exercises and people-centered projects....I would let the pendulum swing back to pure conservation activities, including acquiring biologically rich forested land areas in remote regions. I would...refresh this revisionist approach with a variety of experiments on compensation schemes and types of conservation contracts with different stakeholders, mostly at the local level...support conservation efforts of private owners...and lobby against road building, even if poor in favor” (Wunder 2001). Other evidence from people otherwise favorably disposed towards working with local communities suggests that many ICDPs do not give much bang for the conservation and development buck, for a variety of bureaucratic and local-level reasons. Bureaucratically, one consultant to an African IDCP estimated that 55% of the project budget went to US administrative overhead and consultants and only 2% went to the intended local beneficiaries (Ferraro and Kiss 2002). At the local level, ICDPs can

be paralyzed by conflicts (Gezon 2003). However, these conclusions are premature in many cases and do not take into account the success of more clearly market-oriented approaches (see below). In addition, there may indeed be a problem that biologists have been trying to do community development, as has often been noted. For example, ecologists have argued that “institution and capacity building are a poor substitute for economic growth, and trap people into a rural agricultural and extractive existence” (Robinson and Redford 2004). This argument shows a fundamental misunderstanding of the crucial roles of investing in social and human capital in promoting both economic growth and more sustainable environmental management (Southgate 1998; Dasgupta and Serageldin 2000).

Strategy 5, market-oriented projects such as shade-tree organic coffee, community forestry focused on logging, and ecotourism, appear to be the most promising in terms of generating income around PAs. The perceived failures of many ICDPs may be due to inadequate economic analysis and failure to invest sufficiently in human and social capital. Organic, shade-tree and sustainable coffee has kept many small coffee farms in the business and provides documented biodiversity benefits (Perfecto 1996; Bray et. al. 2002). There is increasing evidence that community logging, which takes advantage of the highest value product of the forest, is particularly effective at reducing poverty (Bray et. al. 2003). NGOs have favored ecotourism, since it is perceived as being the lowest-impact income-generating activity. All of the GC-NGOs work on ecotourism, CI and TNC have worked on organic or shade tree coffee to varying degrees, and WWF in particular and TNC to a lesser degree have worked in community logging. CI takes the position that sustainable tropical logging of any kind, community or otherwise, is an oxymoron (Rice et. al 2001). However, this argument appears to be mostly based on the model of granting logging concessions on public lands to private timber companies, as in the case of Bolivia, and does not take into account the multiple use, bequest and discount values that communities may invoke when logging on their own lands with secure tenure and good technical assistance (Bray 2004).

Finally, with regard to Strategy 7, “conservation concessions,” there is a growing literature on the subject of direct payments as compensation for local economic losses due to conservation actions, and a few conservation NGOs are experimenting with this approach (Gullison et. al 2000; Ferraro and Kiss 2002). Direct compensation “indicates an explicit payment to residents equal to the value of their opportunity costs (i.e. the costs of foregone alternatives) resulting from restricted access to the protected area’s resources. Compensation can take the form of cash payments, in-kind substitutes, infrastructure development, provision of social services, or the introduction of alternative production technologies” (Ferraro and Kramer 1997). In this rendering, compensation can range from roads to ICDPs to direct payments, but there has been particular interest lately in the direct payment end of the spectrum. Some of the arguments for direct payment are worth quoting at length: “...direct payments benefit poor farmers by improving cash flows, providing a fungible store of wealth, and diversifying sources of household income. Furthermore, under a payment approach, the landholders/resource users decide how best to meet their own goals and aspirations, rather than being subsidized to carry out predetermined activities as is the case under the indirect approach....Paying an

individual or community for ‘not doing something’ might be seen as a form of social welfare rather than development. However, the idea that conservation payments are a form of welfare belies what conservationists have been arguing for decades: Biodiversity is a valuable commodity and biodiversity protection is an alternative land use” (Ellison 2003). Conservation concessions, or “renting biodiversity,” as they have been termed, have received a remarkable degree of attention for a largely untested idea, with E.O. Wilson calling them a “true revolution in global conservation” (Ellison 2003). As has been pointed out, conservation concessions seem to be working, in the few cases where they have been applied, where there is relatively little competition for resources, but the price could become quite high when such competition exists (Ellison 2003).

VII. The GC-NGOs: Who Are They, What They Do, and Landscape Level Approaches

A. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

WWF is the common acronym for the international coordinating body based in Gland, Switzerland, which since 1986 has been known as the World Wide Fund for Nature, and some 40 affiliated “primary offices and associates” throughout the world. WWF-US continues to use the older name, the World Wildlife Fund, under the same acronym. WWF International in Switzerland is the secretariat for WWF's global organization. Its role is to lead and coordinate the WWF network of offices around the world “through developing policies and priorities, fostering global partnerships, coordinating international campaigns, and providing supportive measures in order to help make the global operation run as smoothly as it can” (<http://www.panda.org>). WWF’s regional offices fall into two categories: those that can raise funds and carry out work independently, and those that must work under the direction of one of the independent WWF offices. WWF-US is an independent office and administers most WWF programs in Latin America, although other independent offices may also work directly in the region. WWF-Brazil is now the only independent office in Latin America. WWF-US is also in charge of liaison with multilateral institutions based in Washington, D.C., such as the World Bank. It reports a donor base of 4.7 million supporters and a presence in 96 countries.

In all cases, WWF’s offices carry out local conservation work within national boundaries, such as field projects, scientific research, advising local and national governments on environmental policy, promoting environmental education, and raising awareness of environmental issues. As a decentralized network of organizations, national organizations can act with considerable autonomy. For example, on the issue of the relative weight of traditional conservation versus community-based conservation, one WWF-US staff person noted that there is a “dynamic tension” within the organization over the relative emphasis on community resource management and traditional conservation, and there are differences of opinion over where to invest scarce resources.

WWF has a variety of cross-cutting approaches to biodiversity conservation. It defines itself as addressing the three biomes of Forests, Freshwater Ecosystems, and Oceans and Coasts, a list of “flagship species” and two “global threats” of toxic chemicals, and climate change. These foci are within what is described as a “twin approach” to conservation, with the use of Ecoregion Action Programs and biome-specific Target Driven Programs. The “targets” are specific program areas such as forests, marine, freshwater, toxics and global climate change. For WWF, this constitutes “an innovative and holistic way to integrate the biophysical and socioeconomic dimensions of conservation planning and management and to measure progress toward the achievement of global objectives” (WB/WWF 2003). An overarching programmatic thrust is also found in the Forests for Life Program, announced in 1996, which calls for Protection, Management and Restoration (PMR), an integrated approach at the landscape level. Within this program, it is useful to note that for WWF the focus on Forest Landscape Restoration “provides a more realistic means of achieving results that are acceptable to a wide range of stakeholders and will therefore be durable. It moves the focus away from the trees to the goods, services and processes that healthy forested landscapes can provide” (WWF International 2002). One of WWF’s largest current programs is the Amazon Region Protected Areas Program (ARPA), which will be discussed further in the Brazil section below.

Some WWF alliances with other institutions involve both traditional protected area management and working with communities. For example, the World Bank/WWF Alliance for Forest Conservation and Sustainable Use was started in 1998 and was recently extended to run through December 2005 (WB/WWF 2003). The Alliance has three targets to be achieved by 2005: 1) 50 million hectares of new forest protected areas; 2) 50 million hectares of existing but highly threatened forest protected areas secured under effective management; and 3) 200 million hectares of production forests under independently certified sustainable management. Thus, the target for sustainably managed production forests (which may include both community and industrial forests) is twice as large as the protected area targets.

WWF adopted an official indigenous policy in May 1996 entitled *Indigenous Peoples and Conservation: WWF Statement of Principles*, an 8-page document with an appendix that has the complete text of the International Labor Office’s Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. The Statement of Principles includes statements such as “Prior to initiating conservation in an area, WWF will exercise due diligence to...seek out information about the historic claims and current exercise of customary rights of indigenous peoples in that area,” and “When WWF conservation activities impinge on areas where historic claims and/or current exercise of customary resource rights of indigenous peoples are present, WWF will assume an obligation to identify, seek out, and consult with legitimate representatives of relevant indigenous peoples’ organizations at the earliest stages of programme development.” Below we will discuss the ecoregion approach and indigenous peoples, but here we will just note that WWF over the years has produced a large number of publications about working with local communities and indigenous peoples, apparently far more publications of various kinds on this subject than either of the other two GC-NGOs. The

Huiricuta “Sacred Protected Area” in Mexico is another notable example of WWF’s work with indigenous peoples. In this case WWF worked with the Alliance of Religions and Conservation, the state government of San Luis Potosí, a local Mexican NGO, and the Huichols and other local communities to expand from 74,000 to 140,000 hectares a region that has long been sacred to the Huichols within WWF’s Chihuahuan Desert Ecoregion.

WWF’s ecoregion approach

WWF defines an ecoregion as a “large unit of land or water containing a geographically distinct assemblage of species, natural communities, and environmental conditions.” The ecoregional approach seeks to follow a scientific process in establishing “the representation of all ecosystem and habitat types in regional investment portfolios.” The goals of ecoregional planning are to replace what had been an ad hoc approach to establishing protected areas and in biodiversity conservation projects with a more scientifically based approach, to move beyond a species focus to an ecosystem and habitat focus, to integrate conservation biology principles and landscape ecology into decision-making, and to ensure that scarce conservation funds are put where they are most needed (Dinerstein et. al 1995). It is thus a priority-setting process that allows conservation organizations to say with greater assurance that they are working in the most important biodiverse regions. Through this process, WWF developed what it called its Global 200 Ecoregions (although the actual number is 238, emphasizing the marketing aspects of landscape level approaches).

It is clear that the ecoregion approach was developed by ecological scientists and in its basic formulations shows little interest or sensitivity to local human communities. “These far-reaching strategies identify biodiversity goals and targets. They propose representative systems of conservation areas of sufficient size, condition and connectivity to maintain even the most sensitive species and ecological processes. All of these features strengthen the conservation community’s credibility in predicting the consequences of different resource-use scenarios and its bargaining position during negotiations *with stakeholders for whom conservation is a lower priority*. Without the recommendations of a science-based, ecoregion strategy to serve as a bottom line, conservationists *are likely to enter into dangerous compromises because we will not know when, where and what to fight for*” (Olson et. al 2002). [Emphasis added.]

Thus, for WWF ecoregional scientists, an elaborate priority-setting scientific exercise could be carried out before even talking to other stakeholders, with no apparent exceptions made for local or indigenous communities. The data is then taken as a “bargaining position” without scientific uncertainty appearing to enter the picture. It is assumed that all other stakeholders have conservation as a lower priority and that compromises are “dangerous,” an approach which seems to assume a zero-sum game of conflict rather than collaboration. One of the early major ecoregional studies almost does not mention any human dimensions, except in references to “threats,” and only at the very end of a lengthy ecological classificatory discussion mentions “land use analysis”

and the need to assess “other uses or demands for resources by stakeholders who have access to or heavily utilize blocks with high conservation potential” (Dinerstein et. al 1995).

WWF staff members interviewed for this study frequently expressed a more nuanced approach to ecoregional planning. They argued that the ecoregion approach does not negatively affect local people, although it may indeed require tradeoffs. If a high conservation value forest is identified in the landscape and it is used by local peoples, discussions and negotiations would be necessary to see if some compensating resource could be located in the landscape. One staff member acknowledged, “When you start doing ecoregion planning you have to bring people in as full partners.” Arguing that the ecoregion approach is a land management tool that includes social values, this person continued, “ecoregions allow conservation organizations to develop solutions that are as big as the problem.” Another pointed out, “no ecoregion is going to be sewn up as a park, so how do you scale up the livelihoods work? How do you address land use and zoning to look at accumulating impacts?” One staffer likened ecoregions to “a biosphere reserve with core areas large enough to protect jaguars.”

There would appear to be some contradiction between ecoregional methodology, particularly as expressed by WWF’s scientists, and the organization’s own indigenous policy. Gathering the data for the ecoregional approach is a major conservation exercise, but seeking out information on “current exercise of customary rights of indigenous peoples,” as called for in the indigenous policy, is not part of that exercise. It is an indication of the tension over these approaches that the indigenous principles statement was elaborated by WWF International and the ecoregional approach was developed by WWF-US, although both are now the official policies of the international network.

Possibly as an effort to address these tensions, WWF International made a major effort to integrate the ecoregional approach with local communities. A monograph produced by WWF International-Terralingua, *Indigenous and Traditional Peoples of the World and Ecoregion Conservation: An Integrated Approach to Conserving the World’s Biological and Cultural Diversity* (Oviedo and Maffi 2000), constitutes a major conceptual effort to integrate indigenous peoples into ecoregional planning. In addition, wall-size presentation maps the overlay of indigenous peoples with WWF’s Global 200 ecoregions. The report argues that “A crucial role exists here for WWF and other conservation organizations: to support indigenous and traditional peoples in finding ways to develop and strengthen their cultures and societies while sustainably managing their resources” (Oviedo and Maffi 2000: 1). However, it appears that this particular approach was not further developed after this publication.

Despite this, there are multiple examples of WWF working with other stakeholders in larger landscapes. For example, WWF is funding a study of four different soybean producers in Brazil as part of a project that looks at how soybean farming can be made more sustainable by rehabilitating degraded areas rather than expanding into forest. Some pilot projects in carbon sequestration projects also include what they call “environmental and social additionality” in landscape “defragmentation.” In this vein,

WWF is working in an area of northern Misiones province in Argentina to restore a landscape that offers a habitat for jaguars with corridors that include palmetto and yerba mate to provide income for local residents. The region-specific sections below examine how the ecoregional approach plays out on the ground. In these sections, it will become clear that the ecoregional planning approach as conceived by WWF's ecological scientists is not followed religiously on the ground.

There is a widespread view that WWF "flushed out social scientists" over the last several years, laying off social scientists and becoming a more biologically oriented institution. Nonetheless, it is not hard to find people in the main office in D.C., probably more in some units than others, whose background is primarily in community development. Further, as is noted in the next section, WWF has a long-standing commitment to community forestry in particular and clearly has a greater commitment to community logging than any of the other NGOs.

Community Forestry

WWF has a strong community forestry component in several of its programs in Latin America. These frequently take place in larger forested landscapes which are not near protected areas. For example, we spoke with one staff member at WWF whose training is in community forestry and who commented that he doesn't have much experience in protected areas. This staffer argued that many people in WWF are primarily interested in protection but that there is also a large constituency within the network who see that strict protection is not an option in many local situations. He argued that "it is not an option to not work with local communities." WWF has worked extensively to develop certification programs as building blocks towards sustainable forest management. In Madagascar it has helped organize a national working group to test FSC standards in community-managed forest areas. One staffer commented that in Madagascar 10% of remaining forests are already in protected areas and in such a poor country it doesn't make sense to try and expand that figure. WWF also has strong community forestry programs in Mexico and Central America, particularly in Honduras and Nicaragua. (A field visit to WWF's community forestry project in Nicaragua is discussed below in the Central American section.) It is also launching local-level sustainable logging projects in Madre de Dios province in Peru.

B. Conservation International

Conservation International (CI) was established in 1987 as a breakaway from the International Division of the TNC. Reportedly, one of its disagreements with TNC at the time was over the importance of working with local communities, a position that the emerging CI championed as central to its approach. CI had a relatively limited presence in a selected group of countries until fairly recently. In the early and mid 1990s, CI's largest program was in the Petén in Guatemala. However, in recent years, CI has been on a dramatic growth curve, mostly because of foundation funding. The Center for Applied Biodiversity Science (CABS) was founded in 1999 with a personal grant from Gordon

Moore and CI's very active research program is based in this unit. CABS includes programs such as GIS databases, rapid assessment programs (RAP), and the Tropical Ecology Assessment and Monitoring Program (TEAM), which seeks to establish a network of field stations in tropical biodiversity hotspots and wilderness areas to become "the first global-level system to track the behavior of biodiversity over time." Additional programs include the Conservation Knowledge Management Program, the Conservation Economics Program, and a new program on Biodiversity and Climate Change. In 2002, CABS established the Human Dimensions of Biodiversity Program. It also administers a series of specialized conservation research and action funds such as the Turtle Conservation Fund and the Small Cat Conservation Alliance. Scientists on CI staff have published findings on the impacts and causes of biodiversity decline, the effectiveness of protected areas, and the ineffectiveness of some sustainable use strategies such as "sustainable" logging in tropical forests. The organization has published in the most prestigious scientific journals, such as *Science* and *Nature*, and has established a very high and respected scientific profile on these issues. Indeed, it can be said that CI has established a new model of conservation science research by GC-NGOs (da Fonseca 2003).

In 2001, CI received a \$261.2 million grant from the Moore Foundation. With \$100 million of these funds, it established the Global Conservation Fund (GCF) in 2001 to focus on the "creation, expansion and long-term management of protected areas in the world's biodiversity hotspots, high-biodiversity wilderness areas and important marine regions." Although focusing on protected areas, GCF funds are being used extensively to work with local communities, and protected areas can include community-managed areas. Efforts include a multi-community-managed wildlife management area in Papua New Guinea and working on community natural resource management on Siberut Island in Indonesia. GCF claims it has supported new conservation activities on 53 million hectares, about one-third of which are in indigenous communities, and says that although CI units and country-level projects can apply for funds, the majority of the grants go to small NGOs. Also of relevance to this study is that GCF funds are being used and are available to support the "conservation concession" concept promoted by the CABS conservation economics unit.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) was launched in 2000 and gave its first grant in 2001. It is a joint initiative of CI, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank, with each entity contributing \$5 million a year for five years. The CEPF provides funding and technical assistance to NGOs, community groups and private sector partners to "create strategic working alliances among diverse groups...for a comprehensive, coordinated approach to conservation challenges." Thus, the CEPF is intended to build civil society, and its stated policy is that funds may not be used "for the purchase of land, involuntary resettlement of people, or the alternation of any physical cultural property."

Verde Ventures is a \$6 million investment fund for small conservation-oriented businesses in CI's priority areas. One recent report claims that it has invested \$1 million in six projects. Verde Ventures is being used to support CI's work with shade tree coffee

production and marketing efforts in Chiapas, Mexico, with a \$89,444 loan to the Campesinos Ecológicos de la Sierra Madre de Chiapas (CESMACH) a 250-member cooperative around the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, and a \$250,000 loan to Ethno-Verde for investment in a three year rotating fund to finance shade-grown coffee production to coffee farmers.

The Moore Foundation donation also supports Centers for Biodiversity Conservation (CBC) (\$121.2 million) to support alliances with communities, NGOs, governments, businesses and other stakeholders in the regions of the Andes, Brazil/Guianas, Melanesia and Madagascar, and Scientific Field Stations (\$40 million) to support the first 10 scientific field stations of an anticipated 50 for the TEAM project and the GCF.

CI recognizes that there have been major gains in global protected areas and likens this trend to a successful franchise, like McDonald's, with acceptance by the global community. But the organization notes the need to look more closely at interventions beyond the PAs. In interviews, a CI staffer noted with reference to landscape approaches that "our approach at that level is to incorporate especially indigenous areas as a part of conservation planning."

CI was involved with dialogues with indigenous peoples at the WPC in Durban and came away feeling very positive. It felt a deep interest on the part of indigenous peoples in joining together with conservation organizations on issues like funding demarcation of native lands. It noted the larger number of indigenous communities in Peru, Bolivia and Venezuela and the necessity of working with them. Staff members feel that there has been "quite a revolution in terms of focus; five years ago the level of awareness of indigenous peoples in the conservation equation was not high." CI also frequently mentions its work with the Kayapó indigenous reserve in southern Pará. This is a tract of 11 million hectares with 6,000 people in it. However, it is noteworthy that in interviews a CI official was one of only two people interviewed for this study who was openly critical of some indigenous groups (another was a former Mexican secretary of the environment, see below). This administrator cited the case of the Pataxo Indians who occupied Monte Pascoal National Park in Bahia in 1999 and claimed it as their traditional lands. "They act pretty much like the landless movement in Brazil and protected areas are especially vulnerable. If you invade a private farm you are subject to being expelled but it doesn't happen in a PA." The official also mentioned the case of the Superagúí Guarani Indians from Argentina who invaded a national park across the border in Brazil. "Fifty families invaded and chopped down the forest and then left and went back. ...Some communities will be good stewards of the land, some can be bad. ...Indigenous rights organizations are sometimes blind to the fact that rights must come together with responsibilities." The same person continued, "We will work with indigenous peoples when they ask us to and when it makes sense." However, one of CI's basic arguments for continuing to focus primarily on protected areas is that "protection of biodiversity must be public."

CI appeared to be most active in engaging with communal reserves and indigenous organizations in the Peruvian Amazon. A staff member argued that “the best way to protect these local areas is to empower the local communities....How do you build that viable institutional foundation? We are working with indigenous communities from the start. The amount of land that can be set aside is limited, so you have to work with the private landowners, which in many cases is now the indigenous communities.”

CI’s indigenous policy was just recently formally adopted by its board. It is based in part on existing World Bank and WWF indigenous policies. The CI policy includes clauses such as “We recognize that there are often overlaps between lands set aside for legally designated parks and protected areas and lands customarily owned or used by indigenous peoples. CI recognizes both the significance of these customary rights and the need for long-term sustainable management of critical ecosystems. In legally designated parks and protected areas, CI will work with protected area and indigenous authorities to support collaborative management initiatives that recognize customary uses while ensuring that natural resources are not depleted and that actively involve indigenous communities in planning, zoning, and monitoring.” CI also recently established the Human Dimensions of Biodiversity Program as a new effort to incorporate local communities into its research and action programs. The director of the Human Dimensions Program says he feels that he has received strong support from CI management, and that one vice-president volunteered in a recent general staff meeting that “We realize the lack of attention to human dimensions issues is a problem and we are very committed to getting this program up and running.” He notes that “CI is building conservation on the backs of protected areas, but as we expand into a focus on corridors everyone realizes we have to work with the human communities.” He says they are developing relations with indigenous advocacy organizations and acknowledges that “We want to turn around the bad press that CI has gotten on indigenous issues....If we have at the same time biodiversity conservation and conflicts with local peoples it’s not going to work.” Another CI staff member interviewed said, “A lot of us are biologists and it’s hard for us to have humans in mind...‘Outside the protected area isn’t important and inside you can control things.’ That has impeded us from understanding other points of view.”

In terms of landscape level approaches, it should be noted that the hotspots approach apparently has some limitations for landscape level planning. Hotspots is really a rather limited tool. It identifies large and threatened areas to invest in, but unlike ecoregional planning, it does not appear to have a specific methodology for establishing priorities within the hotspot. In its approach to landscape level planning CI notes that it may want as much strict protection as possible, but in a regional approach you have to think in terms of sustainable development alternatives. It notes its recently declared support for Sustainable Development Reserves in Amazonas State in Brazil as one example, but also cites disagreements with the Brazilian government, saying CI wanted to invest directly in protection rather than sustainable development projects in cases where there may be only 50 families in a large reserve. In another indication of greater attention to sustainable use alternatives in larger landscapes, CI recently published a book on agroforestry and biodiversity conservation in landscapes beyond protected areas (Schroth et. al. 2004).

CI and Conservation Concessions

CI is currently pursuing the conservation concession approach more aggressively than any of the other NGOs. WWF has only one experience, in the Monarch Butterfly Reserve in Mexico (reviewed below), while TNC apparently has none in Latin America. The major architect of the conservation concessions option argues that it is a way of providing a direct conservation incentive and puts money in people's pockets much more directly than ICDPs or other market-oriented efforts. CI argues that too much conservation money remains in the NGOs and not enough gets into the pockets of the people who need the incentive to conserve. CI's first successful conservation concession was in Guyana, where it bought from the Guyanese government the logging concession in the 300,000-hectare Iwokrama Reserve. The reserve itself is uninhabited but CI says it went out of its way to involve three small indigenous communities (with a total population of around 300) located some distance from the actual concession. CI has established a 30-year trust fund which will make \$10,000 a year available for community projects and has hired, trained and equipped eight people from the communities to patrol the concession area to make sure there are no incursions, although the threat level is believed to be low. The conservation concession approach has also been used in Bolivia in the Pílon Lajas Biosphere Reserve to buy from a private timber company a 195,000-hectare logging concession that had been issued before the area was declared a park. CI currently has a list of some 10 other possible conservation concession arrangements it is exploring, ranging from the Cofán of Ecuador to a communal reserve in Cojolita in the Lacandon forest in Chiapas and a private cattle ranch in the Llanos of Venezuela. However, CI's most controversial concessions effort was one that failed in the Petén of Guatemala. It will be reviewed in the Central America section below.

C. The Nature Conservancy

TNC began as an entirely US-oriented organization that specialized in the purchase of lands for conservation purposes, which it then administered itself or donated to public agencies to be administered by them. Beginning in 1984, when it established its Latin American and Caribbean Division, TNC began expanding into international work, although it was shaken in these efforts in 1988 when most of its international division left suddenly to establish CI. Rebuilding its international programs in the 1990s, and particularly with the Parks in Peril program, TNC became an important international actor again. TNC was shaken by a series of investigative reports in *The Washington Post* in May 2003 that suggested TNC had engaged in a series of questionable activities, but none of this investigative reporting addressed TNC's international operations.

The Parks in Peril (PiP) program became TNC's signature international program after it was launched in 1990. PiP was the first major international conservation program to focus on a broad array of protected areas in Latin America and represented a major effort to move many Latin American protected areas from the status of "paper parks"—i.e. legally declared but with little in the way of budgets or programs—to actively

managed areas. Given the condition of many of these protected areas, PiP was defined as “emergency assistance.” From a list of 200 protected areas, TNC selected 22 to begin working with, and 10 of these received major USAID funding (Houseal, Ostria and Touval 1998). A decision was made not to pursue the establishment of new protected areas, on the rationale that there were so many already decreed ones with very inadequate support. The emphasis was on creating a permanent on-site presence in the protected areas. “This singular focus became a major undertaking for each protected area, in most cases entailing the acquisition of four-wheel drive vehicles or boats and horses; obtaining field equipment such as backpacks, boots, jungle hammocks, compasses, and machetes; recruiting and training rangers from the local communities who would be capable of working alone in remote areas for extended periods of time; contacting local residents and obtaining their support for the areas; surveying protected areas boundaries, opening up patrol trails, building cattle-control fences, and placing signs at access points; building the first ranger stations, and furnishing them with first aid, fire-fighting, and rescue equipment and battery- or solar-powered radios” (Houseal, Ostria, and Touval 1998). Although the focus was clearly on strengthening traditional protected area management, the second of three goals was “to integrate these protected areas into the economic and cultural lives of local communities” through “environmental education and pilot projects in sustainable resource use.” The PiP program grew to include 60 parks in 18 countries covering more than 30 million hectares, with 28 of them eventually supported by USAID. The PiP program was based on building collaborative partnerships among national, international, public, and private organizations. TNC in most cases worked with existing conservation organizations and focused on strengthening them, rather than creating new NGOs. Direct grants and training to both government agencies and NGOs were the two principal means of strengthening.

A major review of the PiP program in 1998, however, concluded that “protected areas policies concerning compatible land and resource uses are often in conflict with communal landholdings, traditional practices, or individual property rights. In the absence of creative mechanisms that promote and enforce appropriate land and resource uses, many terrestrial and marine protected areas are still treated as open-access resource areas with few possibilities for sustainable uses that also ensure longer-term economic benefits” (Houseal, Ostria and Touval 1998). Today, the PiP program has pretty much wound down in favor of other programs, particular the USAID-funded Leaders with Associates Program, which supports all three of the GC-NGOs.

TNC’s signature activity in the US was the acquisition by purchase of environmentally sensitive lands, which it frequently turned over to government agencies for management. Although TNC began in Latin America by focusing on existing protected areas, it is increasingly buying lands in Latin America under similar arrangements as those in the US. For example, an alliance of Mexican and US conservation groups (including WWF and the Packard Foundation) donated more than \$3 million to help the Mexican government buy Isla Espiritu Santo, a 23,000-acre island complex in the Sea of Cortez, from a local community, the ejido Bonfil. The Sea of Cortez is one of the most biologically diverse marine areas in the world and TNC is working with the local community on sustainable use projects. This is reportedly the first

time in Mexico that private funds have been used for such a land transfer to a government agency, developed as a solution to local conflicts between the protected area and the community on whose land it was declared.

In Chile, TNC and a group of partners have acquired 147,500 acres of environmentally critical temperate rainforest in the Valdivian Coastal Range. TNC acquired the property for \$7.5 million at a public auction on November 4, 2003 following the bankruptcy of the forestry company, Bosques S.A. The land acquisition was facilitated by FleetBoston Financial Corporation, the largest major creditor of Bosques S.A. The acquisition is part of a larger partnership among TNC, WWF, CI's Global Conservation Fund and local organizations in Chile. TNC will provide the majority of the funding, with WWF and CI contributing up to \$1 million each toward the transaction. Thus, the land is currently directly owned by TNC and its partners but they have reportedly begun a process to determine how to establish Chilean ownership of the land for conservation. Once this is arranged, TNC says it will transfer ownership and management of the property to Chilean hands. It plans to harvest eucalyptus on the property to begin restoring native forest and work with local communities.

Although early hopes for debt-for-nature swaps have faded, TNC recently carried out such a swap in Panama. With a \$1.16 million contribution from TNC, the US government forgave \$10 million of Panama's debt. In exchange, the government of Panama will fund conservation projects in the Chagres River Basin in the amount of \$10 million over the next 14 years. TNC is involved in partnerships with large corporations and recently received \$500,000 from the Alcoa Foundation to support work on ecoregional planning, community involvement and land acquisition in five global forest areas. In at least one case in Colombia, TNC joined Colombian conservation and indigenous organizations in purchasing 1,000 acres in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and turning it over to the Arhuaco indigenous group for management.

TNC clearly maintains a steady focus on protected area management. Sustainable use projects do not play a major role in its programs. Nonetheless, as shall see below, in certain regions it is more involved with sustainable use projects and in working with local communities outside the context of traditional protected areas. In the Calakmul region of Mexico the TNC is working on certification issues for better forest management by local communities, in Guatemala it is involved in large-scale regional landscape planning in the Lake Atitlan region with local communities on issues like organic coffee, and in Brazil it has a major initiative under way to work with indigenous reserves. Unlike WWF and CI, TNC does not have a formal indigenous policy. A staff member of TNC-Brazil said he is pushing for such a policy and hopes TNC will have one in the near future.

D. Indigenous-Oriented Organizations

A significant number of indigenous advocacy or indigenous service organizations (working on specialized support to indigenous communities such as mapping or legal services) exist in D.C. and elsewhere, but they tend to be small and underfunded,

particularly compared to the conservation organizations. We were able to conduct interviews at four such organizations in the D.C. area: one that advocates for indigenous peoples in the Amazon Basin (Amazon Alliance), two that specialize in mapping indigenous lands or other conservation and development support (Native Lands and Amazon Conservation Team [ACT]), and another that specializes in legal issues (Indian Law Resource Center). We also consulted documents and webpages of other indigenous advocacy or service organizations. As one interviewee working for an indigenous-oriented organization noted, “Everyone has recognized that a politically correct conservation tactic necessarily involves stakeholder analysis, especially when people have been marginalized,” but the degree that recognition translates into specific actions can be highly variable.

With reference to the mapping organizations, Native Lands recently gave up its independent NGO status to become a program within the Environmental Law Institute (ELI), although it maintains its name, projects and focus. ACT is a breakaway organization from CI that was established to work exclusively with indigenous areas or protected areas co-managed with indigenous peoples.

A representative of one of the indigenous organizations interviewed said that actual displacements from protected areas have been few in Latin America, but argued that the problem is not that people have been displaced but that they have been ignored. NGOs don’t deal well with situations where indigenous peoples are inside protected areas, this person continued, pointing out that the rhythms of decision-making and difference in beliefs and social systems make it challenging for western conservation NGOs and indigenous groups to work well together. He noted the major conflicts between marine scientists from the Smithsonian Institution and the Kuna of Panama that resulted in the scientists being thrown out of the Kuna reserve. He also argued that although one conservation organization in particular uses images of indigenous peoples extensively in its materials, they are always images of the most exotically painted savages. “They don’t want any pictures of Indians in T-shirts and shorts,” he noted.

Founded in 1994, the D.C.-based Amazon Alliance is the product of a 1990 meeting held in Iquitos, Peru between US-based environmental organizations and representatives of the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples’ Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA). “COICA participants argued that the best defense of the Amazon came through support of indigenous claims to territory and urged environmentalists to develop policies and strategies that value the Amazon as a biosphere of flora, fauna and human life” (<http://www.amazonalliance.org/about/index.htm>.) Amazon Alliance notes that its primary focus is “on territorial defense, not biodiversity conservation.” Although it started out as a coalition of international NGOs and regional indigenous organizations (CI, WWF and TNC are all listed as members on its website), Amazon Alliance notes that none of the big D.C. organizations currently participates. It draws more interest and participation from the regional offices of the large conservation NGOs, citing David Cleary of TNC-Brazil as an example of active participation and noting that TNC Brazil is planning to join the Amazon Alliance. It acknowledges differences in approach between conservation organizations that can lead to conflicts. An

example is the case of Pacaya-Samira National Park in Peru, where WWF–Denmark was working on titling indigenous land within the park in the face of opposition from the local TNC office. CI staffers interviewed recognized that they are not close to COICA but stated that they do work more closely with some of the regional indigenous organizations that are its members and are active in planning processes in communal reserves in Peru. There is considerable skepticism among some indigenous organizations about the real purposes of PAs, with one noting, “we have seen petroleum wells inside bioserves. I don’t believe them when they say that those areas are for protection.”

E. The Field Programs

Mexico

All three NGOs work in Mexico. We will quickly give an overview of each agency’s activities and then look at two case studies more closely: WWF and the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (MBBR) and CI in the Selva Lacandon.

WWF is under new leadership in Mexico as of fall 2003. A new executive director and forest director were installed in the last year and the agency has undergone an internal administrative reorganization. The new Forest Department is working in the Monarca (see below), three regions of Oaxaca, and just recently in the Tarahumara region of Chihuahua. WWF Mexico focuses on watersheds, which they define as smaller than ecoregions. It claims that in the 13 years it has been working in Mexico it has worked with 35 communities. A lot of this has been supporting communities to develop land use guidelines, which the WWF regards as fundamental. It has also supported a variety of economic alternatives, such as certification of forest management and organic and shade tree coffee. Its major areas of work are protected areas, integrated and sustainable forest management, strengthening of community organizations, and strengthening of forest policy. It also supports some scientific research and claims that the Sierra Norte of Oaxaca has the greatest plant biodiversity of any region from Costa Rica to the Sierra Norte. In other community support, WWF sent representatives from two Mexican communities, Ixtlán and Huatulco (both in Oaxaca), to give presentations at WPC in Durban. One WWF-Mexico director said, “What we have to support number one is social organization. I am a radical on this, but it is evident for me.”

Conservation International is now focusing its work in Mexico in the Gulf of Mexico and in the Selva Lacandon, from where it administers its entire Selva Maya program as well. It has only one person on payroll in Mexico City for some coordination purposes and does not maintain an office there. See below for a discussion of CI in the Selva Lacandon.

TNC has probably the most extensive office network of any international NGO in Mexico, with offices in Mexico City (4 people), Mérida (7), Tuxtla Gutierrez (2), La Paz (2) and Hermosillo (2). Despite this presence, TNC claims to be the most “discreet” of

the NGOs because it says it only operates in a support role to existing Mexican conservation NGOs or protected area management structures, and that it focuses on creating local capacity. It says that it does landscape level planning using a modified ecoregional planning, and agrees that this implies restrictions on use, but that anything concerning the environment implies restrictions on use. It breaks its landscape level planning into two stages: Phase I is entirely science based, identifying the best examples of the biodiversity to preserve, and Phase II is the planning and implementation phase, although it can be difficult to involve communities in landscape level planning. For example, it can be hard to find representative organizations with a regional vision in some areas. “It is very easy to say you need local participation, but at what scale can it happen? It is easier when you get down to specific sites, then you can involve the local communities,” one staffer noted. Currently, in most areas of Mexico where it is working, TNC is still in Phase I and is not involving local communities. Its longest involvement is in the Yucatan Peninsula, and that is where it is working the most with local communities. The Calakmul region of Campeche is one of the few areas where the TNC is involved in forest management and certification issues. It is also working with coffee in El Triunfo, although CI has gotten much more publicity for its work there (see below).

We will now turn to the two case studies mentioned above.

1. The Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (MBBR): WWF’s Experiment with Conservation Concessions

The long-sought overwintering grounds of the monarch butterfly were not discovered by the outside world until 1973. As tourist and other interest began to build in the 1970s, what is now the MBBR was declared a “Wildlife Refuge and Reserve Zone” in September 1980 and in 1986 a “Special Biosphere Reserve for the Monarch Butterfly.” However, when the MBBR was originally declared, it was done without the knowledge of the communities and with inadequate knowledge of where the butterfly colonies were actually established. A high-level trinational conference on the Monarch Butterfly Reserve in Morelia, Michoacán in October 1997 included many local farmers and resulted in an agreement that the lines of the reserve would be redrawn. As a result of this work, in 2000 the MBBR was officially redrawn with new boundaries. The change had major consequences for communities in and around the area, as will be detailed below.

The new MBBR has a total area of 56,259 hectares, divided into three nuclear zones with a total of 13,551 hectares and a buffer zone of 42,707 hectares in four *municipios* in the state of Mexico and six *municipios* in the state of Michoacán. The MBBR was previously only 16,000 hectares of core zone on seven mountaintops isolated from each other. Now there are three separate nuclear areas connected by defined corridors as part of the buffer zone. The situation in and around the MBBR is made difficult by the fact that the communities in the region are very poor and densely populated. Some of the communities are controlled by *caciques* (political bosses) and there is little transparency in community politics. There is widespread illegal logging in

the communities, usually with the collaboration of groups within the communities, and at least sometimes in collaboration with corrupt community authorities (although one report indicates that increased attention to illegal logging has caused the activity to shift to federal lands in the region). As one source argued, “The communities don’t control their natural resources, regional mafias control them.”

The stewardship of the redrawing of the protected area was very much a project of the *Secretaría de Medio Ambiente, Recursos Naturales, Agua, y Pesca* (SEMARNAP)⁵ under the leadership of then-Environmental Secretary Julia Carabias, who acknowledged in an interview, “I was very much a protagonist there.” Carabias pointed out that the situation in the MBBR is quite different from that in Montes Azules and the Lacandon Community (see below). In the case of the MBBR the Biosphere Reserve was declared on lands that belonged to ejidos.⁶ According to Carabias, WWF began working in the MBBR at her personal request, and she also coordinated support from various programs within SEMARNAP and focused them in the MBBR to try and concentrate available federal resources in the area. The “conservation concession” or compensation scheme now being implemented in the MBBR (see below) did not arise out of any theoretical considerations of the appropriateness or wisdom of such schemes, as is the case with CI’s current efforts to promote the model. Rather, it arose out of the pragmatic consideration that a conservation science-based redrawing of the boundaries of the nuclear zones of the biosphere reserve would include areas now subject to legal logging by the communities, and it was obvious from the beginning that a mechanism had to be found to compensate the communities for this lost income. This led to the development of the conservation concession scheme that is outlined below, and its uniqueness for WWF is underlined by the fact that the organization is not pursuing similar schemes elsewhere at this time, again in contrast to CI.

After considerable discussion and negotiation, WWF and the Mexican Fund for the Conservation of Nature (MFCN) established the Monarch Butterfly Conservation Fund (MBCF) with a contribution of \$5 million from the David and Lucille Packard Foundation, \$1 million from the Mexican government, and \$250,000 each from the states of Mexico and Michoacán. (As of fall 2003, reportedly only Michoacán has paid.) The interest from this endowment is insufficient to pay full market price for the timber. We heard widely varying reports on what the current price of timber should be, ranging from US\$33 to US\$60 per cubic meter, but the MBCF is only paying \$18 per cubic meter. The MBCF has argued that the gap between the price it can pay and the market price is not that far off once the costs of logging are discounted, but it would also like to be able to pay market price to maximize the funds received by the communities. WWF is currently seeking to raise an additional \$21 million. Of this, 6 million would go into the compensation endowment, which would allow payment of market price for the lost

⁵ SEMARNAP became SEMARNAT (Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales) in 2000 with the advent of the administration of President Vicente Fox.

⁶ As we shall see below, when the Comunidad Lacandon (CL) and Montes Azules in Chiapas were declared there were ejidos within their territories as well, but many other ejidos and communities were founded within them after their establishment and there are many illegal settlements in both. The latter two situations do not exist in the MBBR.

timber volume, \$7 million dollars would support reforestation activities within the nuclear zones, and \$2 million would support monitoring and enforcement.

A total of 37 communities have lands within the nuclear zone of the MBBR. Of these, 23 had existing logging permits and 14 did not. This has led to a differentiation in the forms of payment. One form is direct payment for conservation, meaning that there has been no land use change in the nuclear areas. This is set at \$8 per hectare for communities with logging permits and \$12 for communities without them. (Communities with logging permits get an additional payment for lost logging volume). The second payment is direct compensation for communities that have logging permits, at the rate of \$18 per cubic meter.

A first token payment for conserving land covered the last two months of 2000. In that year, six of the 23 communities with logging permits and four of the 13 without them did not sign agreements. In 2001, US\$39,592 was paid out to the 23 communities that signed agreements and had logging permits, and all (now) 14 communities without permits signed, receiving a total of \$53,232. The first payments for logging compensation were made in June 2002. Communities with logging permits in the buffer zones are allowed to continue logging those areas, so some communities still have logging income as well. Reportedly, one or two communities did not receive payment in the most recent period because overflights showed observable land clearing or logging in the nuclear zone.

The initial approach to the communities to broach the idea of the redrawing the Biosphere Reserve boundaries and to propose payment both for conservation and lost logging rights was carried out by the administration of the MBBR, and the degree of participation and consultation was said to be uneven. Some of this was due to the presence of *caciques* and conflicts within the communities, which made full transparency and consultation difficult even in the best of circumstances. Some communities asked for more time to convince the groups who were carrying out clandestine logging to join the rest of the community in approving and respecting the agreements. Other communities signed quickly because the price sounded good to those who had no familiarity with logging or the prices of timber. Others communities split, with some members signing the agreements but others vowing to continue illegal logging. Other problems in arriving at agreements with the community is that community membership lists are not updated and frequently carry large numbers of deceased community members, making it difficult to determine who can vote and what quorums and majorities are. A few situations were particularly conflictual. The community of Francisco Serrato had significant internal tensions between those who wanted to sign and those who were involved in illegal logging. In this case, all of the community legal logging areas were now in the nuclear zone. They proposed that they be given equivalent logging volumes in other forested areas of their ejido, but SEMARNAP said it was not giving any new logging permits, so people in the community reportedly immediately logged out the nuclear zone area in dispute, and they are not receiving any payments from the fund.

The payment was to follow the norms that the communities already had for dividing up logging income, although some communities did not have such income, forcing them to develop new rules for dividing up the new income without much support. Despite these problems and confusion, there was also great pressure to arrive at deals with as many communities as possible and consummate the new decree before Julia Carabias left office in 2000. Although WWF had carried out the remote sensing studies that laid the basis for the redrawing of the MBBR, it was not a presence in the communities until after the agreements had all been signed and it came time to actually administer the compensation payments.

The most serious of the forest-related tensions in the region now appear to be over illegal logging. WWF is also quietly coordinating a new effort to combat illegal logging, since it is estimated that two-thirds of all logging in the region is illegal. WWF facilitated a donation of three vehicles and gasoline for a year directly to the Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente (PROFEPA) by Fundación Telmex to allow for increased patrolling against illegal logging, and Fundación Telmex is also sponsoring annual overflights of the reserve area to measure deforestation and detect clandestine logging. The Instituto de Geografía-Morelia of UNAM is mapping land cover change and all of the logging roads in the forest (Alejandro Velázquez, personal communication). Illegal loggers are said to be armed and dangerous, and also normally collaborate with individuals or groups within the communities. Reportedly, 18 communities have signed requests for the army to come into the area to control illegal logging, an expression of their deep concern about the issue.

Alternare is the largest conservation and development NGO working in the region, with funding from US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Inter-American Foundation, the Fondo Mexicano and private Mexican philanthropic sources. Alternare participates on the board of the trust fund and carries out agroecological and alternative development projects in seven of the communities, currently with around 150 families. Although it agrees with the basic idea of redrawing the boundaries of the reserve and compensating the communities, it disagrees with how the plan has been implemented. It argues that the clandestine logging should have been attacked from the beginning and asks why so much attention has been paid to the one-third of logging that is legal and regulated when two-thirds of it is unregulated. Alternare has also proposed that more of the money should go into training programs and alternative development projects, and not just into direct payments. It cites other ways of conserving forest, such as investing in improved community logging, and points out that the only forest left in one of the nuclear zones of the old boundaries was El Paso, a community that is managing its forests for timber production. However, Alternare says that it believes that most communities are fulfilling the terms of the agreement.

WWF defines its current role as “supporting the reserve” and annual overflights to evaluate community compliance in not cutting forest for the conservation payments. These overflights do not appear to be as controversial as the overflights conducted by CI in the Selva Lacandon and are not supported by AID, although they are supported by a large Mexican corporation. (See the Lacandon rainforest discussion on this comparative

point.) The new leadership of WWF-Mexico notes WWF until now has focused narrowly on the reserve itself, but that it is interested in extending the work to the larger landscape around the reserve. To this end, WWF and the state government of Michoacán⁷ have helped organize a new stakeholder's organization around the reserve called the Monarch Butterfly Regional Forum. The first high-level meeting was held on September 29, 2003 and included the Secretary of SEMARNAT, Alberto Cárdenas, the Governor of Michoacán, and 15 municipal presidents, among others, supported by Fundación Telmex. WWF initially proposed that this group meet once a year, but Cárdenas took up the idea and has scheduled meetings biannually. WWF also is planning to begin working on forest management for timber in the buffer zones, although skepticism has been expressed about the potential for certification.⁸

Some of the principals involved consider the project a success or on its way to being one. The situation in the MBBR has been difficult and challenging for many years; the redrawing of the boundaries and the compensation scheme do not seem to have greatly exacerbated existing tensions and may have helped focus resources on resolving the illegal logging problem. This project merits a much broader study and evaluation.

2. CI and the Lacandon Rainforest

In this section, it is important to first review the history of land tenure and conservation in the Lacandon Rainforest, with some references to the role of CI, present a fuller history of CI in the region, and then attempt to place this history within the larger context of tensions over protected areas in the region.

The Agrarian History and Community Displacements

The Lacandon rainforest has had a tortured land tenure history that is important to understand as the pressures and conflicts of today are directly tied to this history. The area also has a long history of coerced or semi-voluntary and voluntary relocations or displacements (with the exact classification of any particular relocation frequently unclear) and attempted relocations of communities. Already by the 1950s and 1960s, colonists from the highlands of Chiapas had begun to settle the northern part of the Lacandon, and from a much earlier period the so-called Canadas (a series of narrow valleys) on the western border of what is today the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve. In the early 1970s the land tenure situation in the Lacandon was confused because of the uncertain status of many land titles that originated at the turn of the century during the

⁷ Collaborations with the state government of Michoacán around the MBBR are currently facilitated by the fact that the Secretary of Agriculture of Michoacán, Silvano Aurelos Conejo, is also the principal advisor to the main campesino organization in the MBBR, the Alliance of Communities and Ejidos of the MBBR.

⁸ It also seems important to note that WWF did not accurately communicate the complexities of this case to the public. For example, the headline for an article on their project in the MBBR in the bimonthly publication *Focus* declares, "WWF Working with Local Landowners to Stem Illegal Logging." Nearly all of WWF's efforts and certainly most of the funding have gone toward compensating communities for lost income from *legal logging*. It is a more complicated story, but WWF seems to lose an opportunity to do a little environmental education on the real complexities of these processes.

great mahogany boom.⁹ In an apparent effort to resolve the land tenure situation, to take dramatic action that could be perceived as benefiting indigenous peoples and social justice, and to secure a forest estate for logging by a parastatal company, the Mexican government declared 614,321 hectares as the *Comunidad Lacandona* (CL), giving it the status of a common property owned by 66 Lacandon families constituting around 400 individuals. Although much criticized, this declaration can be seen as an indigenous reserve on the Brazilian model, and indeed some indigenous reserves in Brazil were also quickly stripped of their most valuable trees, as was the CL. In the case of the CL, the motive for the declaration became clearer when the government established a parastatal logging company that quickly signed a deal in November 1974 with the “owners” to pay a very modest stumpage fee in return for logging 35,000 cubic meters of timber a year.

At the time the CL was declared, the territory was already occupied not only by the reduced number of Lacandons but 38 tzeltal and ch’ol communities with some 2,400 families. Of these communities, 17 already had been declared ejidos during the 1960s, but the other 21 were in various stages of application, and their status was suddenly much more vulnerable since they could now be defined as invaders. Indeed, in a pattern to be repeated, all of the communities, even those with ejido status, were told at one point that they would have to relocate. The ones with ejido status decided to fight and those without ejido status accepted a political negotiation that would allow them to stay in the region but only if they agreed to be resettled into two population centers, now known as Corozal and Nueva Palestina. Furthermore, they had to accept status as *comuneros* within the CL, but the Lacandons would have guaranteed political leadership, making the other communities second-class citizens in a real sense. This removal and concentration of 21 communities in 1976, a coerced, semi-voluntary removal, was the last time the government was able to effect population movements on this scale, since political sensitivities and community mobilization around these issues was at a much lower level then. The 17 ejidos refused to move and joined a regional peasant organization, *Quiptic ta Lecubtesel*, to press for their rights.

In the middle of this, the federal government, now responding to concerns about spreading deforestation caused by the logging and subsequent colonization, declared the 331,200-hectare Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve in 1976. The territory included a large portion of the CL as well as an additional 26 ejidos and communities that had applied for ejido status, particularly in the southeastern part of the Biosphere Reserve, and were under the threat of displacement because they were within the CL or Montes Azules, or both. After a long political struggle, these 26 ejidos were finally given full land rights in 1989, establishing legal agrarian communities within the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve.

In the meantime, because of ongoing colonization pressures, 20 new settlements had sprung up on the western side of Montes Azules, and 12 other irregular settlements within Montes Azules had also undergone a coerced, semi-voluntary relocation to two regions in the southern part of the biosphere reserve in 1988. In total, and despite the 1989 ejido declarations, a 1990 government study showed that there were 46 settlements,

⁹ Most of this history is from De Vos (2002). See also Bray and Klepeis (in press).

including 30 declared ejidos, within the original CL, and proposed relocating all of them. Although this did not happen, new settlements have continued to appear and the government has sporadically and ineffectively attempted to relocate some of them. The situation was greatly exacerbated by the emergence of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) in January 1994 which, among other things, took up the cause of the settlements within the CL and Montes Azules, taking a firm stand against any relocation. Invasions of both the CL and Montes Azules increased after 1994.

Many government officials now take the position that communities that were established before 1994 may be allowed stay, while those after 1994 are considered less legitimate and under greater pressure to be removed. Communities within CL and Montes Azules are considered illegal because they violate or potentially violate two laws, depending on exactly where they are located. They violate an environmental law which makes it a crime to deforest within a protected area, and civil or criminal law by occupying and using lands adjudicated to others (*despojo*).

In 1997, the government made one of the first post-Zapatista uprising efforts to remove a community by arresting four community leaders from the community of Semental, in Montes Azules, in the hope that this would force the rest and their families to leave. However, in the sort of jurisdictional disputes that afflict the Mexican government, the National Indigenous Institute (INI), which has as its province the protection and development of indigenous communities, bailed the community leaders out of jail and they returned to the community. After this incident, environmental officials decided that they had to provide land and other resources outside Montes Azules if they were to convince communities to leave, and they attempted a coordinated program with the Secretary of Agrarian Reform (SRA). In one case a group from the ejido Taniperlas was voluntarily relocated outside of Montes Azules, with each family given four hectares of land elsewhere. But other promised support did not materialize, and of the 30 families that had relocated, 24 returned to Montes Azules. In 1998-99 there was another effort to voluntarily relocate to new lands three communities in the southern part of Montes Azules, but the lands given were much poorer and most people returned to their original lands in Montes Azules. Thus, limited efforts at both coerced and voluntary resettlements failed.

With the change of federal government in 2000, there were nine new invasions of Montes Azules by 2001. Once again PROFEPA announced that it was going to enforce the law and undertook the coerced removal, without the participation of the state government, of at least one community. There was a great deal of negative press coverage, and PROFEPA did eventually help to arrange to purchase land for this community, but with the same results as before: Most members of the community eventually returned to their original communities. Thus, the Fox administration continued threats of removal and attempted removals, sometimes in unfortunate terms that stoked the fears of many in the region. For example, the head of PROFEPA, Ignacio Campillo Garcia, said that the army would be used in cases of “high ungovernability” like Montes Azules and added that “if we don’t put order in these areas of great natural wealth, private enterprises will not invest in them” (*El Universal*, Dec. 25, 2001). In at least some of the cases of invasions and communities that have returned to their original

locations, the communities have received support from San Cristobal-based human rights NGOs. This directly pits a stance for indigenous rights against environmental protection. It is this issue that Julia Carabias refers to when she says that “Montes Azules has nothing to do with indigenous rights” (see below). A CI staffer in D.C. noted on this subject, “We are asking that the invaders be removed with all due attention to human rights. We don’t think conservation should be charged with the failures of the development agenda.” The issue of invading communities has also become something of a development/human rights cause, with human rights organizations placing foreigners with irregular communities as witnesses to events.

Currently, although numbers vary according to the source, there are 71 irregular groups in the Lacandon Rainforest, 49 in protected areas and 22 in the CL. Some of these communities are within five “autonomous municipalities” that have been declared by the EZLN. CI is currently only publicly supporting the removal of three of the communities. It singles out these three because it considers them strategically placed in a corridor which would facilitate further colonization if they are not stopped. It considers this a spot where “the lock can be placed.”

What was the role of CI in all of this? Because of CI’s monitoring program (see below), it has updated information on the location of settlements and land use change in the region. This information is made available to the government under signed agreements and is used as a basis to make decisions on whether to take actions or not in any particular case. CI has on its website detailed information on 27 irregular settlements within Montes Azules with time-series satellite images showing the amount of deforestation each community has caused (<http://www.ci-mexico.org.mx/invasiones.html>). CI, WWF and other NGOs have also taken out ads in the national press, reportedly with the support of SEMARNAT, advocating a policy of removals. However, beyond this CI has no direct participation or decision-making capacity in the removals themselves, which are entirely government operations. The stance of the government is that laws are being violated by the occupations and that this must be addressed. However, there are differences between federal government agencies, between federal government agencies and the state government of Chiapas, and with CI about the best policy to be pursued in the removals. Some environmental officials and CI hold that the displacements should be forced and no compensation should be given, since compensation will only encourage communities to continue invading the CL and Montes Azules. Other government and state officials hold that removals should only be conducted with appropriate compensation. Some human rights groups, peasant organizations and the EZLN hold that removals should not take place under any circumstances.

Thus, the agrarian problem is quite diverse, ranging from settlements which have been “irregular” for decades to more recent invasions, and varying as to whether they are in the CL, Montes Azules or both. In April 2003, the Chiapas state government made a presentation to President Fox about the agrarian situation in the Lacandon and requested new funds to compensate actors for loss of lands. This could include compensating the CL for lands to be adjudicated to communities, or compensating communities for leaving the CL or Montes Azules. The state government requested \$50 million from the

president but received \$15 million for the first year, with a promise of additional funds if things go well. With these funds, the Operational Work Group for Attention to the Montes Azules Case was established and began meeting with communities on June 6, 2003. As of November of the same year, the Operational Group had met with 53 communities and private landholders, many of whom agreed to have their lands surveyed as an initial step toward negotiations over removal and/or compensation to owners (CL). This appears to be very promising, but at the same time there are continued reports in the press of tense confrontations between irregular communities, PROFEPA, the military and representatives of the CL. A typical denunciation of government actions by the irregular communities is that public opinion “should not be deceived by the pseudo-ecological campaign orchestrated by the government and TV Azteca, since it has been demonstrated that behind them are the interests of transnational enterprises.”¹⁰ This reflects the frequent charges that both the government and other actors, like CI, are merely acting as agents of transnational enterprises.

Conservation International in the Lacandon Rainforest

Conservation International began working in Chiapas and the Selva Lacandon in 1989. At first, it confined itself to support the Chiapas state Institute for Natural History and later to work around Chajul, in the southern end of the Biosphere Reserve. For the first several years, the CI director for Mexico was a well-known Mexican ecologist and entomologist who later became director of protected areas in the Zedillo administration (1994-2000). In this early period in its direct work CI focused on the redevelopment of a biological research station at Chajul,¹¹ in the southern extreme of Montes Azules, and on its best-known sustainable use initiative involving the collection and sale of butterflies, working with woman and children in communities across the river from the Chajul research station, although this project was apparently never very successful. CI also began trying to organize ecotourism activities in some of the villages in the CL. In 1993, CI established its own office in Chiapas and formed a team that began working in Chajul and CL communities in the northern Lacandon. CI was the only conservation NGO that continued working in the region after the EZLN uprising in January 1994. This period included two important facts: 1) During 1996-1998, the director of CI was also the director of the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve, leading to considerable confusion among all actors about the distinction between the Mexican government and CI. There is one report that this was done at the suggestion of the Mexican government, and that CI was never comfortable with the arrangement. 2) In 1996, CI entered a new and far better funded phase of its history in Chiapas when it signed an agreement with the Mexican corporation Pulsar, with interests in tobacco and agroindustries, for \$10 million of support over a five-year period for work in Chiapas. During the same period, Pulsar itself was making major investments around the geographical edges of the Lacandon in timber plantations and vegetable production, and was also carrying out research on biotechnology innovations in vegetables, vanilla and cacao. The fact that Pulsar was active as an enterprise in the same region made it difficult for some to separate the

¹⁰ “Reanudación presiones para desalojar a comunidades de Montes Azules.” *La Jornada*, 23 de agosto 2003.

¹¹ The biological research station had originally been built by a Mexican government agency (SEDUE) in the 1980s but was subsequently abandoned.

activities of Pulsar from those of CI. The news of the large amount of funding led to tensions with the communities with whom CI was working in the CL. However, it is crucial to note that only around \$2 million of the Pulsar money was disbursed over the period 1996-1998. After that, for various reasons including severe economic problems within Pulsar, the support terminated, although the \$10 million figure is still widely cited.

During the period of Pulsar funding, CI was also supporting agroecological and community logging promotional activities that it is no longer doing in the Lacandon. It supported a peasant organization in the region of Agua Azul ejido, near the border of the Montes Azules region, for agroecological work in both coffee and milpa corn farming. Pulsar funds, passed through CI and then to SEMARNAT, were also used to support a significant effort at promoting community logging in the Marques de Comillas, a region southeast of Montes Azules which had been entirely dedicated to directed colonization in the 1970s and 1980s. This effort was led by Deocundo Acopa, who had been one of the leaders of the Plan Piloto Forestal in Quintana Roo and later director of the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve. It faltered after two years because its bureaucratic support was too precarious and because the conditions of isolation and other factors in Marques de Comillas were not as conducive to community forest management as in Quintana Roo.

During the same period, CI's main office in Washington apparently also signed bioprospecting agreements with several large pharmaceutical companies for areas where CI worked, mostly in South America. Apparently, none of this was for work in Mexico and CI denies that it has ever supported any bioprospecting in the Lacandon. However, Pulsar was doing research on biotechnology with vegetables, vanilla and cacao and supported research on this subject in Chiapas. Given the close ties between CI and Pulsar and popular confusion about differences between bioprospecting and biotechnology, it has been hard for CI-Mexico to shake these unfounded accusations, and by the late 1990s the CI program in the Lacandon was considered by one observer to be stumbling. The same observer credited a new director for establishing good working relationships with communities within the Comunidad Lacandona. The establishment of "Seeds of Conservation," a small grants program for research and action projects on conservation in the Selva Lacandon, is also credited with having opened up financing for a variety of projects and to a variety of groups (<http://www.ci-mexico.org.mx/sep/semillas.html>), with a very open and participatory process of selecting projects for funding. A great deal of information is available on CI-Mexico's website (<http://www.ci-mexico.org.mx>).

Today, CI has a large variety of projects underway in the Lacandon, including the Seeds of Conservation Fund, the ecological monitoring project (overflights), sustainable use of fauna, an ecotourism network, a reproductive health program, and women's micro-enterprises. CI has also taken the lead in developing the new strategic plan for the region, *Selva Lacandona XXI: Una Estrategia Conjunta para la Conservación de la Biodiversidad* (A Joint Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation). This document is filled with calls for local community participation.

Perhaps CI's highest profile project in Chiapas (for US observers) has not been in the Lacandon but in the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, where its Conservation Coffee program is currently working with small-scale coffee producers on funding and a

marketing agreement with Starbucks. This project began as a pilot project in 1996 and signed the agreement with Starbucks in 1998. CI is working with six producers' organizations with a total, in 2002, of 1,018 producers who have an average of 3 hectares of coffee. It has been a challenging process, with the producers' organization at different levels of maturity and with different needs. Thus, CI has been working on strengthening the organizations and their human capital. It has contracted with ECOSUR for a training program, a "campesino school" in organic coffee extension, with 38 *promotores* now trained, who are working much more intensively with 350 farmers. They are also carrying out socio-economic and ecological monitoring of the project. The majority of the farms are not in the immediate buffer zone of the Biosphere Reserve. They started out trying to work principally in those areas, but they recognized the logic of working with the organizations which are in the larger landscape. ("We didn't want to fragment the organizations, so we work with the other communities" not in the buffer zone.) CI says it recognizes that the conservation benefits are not immediate in this project, but that producers are recognizing the importance of maintaining forest fragments on their lands and have reduced the practice of throwing the processed coffee pulp into the rivers, reducing water contamination. It notes that by working with communities it has also convinced some of them to not sign contracts with logging companies, so it sees other conservation benefits from the program. Although this program has also been attacked on the Internet, it would appear to be a model program for working on sustainable use activities in an environmentally sensitive area. (More recent reports in 2004 suggests problems in this program, but that is outside the scope of this report.)

The Political Context and Accusations against CI

Chiapas has been a highly politicized place for several decades. It has been the focus of organization by politically radical groups, from Maoist students in the 1970s who helped launch the selva-wide Unión de Uniones in the 1970s to the guerrillas of the EZLN in 1994 and after. Combined with the traditional poverty and exploitation of the highlands, and the poverty and isolation of the colonists in the rainforest, this means that radical populist ideologies and organizations have held great sway, combined with the emergence of more pragmatic, production-oriented campesino groups, particularly after the regularization of the 26 ejidos in 1989. More recently, there has been considerable organizing in rural Chiapas against the Plan Puebla Panamá, which was defined as an effort to introduce corporate capital into rural Chiapas, to the detriment of traditional cultural values and economies. As well, there is great suspicion about the issue of bioprospecting, fueled by the collapse of a major NSF-University of Georgia bioprospecting project in the late 1990s (Nigh 2002). Concern about genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and the protection of traditional agricultural genetic biodiversity also has been widespread in Chiapas. Thus, across the board in the communities of the Lacandon there is great distrust of government and large corporate interests.

In this context, CI's strategy of alliance with the Mexican and US governments and large Mexican corporate interests allies it with forces widely resented in Chiapas, and the Lacandon rainforest in particular. As a result, CI has been the subject of scathing attacks in the Mexican press and in reports by Mexican and international NGOs. Web sites carry

reporting from Mexican newspapers with headlines such as “Conservation International Trying to Expel Zapatistas from Rainforest” (<http://www.organicconsumers.org/Corp/Zapatistas0702.cfm>, accessed Nov. 15, 2003) in which CI is accused of being a “pseudo-environmental group (that).. works hand in hand with Starbucks exporting token amounts of organic coffee from the Monte Azules region of Chiapas.”¹² A San Cristobal-based NGO issued a report in June 2003 called “Conservation International: The Trojan Horse,” in which it argued that “Conservación International represents the Trojan Horse of large transnational corporations and the United States government...the strategy of CI is to gather information and buy large extensions of land¹³ with a high potential for bioprospecting, which permits them to administer natural resources or place them at the disposition of large transnationals” (authors’ translation) (*La Jornada*, June 8, 2003; CIEPAC 2003), and goes on to note the financing that CI has received from large corporations and the representatives of large corporations that sit on its board. It also notes CI’s ecological monitoring flights over the selva and the source of financing for them, saying that CI “carried out a program of overflights that permitted them to widely scrutinize the Mayan Forest region...for this CI solicited financing from...the Agency for International Development of the United States (USAID)” and “it delivers to the US government agency six reports annually in two forms: one financial and one technical. The products are attached to the reports. CI is committed to providing all the additional information that USAID requires for the follow-through on project advances” (*La Jornada*, June 10, 2003). The Pulsar-CI alliance has also been subject to NGO speculation “the Pulsar’s Group’s ‘donation’ could more likely be a remuneration...for services lent by CI in bioprospecting with the Selva Lacandona” (CIEPAC 2003).

The then-director for the Maya Forest, Ignacio March, is also frequently quoted in the Mexican press. For example, in response to a question about the overflights and monitoring program, March is quoted as saying “Yes. We have an environmental monitoring project. We are the eyes of the national and international community.” He has expressed concern about the possibilities of violence between people of the Comunidad Lacandon and colonist communities and the lack of action by government authorities (*La Jornada*, June 10, 2003). It should also be noted that although CI has been the main target of attacks in the Mexican press and in other publications, one of the few national conservation NGOs that works in the region, *Espacios Naturales y Desarrollo Sustentable*, with Julia Carabias on its board of directors, has also been attacked in similar terms. *Espacios Naturales* operates the Chajul Biological Research Station, has been involved in ecotourism projects, and has worked on at least one voluntary resettlement in that area.

We will not attempt to disentangle the truth of some of the accusations mentioned above and many more that appear in various documents and websites. But a perusal

¹² CI’s organic coffee project is not in Montes Azules, it is in the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, which is a substantial distance from Montes Azules, and the exports are substantial for the region in question. And whatever one might think of Starbucks, if one is trying to help small coffee farmers, establishing a direct marketing link with the largest coffee retailer in the US would seem like a good idea.

¹³ There is no evidence that CI has purchased any land in the Lacandon.

suggests that some of the accusations are based on unassailable fact (CI's corporate ties and the donations it has received), while others plunge into wild unfounded speculation and egregious errors in easily ascertainable basic facts (buying up land for bioprospecting in Chiapas and placing the organic coffee project in the Lacandon). It is easy to see, however, that CI's institutional strategy of relying on alliances and support from major corporations and USAID has been on a collision course with the radical populist movements in Chiapas. Other US conservation organizations also rely on AID and large corporations, but CI is the only one that has entered into a major alliance with a Mexican corporation (laudable in other circumstances) and the Lacandon is probably the most politicized and difficult working environment for conservation and development in Mexico. The ecological monitoring overflights are a normal conservation activity that are carried out without much controversy in other Latin America countries. However, the fact that CI is carrying out these flights with USAID support, and reporting its results to both the US and Mexican governments, is highly sensitive when they are overflying guerrilla communities and posting detailed information about invading communities on their website. An outspoken CI director has also contributed to the tension, even as he was credited with improving CI's reputation among some other sectors in Chiapas. CI's Chiapas-based staff is entirely composed of Mexican nationals, but its status as an international NGO with a highly visible corporate alliance strategy and close relations to both the US and Mexican governments also makes it an easy target.

It should also be noted that on the bioprospecting issue, CI is only one of a number of targets that have been vigorously attacked in the left-leaning Mexican press in recent years. Even apparently model arrangements brokered by Mexicans, such as a bioprospecting agreement which existed for several years between the Zapotec-Chinantec Union (UZACHI) and the Swiss pharmaceutical company Novartis, have been attacked as "biopiracy." On the protected area front, many of the populist agrarian, guerrilla and indigenous rights elements in Chiapas deny the legitimacy of protected areas in situations where there are land-hungry campesinos, and the EZLN has said it will defend any communities threatened with displacement, raising the specter of further armed resistance.

It should also be clearly noted that CI's position and strategies do not differ from those of highly placed Mexican environmentalists and Mexican government agencies. Julia Carabias, the Secretary of the Environment, Natural Resources, Water, and Fisheries (SEMARNAP) in the presidency of Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000) argues that protected areas are far more effective at conserving biodiversity than indigenous reserves, and that the introduction of indigenous rights into the conservation debate has been very damaging. In the context of Chiapas she argues that "Montes Azules has nothing to do with indigenous rights." She notes that the kinds of arguments for indigenous peoples that have been advanced in Chiapas have proposed "an autonomy of the indigenous nation that breaks the scheme of the nation-state" and does not admit the possibility of a "multiethnic state." "In Montes Azules in particular there are two different political projects in opposition, a national project with all Mexicans and an oppositional movement that demands autonomy from the state," she continues. "A reserve exists that belongs to the Lacandons. There are those that say they are first-class Indians and then there are second class ones, but they don't understand that it is a reserve. It is said that an

artificial reserve was created for petroleum, for timber, but those are the people who want to discredit the reserve. The questioning of the reserve is by people who are not concerned about biodiversity. (it is questioned) in the name of sustainable development, but that is false in many ecosystems.” Carabias reports that toward the end of her term she attempted to get political backing for the forcible removal of the most recently arrived communities that had settled along the Rio Negro. She says she has no problems with CI’s role in the Lacandon, and that her only concern is that the attacks have made CI more timid. It has also been noted above that government agencies like PROFEPA and others have also taken aggressive attitudes towards irregular settlements within the Lacandon. The current director of protection of the National Council of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP), Guillermo Ramírez Filipini, in an interview for this study, stated that the settlements within the CL and Montes Azules are illegal and should be removed, but he also recognized that the current political situation in the region means that there is basically an impasse with respect to an active policy of expulsion.

CI is well aware of the target it became. Recently, it began taking a more proactive stance in trying to involve other actors in the Lacandon and headed a very participative process in developing the new Joint Strategy for the Lacandon. The Joint Strategy was presented in a high-profile meeting in Mexico City where the argument was advanced that the Lacandon is a national problem and that the national government has to assume greater responsibility. At the level of the Maya Forest, CI is just beginning a regional conservation priority-setting exercise that has identified eight priority regions, but as of fall 2003 it had not yet begun contacting any local actors or mounting any programs in this region.

VIII. Central America

Central America is a complicated, multi-country region, so we will only look at some countries and some aspects of NGO activities in this area. We will begin by looking at the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor as a region-wide activity, the activities of one of the few campesino organizations that cover the entire region, and then the activities of particular NGOs in particular countries.

The most prominent regional conservation planning initiative is the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor (MBC), which includes all seven Central American countries and Mexico. The MBC is defined as a “territorial planning system consisting of natural protected areas under a special regime whereby core, buffer, multiple use and corridor zones are organized and consolidated in order to provide an array of environmental goods and products to the Central American and global societies, offering spaces for social harmonization to promote investments in the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources” (Godoy 2003). The MBC is based on the protected areas already existing in each of the countries and on proposals for new ones.

The MBC also includes a number of corridor zones which link the core protected areas. An analysis carried out in 2000 showed that the full MBC proposal covered 321,103 km², of which 48.7% are legally declared protected areas, 3.9% are areas

proposed for protection and 47.4% are corridor zones (where, in addition to crop, livestock and forestry activities, ecological measures or other forms of conservation are being carried out on private land). This analysis also showed that the MBC as currently proposed could protect 10 ecoregions in critical condition (7% of the area).

Under the MBC's regional strategy for forest development and consolidation:

- By 2005, all the region's countries should have forest policies and national forest development programs, resulting from a participatory process with the main social bodies and groups involved in forest management, conservation and sustainable development. Any relevant components of national biodiversity strategies should also be reviewed and incorporated;
- By 2010 the groundwork should be laid so that the region's forests can begin to help improve the economic and social situation of the region's countries, i.e. by reversing forest destruction, thereby reducing poverty in the rural areas.
- It is hoped that by 2025 the region's lands will be put to the use for which they were intended, and that we will achieve 45% to 60% of forest cover as a result of: strengthening the Sistema Centroamericano de Áreas Protegidas (SICAP) to ensure that it covers 30% of the region's territory; sustainably managing the natural forest that is not under SICAP (10% to 15% of the territory) - a decision that is, in fact, a political one since SICAP has the technical capacity to administer these areas which should be included in the MBC; and recovering deforested land on 10% to 15% of the territory (Godoy 2003).

One of the major interlocutors of the MBC corridor has been the Asociación Coordinadora Indígena y Campesina de Agroforestería Comunitaria (ACICAFOC). ACICAFOC is a Central America-wide small farmer organization that has vigorously pursued a voice in discussions about protected areas and biological corridors. From the time the MBC was first announced it has organized and lobbied for local community participation, and was successful in lobbying against land purchases as part of the MBC and against a family planning component (one is forced to wonder about the gender basis of this policy on the part of ACICAFOC). They have made presentations about their concerns at donors' meetings in Paris. They were on the organizing committee of the First Mesoamerican Congress on Protected Areas in Managua from March 10-14, 2003, but did not have support to actually participate. They got funding from foreign donors to hold a pre-congress, the Mesoamerican Pre-congress on Protected Areas and Rural Communities: A Natural Union (*convivencia natural*) on March 8 and 9, 2003, with 40 campesino leaders from throughout the region.

It appears that most of ACICAFOC's lobbying efforts have been directed against the multilaterals that are supporting the MBC and the Environmental Ministries in the individual governments, and not the conservation NGOs. However, ACICAFOC reports that CI approached its representatives at the Congress saying it wanted to talk and work together, particularly on the Maya Forest. CI has since visited the ACICAFOC offices in Costa Rica and has invited it to a November meeting to coordinate planning for the Maya Forest region. ACICAFOC criticizes WWF for not working with it or any of its affiliated

organizations, but also admits that it does not have any affiliates in the Puerto Cabezas region where the WWF's work in Nicaragua is focused. It reports no contact with TNC.

1. WWF in Central America

WWF's field practitioners emphasized that they follow a bottom-up planning process that involves "a consultative process from square one" and not necessarily a textbook conservation science approach. WWF in Central America has a very active community forestry program, particularly in the Honduran and Nicaraguan Mosquitia. The WWF forest director for Central America formerly worked for CATIE (and CI) on community forestry in the Petén and is trying to extend the model of community forestry concessions in Guatemala. In Honduras, WWF is currently working with two communities that have been logging for three to four years and in Nicaragua with nine communities, at least one of which had its first timber harvest last year. Although one of the most experienced WWF forest promoters is based in the Petén, it currently has little work there, mostly supporting a Guatemalan NGO *Natureleza para la Vida* in certification issues. In both the Nicaraguan and Honduran cases, WWF is working in larger landscapes outside of the framework of protected areas, although some of the activities are also in buffer zones of the Rio Plátano Biosphere Reserve. It notes that the region is directly connected to the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, another justification for its work there.

In Honduras, WWF is working through MOPAWI and the Federación de Indígenas de la Zona de Mocarón y Segovia (FINZMOS), an organization of 14 Miskito cooperatives. Only two of the 14 cooperatives are currently working on logging. In order to carry out the project, WWF worked with the Honduran government to create a new legal form, based on the community forest concessions, called a "usufruct agreement" (*convenio en usufructo*). FINZMOS has not been active since its founding in 1998, but WWF is working to revitalize it. WWF regards the principal work here to be promoting a process of community organization at the local and regional level. It is using a set of criteria to select which communities to work with based on issues such as land tenure, current levels of organization and forest potential. The two communities that are currently logging work in a rustic manner with chainsaws and river transport. They are currently limited to harvesting 200 cubic meters annually, although their management plan calls for 1,500 cubic meters, because Honduran forest law currently limits community groups to that level. WWF is working on trying to get that law changed, and is also working on getting certification for these groups and developing markets for green wood.

Although WWF normally works through local partners, in Nicaragua it took the step of opening up an office in Puerto Cabezas. This was done after an unsuccessful effort to work through an NGO established by the Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense (URUCCAN), the Fundación para la Autonomía y Desarrollo de la Costa Atlántica de Nicaragua (FADCANIC). According to WWF staff, FUDCANIC was not able to carry out training projects adequately. We were not able to meet with FADCANIC, but it is entirely possible it feels displaced by WWF.

However, it was independently confirmed by a well-known Miskito professional that FADCANIC was not viewed as effective by the communities. WWF also gave some support to CATIE, but reportedly most of this went for some forestry training for the commercial logging company that operates in the area. WWF established direct operations in Puerto Cabezas in August 2002, and the office is entirely staffed by Nicaraguans, most Miskito-speaking and from the region. In addition, WWF employment in the region appears to have helped form human capital and give the organization firm political alliances. The first secretary of the Regional Council is a former WWF employee, and was interviewed for this study.

To get a better look at the challenges that WWF faces in the region, we visited the isolated Miskito Indian community of Layasicsa. Layasicsa claims some 110,000 hectares of forest and wetlands and now is split into two communities: Layasicsa I, accessible only by boat and 40 km upriver from Puerto Cabezas, and Layasicsa II, established in the forested area several years ago by people from Layasicsa I. They have a land title that goes back to the Harrison-Altimirano Treaty of 1908. However, the new Nicaraguan Law 445 both opened the door to indigenous land titling in the Mosquitia but also calls into question the titles given out under the Treaty, leaving the current tenancy situation unclear. They claim the forests were unlogged until 1995 but beginning in that year some community members began collaborating with a logging company that received a concession on their lands and began selling mahogany trees as individuals, reportedly virtually extirpating commercial-sized mahogany and cedar. A different concessionaire entered in 2000 with apparently somewhat better forest extraction practices.

Layasicsa is currently battling a land invasion by a group of mestizos who have occupied and cleared some 75 hectares, apparently supported by regional politicians taking advantage of the unclear land tenure situation. This situation has become quite tense, with the community of Layasicsa both seeking international support and threatening violence against the colonists.¹⁴

Layasicsa began receiving some support from FADCANIC but did not make much progress. In 2002, the community began working directly with WWF. Today, Rufino Johnson and Fidencio Rivera, community leaders, express great gratitude to WWF for having taught them how to do scaling (*cubicación*) and for helping them develop their management plan through participatory inventory techniques, employing some 18 people from Layasicsa. They expressed special gratitude for having learned directional felling, saying that young people in the community had been killed by falling trees in earlier periods. Under their own management plan (in a different area than the ongoing concession with Prada) they logged 200 hectares this year but have not yet been able to sell it because the onset of the rainy season made the roads impassable.

WWF is doing similar work with another Miskito Indian community, Sangnilaya, which includes four other communities. Sangnilaya is the largest with 97 families. This

¹⁴ In early 2004, this situation led to an armed confrontation between the Mismitos of Layasica and the invaders that resulted in deaths among the invaders (Armstrong Wiggins, personal communication).

community is working with WWF to put under management 7,000 hectares of forest with tropical hardwoods but not much mahogany, which was apparently logged out over the last few years.

In addition to this community-level work, WWF is also working closely with the Regional Council of the Región Autónoma del Atlántico del Norte (RAAN) to promote a Regional Consultative Forest Council with representation from the entire region. This council would advise on forest policy. It has the full backing of the first secretary, a sort of chief of staff of the Regional Council, who, as mentioned, is a former WWF employee.

This cooperation has led to a series of diagnostic, planning and project implementation tools such as the *Manual on High Conservation Value Forests in Mesoamerica*. WWF is also doing region-wide work on certification and forest marketing. The Global Forest and Trade Network (GFTN), coordinated by WWF, has more than 800 partners and “promotes partnerships between non-governmental organizations and companies to improve the quality of forest management worldwide” with a particular focus on certification, since “the GFTN views independent, multi-stakeholder forest certification as a vital tool in this process.” It has published studies such as *The Forest Industry in the 21st Century* (2001). At the regional level, the WWF has helped establish the Mesoamerican and Caribbean Forest and Trade Network (www.maderacertificada.org). It has also published a series of simple, illustrated “comic book”-style training and information publications on forest certification in Central America and forest management.

2. TNC in Costa Rica and Guatemala

Nearly two years ago, the Central America Division of The Nature Conservancy embarked on an ecoregional planning exercise to develop a regional portfolio of conservation sites, including forest, terrestrial, freshwater and coastal marine ecological systems. TNC convened more than 50 scientists from all seven countries in Central America to agree on a regional classification of ecological systems. Satellite imagery then provided input to map the current range of each ecological system and to guide a discussion to identify and map the most viable examples of each system in the region. The result is a regional portfolio of sites that comprise the full range of biodiversity of Central America and constitutes a blueprint for future conservation efforts in the region. Through the ecoregional planning exercise, the Conservancy identified 18 priority conservation action areas – those landscapes that retain the greatest number of ecological systems, or the greatest potential for return on our investments in the region. Of these priority sites, the Amistad-Bocas del Toro region in Costa Rica and Panama was identified as one of the highest priorities for Central America.

The borders of the *Parks is Peril* Amistad-Bocas del Toro site are within the borders of the Amistad Biosphere Reserve, which includes the Parque Internacional La Amistad (PILA) and several other protected areas and indigenous reserves in both Costa Rica and Panama. In the PiP project, TNC concentrates mainly on the continental areas

of the Amistad Biosphere Reserve, focusing on the mitigation of threats impacting conservation targets in the mid- to high-elevation areas. The Amistad International Biosphere Reserve encompasses approximately 2.5 million acres, with 1.5 million in Costa Rica and nearly 1 million in Panama.

In addition to its biological diversity, the area is inhabited by Costa Rica's largest population of indigenous communities, including Ngobes (Guaymí), Teribes, Bribris and Cabécar. These indigenous territories in the highlands make up a large portion of the buffer zone of the Amistad International Park in both Costa Rica and Panama. According to a species and habitat distribution analysis developed by the WWF, these indigenous territories tend to be on steep mid- to-high elevation terrain on both the Atlantic and Pacific slopes, and are located in areas of high priority in terms of biodiversity and conservation. An average of 59% of forest in the indigenous territories of the Pacific slope has already been removed; nevertheless, many indigenous areas on the Atlantic slope at the mid to higher elevations contain a relatively intact forest cover and serve as important buffer areas for the Amistad Park. TNC says it is trying to develop co-management schemes between some of the local indigenous communities and the protected areas, focusing particularly on ecotourism and trying to develop a "ruta verde." Especially on the Atlantic side, TNC notes, "the real guardians of the park are the communities."

TNC in Guatemala uses the ecoregion concept with a portfolio of terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecoregions. It has selected four regions of interest, including the Maya Forest. It works with institutional partners, including many indigenous municipalities, especially in the Lake Atitlán region. One of the staff members interviewed, Estuardo Secaira, has published a study of conservation and indigenous spirituality and values in Guatemala.¹⁵ It helped to broker a formal co-management agreement between the Guatemalan conservation NGO Defensores de la Naturaleza for the Sierra Lacandona Park in the Petén. Defensores started working out of the TNC office as it developed the Sierra Lacandona project. In Sierra de las Minas Defensores also manages that PA while TNC focuses on conservation science

In the Maya Forest TNC also focuses on science, although it says it is focusing more on the social sciences now as well and includes land acquisition appropriate. TNC focuses on improving economic self-sufficiency of partner NGOs and has a particularly close relationship with Defensores de la Naturaleza. Most of the areas where it works involve multiple stakeholders and follow a multiarea strategy that includes protected areas, private lands, and municipal or communal lands, in an effort to build what TNC calls "landscape coalitions." TNC also says that it is building a network of indigenous conservation practitioners and developing public-private arrangements in co-management. In the case of municipal or communal lands, it is promoting case studies and interchange of learning experiences and developing incentives for conservation in these cases. "We don't do things alone because if we do it alone we are not building capacity," one staffer said.

¹⁵ La Conservación de la Naturaleza, El Pueblo y Movimiento Maya, y La Espiritualidad en Guatemala: Implicaciones para Conservacionistas. Estuardo Secaira. 2000. PROARCA/TNC

TNC is also working with new legal instruments which allow communities to group together for regional planning purposes, a form known as *municipalidades mancomunadas*. This is occurring with 18 communities in both Guatemala and Honduras. For TNC, the focus is on biodiversity protection, and protected areas are one instrument. Protected areas are the backbone, but municipal land conservation and private approaches are also important land and water management tools. “We don’t make the case for livelihoods but we are very sensitive to it, and want it to happen, people should have the means to do it, we have to create capacity, incentives and the means.”

In the Lake Atitlán region, TNC claims to be engaged in what is basically a sustainable development project, although it tries to focus on conservation. “We are not experts in participatory planning in large landscapes but we seem to be doing it, acting as facilitator between different stakeholders. But ecological integrity is our ultimate measure; are we abating threats to biodiverse areas?”

TNC notes that for it ecoregional planning is primarily about locating biodiversity, but if the site selected by those criteria has human uses, then the next step is to determine what those uses are and the opportunities the site poses. TNC has developed a methodology for identifying tangible cultural resources and is also sensitive to non-tangible cultural resources such as sacred sites or other areas important to people. It regards a well-organized indigenous organization as an opportunity, and that the deeper you get in the resolution the more important the human aspect gets. However, TNC does not finally measure its success on human development indicators but on ecological integrity, although sustainable use could be an intermediate indicator. For example, in the Lake Atitlán area TNC is working on organic coffee, noting its importance in keeping vegetation cover. It is also working on tourism in the region, tourism planning, training guides, and enabling local municipalities. In the Sierra de las Minas community of Chilasco, Defensores de la Naturaleza decided it didn’t want to do any income-generating project there so TNC is training guides and working on ecotourism as a complement to Defensores activities.

TNC is also working on climate change issues, working on reducing emissions and renewable energy for marginalized rural populations, mostly in alliance with other partners. At the regional level it is in an alliance with PROARCA.

3. CI, TNC and Other Actors in the Petén, Guatemala

The 1.6 million-hectare Maya Biosphere Reserve (MBR) was established in 1990. It includes four national parks and three wildlife reserves (known as *biotopos*) in about half of the area and multiple-use buffer zones in the rest. Beginning in the 1980s, the Petén and the MBR have been heavily pressured by colonization, illegal logging, cattle ranching and oil drilling. By the late 1990s the human population of the Petén had grown over a 30-year period from 25,000 to more than 500,000. The Petén saw a large wave of USAID-driven NGO projects wash over it in the 1990s, after the establishment of the MBR. From 1990-2001, in two major phases, an estimated \$56.6 million was invested

in conservation and development projects in the Petén. This included \$31.2 million from USAID, \$15.3 million from the Guatemalan government, and \$10.1 million in counterpart from international NGOs such as CARE, CI, Rodale and TNC. WWF had a lesser presence in the Petén during this period, but did work with a Guatemalan NGO called Natureleza para la Vida which supported some of the community forest concessions. In a first phase, TNC focused more on traditional protected area activities, while CI focused on scientific research and sustainable use activities. In a second phase, USAID encouraged a greater focus on community forest concessions with support by CI, Centro Maya and other NGOs working in the area. CI established an NGO that operated as a local office of CI called ProPetén that was the implementer of most of CI's projects in the region.

The history of the implementation of the multiple conservation and development projects in the Petén during the 1990s is complex and little documented, so we cannot attempt a comprehensive history here. Rather, we will try and sketch in some of the major themes of interest to this report, such as relocations and sustainable use activities, particularly community forestry. With reference to community forestry, CI began working with a community called Bethel on the Usumacinta River in the buffer zone of the Sierra Lacandona PA around 1992. However, by 1994 CI economist Richard Rice and his colleagues had concluded on the basis of their analysis in Bethel and other studies they undertook in the same period in Bolivia that sustainable logging of tropical forests was not possible for a variety of economic and ecological reasons. CI researchers have since published a series of articles in prestigious academic journals advancing this argument. At this time, several CI staff members committed to community forestry left CI and went to other USAID-supported NGOs in the Petén that were still willing to work in this activity. One of these, Centro Maya, had been created by the Rodale Institute, and was thus focused on sustainable agriculture for the first couple of years of operation. However, when a former CI staff member joined Centro Maya, he convinced it to develop a program in community forestry. CI then went several years without working in community forestry. However, after 1996 CI again began working on community forest concessions, first with the community of Carmelita and later with the communities of San Andrés and Selva Maya del Norte. The community organization that came out of the community concessions, ACOFOC, speaks well of CI and said it felt like it had made a transition from only being concerned about protected areas to understanding the role of the community concessions. During this period, CI also worked on such sustainable use projects as selling forest litter potpourri, ecotourism, xate, chicle, and allspice production and marketing, and an ecologically oriented Spanish language school.

One of CI's most difficult moments in the Petén was when its Las Guacamayas Biological Research Station in Laguna del Tigre National Park was burned by people from three local communities in March 1997. This occurred during a particularly complicated period after the signing of the Peace Accords in 1996, when there were renewed efforts at voluntary relocation of families and communities outside of protected areas (see TNC below), but also renewed invasions of protected areas. In the Laguna del Tigre PA in 1996 there were one or two communities, but by the following year there were 15-20 (and an estimated 48 in 2002). Discussions had begun with the community

closest to the research station, Paso Caballo, about the possibility of a voluntary relocation. However, this community was also reportedly involved in illegal logging in collaboration with the military, and there had recently been a large confiscation of illegal timber. The precipitating incident reportedly came when illegal loggers tried get three truckloads of illegal timber past the research station. The loggers incited the communities by telling them ProPetén was going to take away their land, and since it was a coordinated attack by several communities, it is thought that it was paid for and orchestrated by the illegal loggers.

As a response to the burning of the station and the new wave of invasions, the policy of attempting voluntary relocations in Laguna del Tigre was suspended. Instead, CONAP, with USAID support, began giving the invading communities letters of understanding offering them rights to the land they occupied in exchange for which they were to elaborate management plans and accept some restrictions on use. ProPetén began working with the three communities that had burned the station on health projects. Today, the only community that eventually completed its management plan and is sticking to it is Paso Caballo. The rest of Laguna del Tigre is described as “anarchy.” CI also attempted to establish a new NGO that would just work in Laguna del Tigre called Kanaan Kach, which had a co-management agreement with CONAP that was later annulled. Kanaan Kach was never able to consolidate its work and did not survive as an NGO.

The history of CI in the Petén terminated for this period when USAID funding ended in 2001. What followed was a long and bitter dispute between CI and ProPetén over money and infrastructure, especially the reconstructed Las Guacamayas Research station. Given the complexity of the process, it is probably best that we do not attempt to give an account of the dispute, although as noted below it does have relevance for the relationship between the GC-NGOs and small local NGOs. It can be said that in this dispute ProPetén was caught in the middle in terms of perceptions of other stakeholders in the region. For some observers concerned with communities in the region, ProPetén was too focused on conservation and divided local communities into “good Indians and bad Indians,” while for CI ProPetén had become too involved in social programs with, for CI, questionable impacts on biodiversity conservation.

But before concluding we also need to review the history of CI’s failed attempt to implement a conservation concession with the community of Carmelita. This was during the period when CI was in the middle of its difficult separation from ProPetén, but was approaching ProPetén to work with it in undertaking a new and controversial conservation initiative.

CI proposed to the community of Carmelita to buy one-third of the mahogany authorized volume and 100% of lesser-known species authorized volume. Carmelita reportedly accepted the price and the deal, and the loggers offered a higher price. The concession was still a better deal because the community never sells anywhere near the authorized volume of lesser-known species. The community was very interested in the possibility and reportedly actually signed a contract. But there was opposition from multiple quarters. TNC had helped created the logging concessions scheme and did not

support the conservation concessions, arguing that the concession wouldn't work, that people would log anyway. CI noted that the concessions were a complement to logging, and that they were not buying all of the volume, so logging would not cease entirely. TNC and others proposed that they implement the project with some of the highland forest municipalities. In some cases communities were not currently logging, so they could be paid for environmental services in maintaining the forests without conflicts over logging. However, CI reportedly wanted to work in Carmelita because of prior experience there. The Guatemalan government was also reluctant to approve the concession, even though CI's Guatemala lawyer said it was fully in the spirit of the relevant law. The government was being pressured by public opinion, and editorials against the concession scheme appeared in the US press. Chemonics, the company that is managing the sustainable logging operation now in Guatemala, was also opposed to it. In rapid succession, in fall 2002, ProPetén finally declined to continue working with CI on the concession and the Guatemalan government declined to approve the scheme, killing the proposal. However, the executive director of ACOFOP says that his organization had supported the concessions scheme, with some concern that it did not damage what had been achieved in community logging. He says his group had several meetings with CONAP in support of the idea but that it was finally CONAP's decision to oppose it.

The history of CI and other NGOs in the Petén is worthy of a much more detailed study. As one of CI's first and largest efforts in Latin America, there would appear to be a lot of lessons that could be learned, although it is not clear if anyone has learned them. At a minimum, it could be said that CI does not appear to have developed a model for successful launching of local NGOs. Although a viable local NGO was finally left behind, it appears that CI deserves no credit for this. A CI official admitted that the experience was a "breakdown in the model of building local capacity." As another observer put it, "CI didn't think through their exit strategy very well." It is useful to note that although CI now does not pursue community logging in any of its programs, this appears to be its most successful legacy in the Petén.

During this period, TNC apparently had a much less controversial and difficult experience in the Petén. We do not have the data to summarize all of TNC's experiences with USAID support, but we will focus on some of its work in the Sierra Lacandona National Park. TNC worked closely with the existing Guatemalan NGO Defensores de la Naturaleza, with whom it had also successfully worked in the Sierra de las Minas Biosphere Reserve.

In the Petén, beginning in 1996, TNC, the Guatemalan government and *Defensores de la Naturaleza* began experimenting with what they called "small-scale voluntary resettlement" in the same period when CI began the discussions in Laguna del Tigre National Park that resulted in the burning of the research station. TNC had been doing some work in Laguna del Tigre in the early 1990s but in 1996, under the second phase of the USAID project (MAYAREMA II), it brought in Defensores as a partner. When Laguna was declared in 1990 there were already families living inside what became the eastern border of the park, alongside a road, and new families have apparently been arriving there. However, because these were pre-existing families along

a major road, no effort had been made to relocate them. The relocation efforts focused instead on families that had settled along the Usumacinta River, in the western part of the park in isolated areas in the first half of the 1990s. It appears that this effort was relatively successful, in that at least 118 families were voluntarily relocated and reportedly none have returned. TNC also invited a Yale Ph.D. student to study the relocation process and make recommendations as to how it could be improved. At least one publication has appeared on this. The study found that “an adequate water source, decent road access, and good soil fertility” are keys to successful relocations. It concluded, “Many families are clearly content to have resettled and are quickly adjusting to their new communities. Other families are not happy and will probably not remain in their new communities for long. Nevertheless, my interviews in Guatemala suggest that under the right conditions, people will indeed voluntarily move themselves out of a situation that we have come to refer to as ‘people versus parks.’ The key to making resettlement work as a conservation tool is to ensure that it is voluntary and that there are clear benefits to the communities as well as to conservation” (Margoluis, Beavers and Paiz 2000). The introduction to this study also discusses another successful case study of voluntary relocation after eight years of discussion, also involving TNC and Defensores, in Sierra de las Minas.

The contrast between this situation and CI’s situation in Laguna del Tigre is striking. It has been pointed out that CI was trying to resettle an established community of many households on a road in the case of Paso Caballo, whereas TNC/Defensores focused on small family settlements in isolated areas, with more difficult living circumstances. The situation in Sierra Lacandona is considered to be relatively stable today. While about half of the forest cover in the park has been lost, Defensores considers the remaining half to be fairly stable and defensible. After working with Defensores for several years and helping to broker the formal co-management agreement with CONAP, TNC’s role today is primarily that of fundraising for Defensores. For example, TNC-Guatemala recently signed an agreement with TNC-Minnesota to raise \$250,000 for Defensores in the Sierra Lacandona. It is also undertaking a \$5 million campaign to buy a 75,000-hectare private parcel within the park and to establish a trust fund for park administration. Thus, TNC can claim to have successfully transitioned out of a direct role in PA management, while strengthening a local NGO. TNC also successfully developed a participatory management plan for Tikal National Park in the last several years.

The Community Forest Concessions

Only passing reference has been made to the community forest concessions (CFC) of the Petén thus far but they merit further attention as a notable case of creating a community forest management alternative in a relatively short order. The community forest concessions are striking evidence that the outside organizers with a participatory methodology can successfully launch community forest enterprises from colonist communities with presumably low social capital. The CFCs were promoted with similar methodologies by several different NGOs, all with USAID support. These included CATIE, Centro Maya (Rodale Institute), CI and others. The role of USAID in supporting

this effort should also be noted, and USAID is currently important in extending this model in Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru.

Today, the CFCs are composed of 23 communities and cooperatives that log, under concessions with the government, 445,804 hectares of forest in the multiple use zone of the MBR. Twelve of the 23 have been certified, and since most of the concessions are contiguous or nearby, the CFCs rightly claim to have the largest certified region of community-managed tropical forests in the world. (Mexico has about twice as much total certified community forests, but throughout the country in both temperate and tropical areas.) The CFC have organized themselves into a second-level organization, the *Asociación de Comunidades Forestales de Petén* (ACOFOP), founded in 1996. ACOFOP is currently supported by Ford and other international organizations and is an active member of ACICAFOP.

Despite their accomplishments, the CFCs are currently under pressure both internally and externally. Internally, there are reports of problems in Carmelita. The director of ACICAFOP notes that many of the communities are having problems with accounting issues, both because of ignorance and because of people in some communities who benefit from the ignorance. Externally, ACOFOP and the Petén in general are being roiled by a controversial new proposal spearheaded by an archaeologist, Richard D. Hansen, associated with the Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics at UCLA, who has been working in the Mayan site El Mirador for years. Hansen is promoting what he calls the Mirador Basin National Monument Project (<http://www.miradorbasin.com>). It involves developing El Mirador into a major tourism site on the model of Tikal, but with high end ecolodges and visitors flown into a landing strip rather than building any new roads. It also involves a major expansion of El Mirador National Park which would overlap and in principle nullify six CFCs and 70,816 hectares, or around 33%, of their current concession territories (Cortave 2003). Hansen has been quite aggressive in pursuing this project and is prone to grandiose statements like ““If I fail, the forest is gone and the sites will be destroyed”” (Buettner 2003). He has the former US Ambassador to Guatemala, Donald Planty, on his board, the Inter-American Development Bank has reportedly expressed interest, and he has convinced the president of Guatemala to issue a “Governmental Accord”¹⁶ that calls for the establishment of the Mirador Basin Special Archaeological Zone, expanding the existing national park. The president of the Guatemalan Congress has also openly questioned the performance of the CFCs and has reportedly asked for a report on them from CONAP, and the danger of nullification of the CFCs is considered real. ACOFOP held a meeting with a Hansen representative on June 10, 2003 where they expressed their objections, and according to ACOFOP, after this the Hansen people issued a statement saying that ACOFOP supported the project. ACOFOP afterwards issued its own statement vigorously disputing this.

However, as of fall 2003, many observers note that the Governmental Accord may not be constitutional and violates the current Protected Areas Law and the Maya Biosphere Reserve Law. Its exact status and consequences are still unclear and ACOFOP has filed suit in Guatemalan courts questioning its legality. ACOFOP is receiving

¹⁶ Acuerdo Gubernativo 129-2002 “Zona Arqueológica Especial Cuenca El Mirador”

support from the Guatemala City NGO Center for Legal and Environmental Action and expresses confidence it can win the suit on legal grounds. The current Guatemalan president will be leaving office soon, and that is likely to slow down the project. Apparently none of the GC-NGOs is currently supporting the project, although Hansen has approached all of them. In an interview, TNC said it wanted nothing to do with it, a WWF staffer has been published questioning the project,¹⁷ and CI has reportedly questioned its environmental impact and its effect on local communities.

IX. Brazilian Amazon

A. Introduction

Covering about 7 million km², the Amazon basin is the world's largest repository of biodiversity, of which about two-thirds are within Brazil. Here the stakes for conservation are exceptionally high, due to rapid frontier development that has cleared an area larger than France. While forest cover remains intact over most of the region (4.1 million km²)¹⁸, in 2002 deforestation jumped to 25,000 km² and an additional 10,000-15,000 km² was logged. New highway construction, settlement projects, expansion of soybean cultivation and logging are opening up multiple frontiers, fragmenting what was once continuous forest. Conservationists fear that if recent development trends continue unchecked, deforestation and forest degradation could eventually unravel the region's rainfall patterns, drying the remaining forests and enabling wildfires to spread uncontrolled.

Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon has attracted worldwide attention. In response, international donors have invested heavily in establishing protected areas (including indigenous lands) and promoting more sustainable forms of development. All three major global conservation NGOs are active here and are involved in planning, establishing and/or strengthening PAs as part of a strategy to maintain large forested landscapes intact. In addition, various multi- and bilateral donors and lenders are supporting an array of projects aimed at biodiversity protection and resource conservation.

This section begins with a rapid spatial analysis of the region—where people are located and how frontiers are expanding—and reviews the existing policy framework for PAs and indigenous lands in Brazil. This analysis provides a basis for determining whether the global conservation organizations' common objective of expanding and/or consolidating these areas within connected landscape mosaics is a viable strategy for the region. The section then focuses on the global conservation organizations and their specific agendas and modes of operation in the region.

¹⁷ "It reeks of neocolonialism," says Darron A. Collins, 33, the Latin American and Caribbean forest coordinator for the WWF. "The gringo comes down, wraps up large chunks of forest, and builds a fence around it without considering the lives of local people" (Buettner 2003).

¹⁸ Of the region's 5 million km², roughly 12-15% has been deforested and the rest is comprised of natural savannas. Deforestation estimates vary depending on the methods used to measure it.

B. Spatial Context

Brazil alone contains about two-thirds of the world's remaining moist tropical forests and, after Russia and Canada, the Brazilian Amazon represents the largest expanse of natural forest cover in a single country. At present, 80% of the region's population (22 million) lives in rapidly growing urban centers, and most of the rest is concentrated along the southern and eastern flanks of the region. Here loggers, ranchers and farmers compete for unclaimed public lands. For the past three decades, frontier expansion in the Brazilian Amazon has followed a destructive process that parallels other forested frontiers throughout the tropics. Along the outer frontier margins, loggers generally arrive first, opening up access roads and harvesting high-value species such as mahogany. Small-scale farmers, often migrating from more mature frontier areas, arrive next. Distant from markets and with few alternative employment opportunities, these producers are compelled to eke out a living by selling lower-value timber species to loggers and clearing the forest for shifting cultivation. Finally, larger scale farmers and ranchers (many of whom are ex-loggers¹⁹) consolidate land holdings, often through violent expropriations that compel small-scale producers to either move to urban centers or seek new frontiers. Today, portions of the region have some of the worst indices of rural violence in the Western Hemisphere: 20 small-scale producers and their representatives were assassinated in the eastern Amazonian state of Pará during 2002 alone.²⁰

This is the typical settlement pattern along development frontiers in the Amazon. It has led to the privatization of 24% of the region—of which less than half still maintains forest cover.²¹ In recent years, however, two new processes are changing this pattern. First, soybean expansion into the Amazon—in response to growing international markets (especially in China) and improved highways or planned construction projects—is exacerbating land concentration in older frontier areas. Second, instead of a step-by-step expansion along frontier edges, the logging industry is beginning to leapfrog into the core of the Amazon region, where long-term access to large expanses of forest is assured. Both of these processes threaten to quicken the pace of frontier expansion and further reduce opportunities for the rural poor.

The key question facing the Brazilian Amazon today is whether this destructive and accelerating process of frontier expansion will continue in the remainder of the region—most of which (47%) consists of public lands that are still unclaimed or in dispute. PAs and indigenous lands are key factors in this process. Such areas currently cover a net area²² equivalent to 29% of the region. Evidence from tropical forest regions worldwide (Bruner et al. 2001) shows that, even in cases where there is a lack of effective protection

¹⁹ Loggers typically reinvest their wealth either in consolidating land holdings or in other sectors and geographic areas. Recent signs show increasing links with drug trafficking.

²⁰ <http://www.cptnac.com.br/conflitos/2002/conf0001.htm>

²¹ Brazilian law stipulates that forest cover be maintained over 80% of landholdings in the Amazon region. On private lands, however, 42% of the area has been converted to pasture, 7% is under active cultivation in annual or perennial crops, 3% is abandoned and 48% is covered by forest—much of which may actually constitute secondary growth.

²² Total area designated to indigenous lands and conservation units currently totals 32%, but due to overlaps the net area is 29%. Under the Brazilian constitution indigenous lands have priority in such cases.

on the ground, PAs maintain a relatively high degree of forest cover and exhibit few signs of disturbance in comparison with the surrounding landscape. Further evidence from Brazil indicates that indigenous lands are no less effective than PAs in maintaining forest cover (Schwartzman et. al 2000). Indeed, in zones of rapid frontier expansion, indigenous lands such as the Kayapó Indian Reserve now provide the only continuously forested landscapes.

Is there room to expand PAs in the Brazilian Amazon without negatively affecting human populations? Outside of urban centers and expanding frontier areas, average population densities are <1 inhabitant per km², with most of the rural population concentrated adjacent to rivers and streams. Evidence from diverse sources suggests that riverine population densities were far greater prior to and at European contact in the early 1500s. Furthermore, 500- to 1000-year-old charcoal and ceramic remains indicate human presence even in remote interfluvial areas, although such a presence was probably sporadic. Population densities appear to have changed little or perhaps even declined since: Today, an estimated 50 uncontacted tribal groups (typically ranging in size from 10-50 members) inhabit these areas.

In short, although historic human presence has been documented in much of the region, at present population densities are extremely low over vast areas of the Brazilian Amazon, although some indigenous advocates argue that few areas are not part of some indigenous group's traditional hunting grounds. Nevertheless, frontier expansion is accelerating in increasingly unpredictable ways. Conservationists use these facts as a basis for defending both the potential and need to expand PAs—ranging from strict conservation units to extractive reserves that are designed around the needs of traditional populations—in a landscape mosaic. Expanding PAs thus could help conserve forest and the livelihoods of forest peoples while buying time for more orderly forms of frontier expansion, including land titling, agricultural intensification and increased enforcement. To varying degrees and with subtle differences, this strategy has been the core agenda of the global conservation organizations operating in the region (although TNC is moving increasingly toward a strategic focus on indigenous lands). Its viability and potential effects on local populations will be examined below.

C. Policies for Protected Areas and Indigenous Lands

The Brazilian Amazon's biological diversity is staggering: in terms of numbers of species, it contains 25,000 plants (with a total probably double that figure), 2.5 million insects, more than 2,000 fish (by far the world's highest concentration), 163 amphibians, 550 reptiles (of which 62% are endemic), more than 950 birds, and 350 mammals—of which 57 are primates (by far the world's highest concentration), 124 bats, 22 marsupials and 72 rodents.

Despite this wealth of biodiversity, strict protected areas—which are known in Brazil as “indirect-use conservation units” (equivalent to IUCN categories I-IV and including biological reserves and national parks)—covered only about 4.5% of the region in 2002. This contrasts with many countries (e.g., Canada, Costa Rica) where strict protected areas

cover 10% or more of the national territory. Other, so-called “direct-use” conservation units—equivalent to IUCN categories V-VI and including national forests, extractive reserves and sustainable development reserves—cover an additional 4% of the region. Most PAs are under control of the federal environmental agency (IBAMA) and were established in the 1970s, although Amazonian states and even municipalities have begun to establish conservation units as part of a new wave of expansion under way since the 1990s.

The Brazilian Amazon also contains a high degree of cultural diversity, with more than 160 tribal groups and 195 different languages—most of which are spoken by small groups threatened with cultural if not actual physical extinction. This diversity is contained within a miniscule population of 280,000 (<0.2% of Brazil’s population). The 1988 Brazilian constitution guaranteed the land rights of indigenous peoples, and since then (and especially during the 1990s) extensive areas of indigenous lands have been demarcated, now incorporating 22% of the Brazilian Amazon (1.035 million km²). Due to their low population density (averaging 0.27 inhabitants per km²) and wealth of mineral and forestry resources, indigenous lands are often prime targets for powerful economic interests. A federal government agency (FUNAI) has a constitutional mandate to establish indigenous lands, and because the process is carried out without consulting other interest groups it tends to generate strong local opposition.

Although most indigenous lands have been defined, new ones continue to be demarcated around uncontacted groups, and new demarcations are under way or planned around acculturated communities that have recently begun to rediscover—either through endogenous or exogenous influences—their indigenous roots. This could set a powerful precedent for a much larger group of indigenous descendants who constitute the bulk of riverine communities in the region,²³ and it could increase local opposition to indigenous lands.

Through ongoing initiatives such as WWF’s Amazon Region Protected Area program (ARPA—described below), PAs are scheduled to expand from their current 7% to ca. 17% of the region. The previous Brazilian government had planned an ambitious expansion of the national forest system to cover an additional 10% of the region. The current government has backed off this commitment, but it is conceivable that indigenous lands and PAs could expand in the future to incorporate 45% or more of the region. Together with required protection on private lands, this could assure maintenance of well over 50% of the region’s forest cover.

Unfortunately, the expansion and consolidation of PAs and indigenous lands in the Brazilian Amazon is likely to take considerable time—which, given current rates and patterns of frontier expansion, suggests that the previous projections may never actually take place except on paper. With cumbersome bureaucratic structures,²⁴ fierce

²³ Recently, two community representatives appeared in the regional offices of an indigenous organization (COIAB). When the receptionist asked if they were Indians, they responded: “Not yet.”

²⁴ For example, as government agencies they are unable to fire incompetent staff and rarely are able to hire new staff.

interagency rivalries and inadequate budgets,²⁵ FUNAI and IBAMA are incapable of building an integrated system for effectively conserving biological and cultural diversity—in contrast to agencies in other countries, such as Colombia. These agencies are responsible for extensive areas, yet they have inadequate presence on the ground and, until recently, showed little historic inclination to include stakeholder consultation as part of the establishment process.²⁶ They are coming under increasing pressure to transfer these areas to state governments and other local interests. Cautiously, FUNAI and IBAMA have begun to delegate specific steps in demarcating indigenous lands and management of conservation units to NGOs, many with backing from the global conservation organizations. These steps have generally led to greater local participation in the establishment and management of indigenous lands and protected areas.

It is important to note that the Brazilian constitution (1988) guarantees indigenous lands priority over other land-use designations, including conservation units. A 2001 law requires a process of stakeholder consultation prior to establishing new conservation units. It also defines a wide array of units—such as extractive reserves and sustainable development reserves—in which traditional peoples²⁷ are an integral part of reserve design. Strict conservation units theoretically do not permit people and must provide compensation for their property. In no case in recent history have resident populations been removed from conservation units in Brazil, although fines and other penalties have been imposed on local populations carrying out hunting and fishing within areas designated for strict protection. There have been numerous cases, however, in which newly arrived settlers have been removed, particularly from indigenous lands but also from conservation units. As we have seen, similar efforts have been made in Mexico and Guatemala, where more recent arrivals in protected areas are far more vulnerable to being displaced. In recent years, IBAMA has gradually moved to a more conciliatory stance in relation to long-resident populations with a view toward building local support. This is a particular need in the Amazon region, where conservation units are woefully understaffed and unequipped. Current efforts to expand the system envision mosaics of conservation units designed in accordance with the location of resident populations and resources.

A combination of legal safeguards, the low institutional capacity of responsible governmental agencies, and the presence of extensive unoccupied or low-use areas, therefore, reduces the potential threat of Brazil's expanding PAs to indigenous and other traditional populations in the Amazon region.

²⁵ In 2002, FUNAI's total annual budget from the federal treasury (including donations from international sources) was \$64 million, of which 61% went to administration and pensions and 12% (\$8 million) went to demarcation and protection of indigenous lands in the Amazon—where 95% of the country's indigenous lands are located. IBAMA's budget was \$180 million, of which 46% went to administration and pensions and 24% (\$44 million) went to conservation units—of which about half (in area terms, but far less in budgetary terms) are located in the Amazon.

²⁶ One exception to this pattern involves extractive reserves, which arose in response to a grassroots movement by traditional peoples (such as rubber tappers).

²⁷ Traditional peoples are defined under Brazilian legislation as follows: (1) descendents of indigenous groups, slaves and indentured peoples; and (2) dependent on low-impact resource uses, including hunting and fishing, gathering of forest products (e.g., rubber, Brazil nut, babaçu nut and açaí fruit) and swidden agriculture—the latter primarily for subsistence.

C. Other Stakeholders and Their Roles

The three GC-NGOs are part of a wide and growing array of stakeholders involved in promoting expansion of PAs in the Amazon. They include international donors, local NGOs, and grassroots movements and networks. Noteworthy examples among these groups are described briefly below.

A variety of international donors support expansion and consolidation of PAs in the Brazilian Amazon. The principal forum for these donors is the Pilot Program to Conserve the Brazilian Rainforest (PPG7), which was announced during the 1991 G-7 meeting and effectively launched in the mid-1990s under the auspices of the World Bank with major participation by the German Development Bank (KfW), the German Technical Agency (GTZ), the European Union (EU), the British Department for International Development (DfID) and USAID. The program consists of 12 projects and has received approximately \$350 million in committed funds to date. Three projects are of special relevance here: Indigenous Lands (\$22 million), Extractive Reserves (\$17 million) and Rainforest Corridors (\$27 million). Of these three, the Indigenous Lands project has been by far the most effective, supporting demarcation of about 11% of the Amazon region. The Extractive Reserves project has helped consolidate three extractive reserves but has achieved minimal success due to declining performance of the responsible agency within IBAMA. Finally, the Rainforest Corridors project—which has just begun—aims to increase connectivity of zoning and land use within a 245,000-km² area in the central Amazon. All of these projects involve a high degree of participation by civil society, in particular NGOs.

Private foundations have played a more discrete role in expanding PAs. Chief among these has been the Ford Foundation, which has maintained an active program in the Brazilian Amazon since the mid-1980s (Anderson 2002). Ford supported the initial establishment of extractive reserves, a unique form of protected area designated for traditional populations such as rubber tappers and tightly linked to grassroots movements. It has also played a special role in strengthening key institutions—including both NGOs and public research institutions and universities—involved with PAs.

In 2003, the Moore Foundation—recently established by Intel founder and billionaire Gordon Moore—developed a new grantmaking program for the entire Amazon Basin (including portions of eight countries besides Brazil). This program, which has begun disbursing \$30 million per year, makes the Moore Foundation by far the largest private donor in the Brazilian Amazon. The Moore Foundation's main objective is to support the expansion and consolidation of restricted use areas, including indigenous lands and other areas designated for traditional peoples and/or low-impact activities. As noted below, the Moore Foundation is or has committed to providing substantial support to the three major conservation organizations, although it has also begun to negotiate smaller grants to other institutions, including Brazilian NGOs. Three prominent Brazilian NGOs involved with PAs are described below, two of which (ISA and Imazon) recently received Moore grants.

The Social-Environmental Institute (ISA) has developed a diverse portfolio of activities involving participatory demarcation, resource management and business development in indigenous lands of the Upper Negro and Xingu River Basins, and has an annual budget of \$3 million. Another important player is the Institute of People and Environment in the Amazon (Imazon), which has played a key role in building political support for the expansion of national and state forests in the Amazon as a strategy for curbing illegal logging. Characterized as one of a handful of “think and do tanks” worldwide,²⁸ Imazon’s annual budget is \$1 million.

A third research-oriented NGO is the Mamirauá Institute, which launched a new, participatory type of conservation in the form of so-called sustainable development reserves, which contain a patchwork or mosaic of different land-use designations within a single reserve unit. Piloted extensively in a single reserve (Mamirauá) and subsequently replicated elsewhere, sustainable development reserves represent a pragmatic approach to expansion of protected areas in the Amazon. The institute has an annual budget of \$2 million.

The three NGOs described above represent only a small sampling of civil society organizations involved with PAs in the Amazon. Although their agendas vary, all three seek a balanced approach to biodiversity conservation that incorporates human needs, and all deal with a wide range of international agencies and are not overly dependent on any one. Thus, Brazil has more and larger domestic conservation NGOs than are found in Mexico, for example. Further, these domestic conservation NGOs play critical roles in shaping domestic policies, and they tend to be much more active than the international NGOs in implementing projects on the ground.

Finally, grassroots movements and labor organizations play a powerful role in building public support for PAs in the Amazon. One of the most noteworthy examples is the National Council of Rubber Tappers (CNS), which pushed for the establishment of extractive reserves, recently assumed effective control of the federal agency responsible for these units, and has provided an effective lobby for their continued support.²⁹ CNS played an important role in establishing the Amazon Working Group (GTA) Network, which today consists of more than 500 organizations representing traditional populations and supporting NGOs involved with social, economic and environmental issues. A major recipient of support from the PPG7, this network helps execute projects involving natural resource management, and it provides a useful forum for exchanging lessons and mobilizing political support. A core participant of the GTA is the National Confederation for Agricultural Workers, which has active chapters in all nine Amazonian states. Additional participants include a wide variety of indigenous organizations and supporting NGOs, which often have conflicting agendas regarding indigenous rights.

In short, although the Brazilian Amazon contains large areas with little permanent populations, it also holds a diverse and sophisticated array of stakeholders involved with

²⁸ World Bank World Development Report. 2003. *Sustainable Development in a Dynamic World*. World Bank, Washington, D.C.

²⁹ See section under WWF below.

PAs and indigenous lands. It is within this complex institutional milieu that global conservation organizations operate.

X. Global Conservation NGOs

The GC-NGOs studied in this report have broad similarities in their Brazilian programs. The emerging landscape paradigm—in which biodiversity priorities and targets are more clearly defined—has provided a powerful marketing tool that has enabled the major conservation organizations to expand operations in Brazil. Since 2000, and despite an adverse funding environment, all three have vastly increased budgets (Table III). While these budgets—which totaled roughly \$8 million per year in 2002—are much smaller than the budgets of the governmental agencies responsible for PAs and indigenous lands (about \$52 million nationwide: see footnote 24) or the funding provided through international programs such as the PPG7, they are disbursed more efficiently through non-governmental channels, and more effectively through strategically focused interventions.

Table III. Summary data on GC-NGO activities in the Brazilian Amazon.

NGO	Size of investments	Main funders	Δ annual funding since 2000	Major program objectives
CI	\$1.2 million/yr	Moore Foundation, British Council, USAID	+1000%	1. Expansion of strict conservation units 2. Expansion and strengthening of sustainable development reserves (including communities) 3. Monitoring and development of indigenous lands
TNC	\$1.2 million/yr	Private donors, USAID, Earth Foundation	+200%	1. Strengthening of Serra do Divisor National Park 2. Land-use zoning for conservation of indigenous lands
WWF	\$5.4 million/yr	WWF's international counterparts (principally US, Holland, Switzerland, Sweden), Moore Foundation, USAID	+400%	1. Expansion and strengthening of strict conservation units and expansion of extractive reserves (ARPA program) 2. Strengthening of direct use conservation units (including communities) 3. Support for sound forest management including certification

Specific information on each organization is provided below:

A. *WWF*. Of the three organizations, WWF has the largest and most long-term operation in the Brazilian Amazon. Its biggest single initiative is the Amazon Region Protected Areas (ARPA) program, which aims to both strengthen existing PAs and set aside 10% of the Brazilian Amazon region (approximately 500,000 km²) in new PAs by 2012—half as strict PAs and the other half as extractive reserves. The program's total estimated cost is \$395 million over 10 years, which will be divided into two phases.³⁰ During the preparation of this project, WWF lobbied hard to limit its focus to strict protected areas,

³⁰ For ARPA's Phase 1 (2003-6), which aims to set aside about 3.3% of the region (170,000 km²), \$81.5 million has been raised from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF--\$30 million), the Brazilian government (\$18.1 million), WWF (\$16.5 million), KfW (\$14.4 million) and other donors (\$2.5 million). For Phase 2 (2007-12), another \$70 million has been committed by the World Bank and WWF.

but that effort was stymied due to strong opposition by the Brazilian government and allied civil society organizations such as CNS. Even so, during Phase 1 (2003-6) only about 20% of the program's funding will be allocated to extractive reserves and will be directed exclusively to their expansion.³¹ WWF was actively involved in the establishment of extractive reserves in Acre in earlier years, but is now much less involved in this issue.

With strong financial support from its global network, WWF continues to support various community-oriented initiatives, including traditional ICDPs in and around extractive reserves. In contrast to the other global conservation NGOs (in particular CI), it also maintains strong programs involving forest management and certification, and it has been a major supporter of Imazon (described above). In recent years, WWF underwent a severe leadership crisis that strained its ties with the NGO community in Brazil. Under new leadership since mid-2003, the prospects for improving those ties appear to have improved.

B. *TNC*. During the 1990s, TNC's Amazon-based activities were limited to ICDP-type operations in the extreme western Amazon state of Acre, where it has supported work in and around a strict PA (Serra do Divisor) that has an area of 843,000 hectare and a population of 5,000 people, living mostly on flood plains. A local indigenous group is lobbying for an indigenous reserve to be carved out of the park, but that will take years to process and is an issue TNC avoids. As part of a recent institutional reorganization, a larger program now coordinates TNC's work in the Amazonian portions of Brazil, Venezuela and Colombia. Under this program, TNC has embarked on a new regional initiative focused on indigenous lands, and it is developing a major, nationwide initiative for conservation on indigenous lands for support from the GEF. While CI has supported such work at one site (see box under CI below), it is important to note that TNC is the only organization that has established indigenous lands as a primary program focus across the region. Thematically, this is the most distinctive approach to conservation adopted by the three organizations, and it could provide important strategic advantages due to the immensity of indigenous lands in the Brazilian Amazon. According to TNC's Amazon program director, "Indigenous lands are to conservation what China is to foreign policy." He goes on to note that "You can't deal with conservation without dealing with them. There is a huge accumulation of expertise in parks, but how can those methodologies be adapted to indigenous issues?" As a part of this strategy, TNC is supporting an administrative position with a national indigenous organization.

TNC works with other Brazilian organizations that are already dealing with indigenous peoples. One priority is to involve indigenous peoples in developing management plans for the lands by linking traditional knowledge with conservation – specifically by developing protocols for ethnomapping. TNC currently works with six indigenous areas and plans to add another six indigenous reserves by the end of 2004. One of the selected areas (Raposa-Serra do Sol in the northern state of Roraima) partially overlaps a major

³¹ The Phase 1 target for expansion of extractive reserves is 90,000 km². Additional funding for strengthening of extractive reserves is provided by the PPG7's Extractive Reserves project described above.

strict PA (Mount Roraima). As noted above, Brazilian law gives priority to indigenous lands in such cases, although this case has generated considerable institutional friction between IBAMA and FUNAI. In Venezuela and Colombia, no conflict exists between these land-use designations.

While a focus on indigenous lands appears to be highly strategic, TNC's approach could also involve substantial risks due to the inherent difficulties of working with scattered and culturally diverse groups subjected to formidable development pressures. Observers also note that this approach will increase TNC's exposure to a variety of indigenous organizations and supporting NGOs which, as noted above, have conflicting agendas regarding indigenous rights.

Nevertheless, TNC's Amazon program director asserts that providing a human face to conservation by focusing on indigenous peoples offers immense potential for marketing, particularly among the individual and corporate donors that constitute a relatively large share of the organization's support. In this sense, TNC's program in the Brazilian Amazon is quite distinct from the organization's main marketing focus on nature conservation in the US and other countries.

C. *CI*. Until recently, CI's activities in the Brazilian Amazon were confined to support for an ICDP-type project involving the Kayapó Indians. This project has since expanded from a village to a larger landscape (see Box).

CI's Work with the Kayapó Indians: From Village to Landscape

Since the early 1990s, CI has supported basic biological research near the village of Aükre, located within a 14.5 million-hectare Kayapó Indian Reserve in the South-Central Brazilian Amazon. Access fees to a 8,000-hectare research station adjacent to Aükre provide a modest but steady source of income that is administered communally by the village. In the 1990s, loggers paid much larger sums to extract mahogany from the reserve. Logging provided the first major exposure to a cash economy, and decisions regarding the access of loggers resided exclusively with the chiefs, who accumulated considerable wealth. This arrangement generated tension among the residents of Aükre and eventually led to the election of new chiefs who used the proceeds from logging for community benefits.

Beginning with a modest budget, CI has increased investments in the Kayapó to approximately \$300,000 per year. In addition to the Aükre research station, it supports monitoring and surveillance along the 1600 km perimeter of the reserve—both by remote sensing and establishment of posts maintained by members of all 15 communities within the reserve. Maintenance of the Kayapó Reserve is especially strategic for conservation because it is bordered on both sides by major highways that serve as frontiers for expansion of logging, cattle pastures and soybean plantations. Historically, the fierce Kayapó culture has provided an effective deterrent to incursions by outsiders. As a result, the continuous forest cover within the reserve contrasts starkly with the landscape

outside—in particular to the east, which is characterized by widespread forest clearing. With outside support in critical areas, CI believes that the Kayapó can continue to maintain the reserve against external threats.

- This case provides an interesting example of how a localized ICDP has evolved into a larger, landscape-wide conservation initiative.

Barbara Zimmerman, Personal Communication

While CI widely advertises its work with the Kayapó, this is in fact its only project involving indigenous peoples in Brazil. In addition to its project with the Kayapó, CI has recently become involved in assisting in the expansion of PAs in various Amazon states such as Amazonas. In comparison to the other international conservation organizations, CI's operation in Brazil appears to have gone furthest in embracing a landscape perspective, reflecting a strong orientation emanating from its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Observers note that this perspective has made CI relatively isolated from locally based initiatives involving populations and, as noted earlier in this report, has also led to at least one position regarded as hostile by Brazilian indigenous groups. The incident had to do with the invasion of the Monte Pascoal National Park. This park was declared in the 1930s on land that had been traditionally used by the Pataxo indigenous group. After many years of attempting to obtain recognition of their lands, in the late 1990s the Pataxo burned down the park office. After this, CI supported a resolution condemning invasions of national parks by indigenous groups at a Brazilian national parks congress in 2000. One observer said that CI's action has “never been forgiven or forgotten” by indigenous groups in Brazil. This incident was also referred to earlier in the section on interviews in CI's D.C. office.

Among the D.C. branches of the three conservation organizations,³² CI has the most centralized leadership and decision making processes and, in contrast to the others, has elevated conservation scientists (including numerous staff members and associates of CI Brazil) to the highest posts. While all three organizations have formidable marketing strategies, CI has established the tightest link between science and marketing—in which so-called “hotspots” cover <2% of the Earth's surface but contain ~60% of terrestrial biodiversity. This “biggest bang for the buck” approach—backed by world-renowned scientists such as E. O. Wilson (who sits on CI's board)—has helped establish critical inroads into the donor and business community. An unprecedented payoff came in 1999-2001, when Gordon Moore (who also sits on the board), through his foundation donated a series of grants totaling more than \$300 million to CI, primarily for institutional strengthening over a 10-year period. This funding enabled CI to leverage additional funding from the World Bank and other donors to establish a \$150 million Global Conservation Fund to support PAs worldwide (see earlier discussion). However, as one observer noted, “You wouldn't know that CI has all that money on the ground--all of it

³² This comparison refers to the respective organizations headquartered in Washington, D.C. In the case of WWF, the comparison refers exclusively to WWF-US and not WWF Brazil.

seems to be going into mapping and conservation science.” CI also lobbied hard to play a gatekeeping role in the Moore Foundation’s Amazon Basin program, at one point even gaining authority to provide anonymous reviews of all grant proposals. That role has since diminished, and today the Moore Foundation has provided support to a total of 11 US-based institutions active in the Amazon region and is supporting various regional NGOs, including three in Brazil.

Although their programmatic and marketing strategies vary, the GC-NGOs have various characteristics in common. All three have greatly expanded their operations in the Brazilian Amazon region and the corresponding fundraising that supports those activities. Brazil’s sensitivity to international influences—which is especially strong in the Amazon—requires that global organizations establish local partnerships and, ultimately, a national identity by incorporating in Brazil. As a result, despite isolated attempts to seize control of the agenda, all three organizations collaborate with broad institutional networks, including NGOs, grassroots movements, governmental agencies and international donors. All three have established national organizations in Brazil with varying degrees of autonomy. Whatever the mandate of their US-based constituents, however, in Brazil these organizations would be unable to pursue agendas with negative social impacts for long.

XI. Conclusions

The preceding pages reveal the complex institutional context in which the global conservation organizations operate in Latin America. We conclude by addressing five key questions raised at the beginning of this study, and follow with some more general reflections.

1. Is there an increasing concentration of control over conservation funds by the big conservation NGOs? What is the nature of this “gatekeeper role” and does it induce local governments to adopt measures that inhibit local participation in protected areas?

The last few years have been clearly marked by the rapid emergence of the large conservation NGOs as major conservation finance actors and funding gatekeepers for developing country NGOs. As noted earlier, combined international conservation NGO investments in developing countries doubled from 1998 to 2002, from \$240 million to \$487 million. This trend is reinforced by USAID’s decision in many countries to channel all or nearly all of its conservation funding through the big three (the “Leaders with Associates” Program). The large NGOs are, in turn, obligated to fund national NGOs, but this clearly puts them in a very powerful position, and national conservation NGOs who want funding are not likely to strongly disagree with them. However, it should also be noted that even if USAID were handing out the funds directly, its role as a US government agency limits the freedom of national NGOs who might want to solicit money from it. In Brazil in particular, since 2000 and despite an adverse funding environment, all three the large conservation NGOs have vastly increased budgets (Table

III). These budgets remain smaller than the budgets of the governmental agencies responsible for PAs or the funding provided through international programs such as the PPG7; however, global conservation organizations are increasingly providing alternative funding channels for multilateral agencies such as the World Bank. These organizations are emerging as arguably the most important sources of funding for conservation initiatives in the Brazilian Amazon.

In the larger Latin American countries like Mexico and Brazil, the clout of the big NGOs remains relative. These countries have large environmental bureaucracies and active environmentalists within civil society that keep foreign NGOs from having an inordinate influence. As we have seen in the report, there are multiple examples of national governments and civil society resisting initiatives of the large NGOs. Even in smaller countries like Guatemala, a combination of government and civil society (some of it international) resistance forced CI to abandon its conservation concession initiative. CI was helpless in attempting to keep settlers out of the Laguna del Tigre National Park and had its biological research station burned for its efforts. In Brazil, occasional efforts to establish control over the conservation agenda—such as WWF’s attempt to focus ARPA on strict protected areas or CI’s attempt to act as gatekeeper for the Moore Foundation’s Amazon program—were notably unsuccessful. In both cases, Brazilian NGOs and their allies played key roles in countering these efforts. In Mexico, CI in the Lacandon has been an important force, but its role has been greatly exaggerated by some of the broadsides on the Internet. Mexican government environmental agencies remain much more powerful forces than CI in the Lacandon and have pursued strategies with which CI is in open disagreement, such as compensating communities for being displaced and not taking action in the majority of cases of illegal occupations.

In brief, we do not know of any specific case in which a large NGO has convinced a national government to prioritize strict conservation over programs that work with local communities. The capacity of global conservation organizations to control national conservation agendas is limited and, in order to maintain legitimacy, they must develop strong ties with civil society. This generalization may be tempered in very small countries like Guyana and Suriname, where there have been recent controversies around CI’s role, and where both government and civil society are very weak. But we did not examine these cases in the study.

2. Are global conservation NGOs directly managing conservation areas in developing countries? If so, does this make local conservation and development groups unequal partners and hinder locally based visions of appropriate conservation activities?

We came across several cases where global conservation NGOs purchased land in Latin America and are currently administering it, although in all cases they say this is a temporary arrangement until they can transfer control to national actors. These cases include TNC’s purchase of Isla Espritu Island in Mexico, another TNC purchase of private land within the Sian Ka’an Biosphere Reserve in Mexico, and WWF’s purchase, with others, of the Valdivia plot in Chile. Local conservation and development groups do not normally have the access to the fundraising opportunities that the big NGOs have.

Within the limitations of this study it is really not possible to say whether these particular actions hinder locally based visions of appropriate conservation actions. This would require more extensive fieldwork and interviews with local conservation organizations.

Except for these few cases, global conservation NGOs are not directly involved in PA management, but fundraising for this purpose is under way by WWF (through ARPA), and additional funds will soon become available from CI's Global Conservation Fund, which is, however, restricted to biodiversity hotspots. In Brazil, this refers to the Atlantic forest and Cerrado biomes but does not involve the Amazon region. In the case of Brazil, most future investments are likely to be channeled to large-scale activities such as landscape design and monitoring, with little funds available for small-scale economic initiatives at the community level. It must be understood, however, that at present local communities in and around PAs in the Amazon tend to be in isolated places where governmental services are minimal and where prior support by environmental or other NGOs was nonexistent. While the ICDP approach is no longer strongly emphasized, all three organizations claim that some biodiversity-friendly local initiatives will be supported at strategic locations. The sensitivity of these initiatives to local populations is likely to vary and will greatly depend—as always—on community assets and capacities of project personnel.

3. What is the impact of the relatively new landscape-level approaches to protected area planning (e.g. ecoregions and hotspots) on local communities? Do landscape-level approaches lose local context and harm local well-being?

There is active disagreement within the conservation NGOs over the appropriate strategy to follow vis-à-vis communities in landscape-level approaches. The conservation scientists see it as a conservation priority setting exercise that in its first phase should take into account only ecological issues. Field practitioners tend to see it quite differently, and argue that people and local communities have to be engaged from the beginning. In many cases, landscape-level planning as a formal process is still in an early phase and has not engaged local communities. Field offices of WWF and TNC in particular tend to engage local communities in specific projects from the early phases and do some form of ecoregional planning only as part of that process. CI, using a corridor approach, seems to be putting the most funding into large-scale conservation planning processes with relatively little engagement of local communities at this stage (fall 2003).

However, there is also widespread realization that as conservation NGOs venture out into larger landscapes they will inevitably have to confront sustainable use issues more directly. As has recently been argued, "...environmentalists must look beyond parks and indigenous zones, beyond biosphere reserves and wildlife refuges, to find ways to preserve forest covers in areas with lower biodiversity, less ecological interest, and large proportions of land held privately or being converted to other uses" (Linden, et. al. 2004). Most realize that there are going to be limits to how much national territory can be put into formal protected areas and that the limit may have been reached or nearly reached in many countries. But there are contradictory tendencies and trends around this fact with no clear pattern emerging, or at least no clear pattern evident from this brief

study. It is frequently observed that the move to landscape-level work is accompanied by a declining commitment to traditional ICDPs. At the same time, there is expanding interest in market-oriented activities such as shade tree/organic coffee, community forestry for timber production and ecotourism, which are seen as larger landscape activities that tap more directly into existing markets than many small local ICDPs. Moving into larger landscapes also inevitably means engaging more stakeholders and in many cases becoming the facilitator of stakeholder fora. WWF in the Monarch Butterfly Reserve has stimulated an active process of stakeholder coordination in the state of Michoacán. WWF in the Nicaraguan Mosquitia is supporting an effort by the autonomous regional government to convene stakeholders around sustainable logging. TNC in the Lake Atitlán is convening stakeholders around regional sustainable development initiatives. CI appears to be less active in this sort of landscape-level stakeholder consultations. Thus, the new landscape-level approaches in an implementation phase are unlikely to harm local well-being, because they almost necessarily call for democratic fora and consultations, although some organizations seem to be avoiding this conclusion. The small local initiatives associated with ICDPs, however, are likely to become relatively less important within the programs supported by the global conservation organizations. To this extent, the greatest threat appears to be that local communities will be ignored. The new landscape-level approaches are an important new feature in conservation, and there has been little academic study of their implementation, implications and impact. One of the few has been carried out in Madagascar (Gezon 2003) but more are needed.

4. Do current PA programs in general displace local communities? Do they allow for the participation of local communities, security of tenure and/or access rights?

To answer this question, the definition of what is meant by “local communities” is important. If local communities mean communities that were in place at the time the protected area was declared, then in general PAs do not displace local communities in Latin America. In the introduction, a case from the literature was cited from the Dominican Republic where relatively large-scale displacements took place. In the Lacandon rainforest we saw that communities that already had legal title to their lands at the time the Comunidad Lacandona was declared were able to stay after some struggle. In most cases, resident communities are not displaced. There are no cases of such displacements in Brazil, for example, even though it is technically illegal for the communities to be there.

The situation becomes more complicated when it concerns communities that arrived after the declaration of the PA and where there are ongoing colonization pressures. The complex political tensions around new irregular communities in the Lacandon and CI’s role in trying to evict them were discussed at length. As mentioned, CI provides information on its web site and to the Mexican and US governments which demonstrates that many communities are engaged in illegal activities, although its current public stance is that only three of a much larger number of communities should be displaced. Both some Mexican government agencies and the Comunidad Lacandona have been more openly aggressive towards some of the irregular settlements than CI.

After an initial wave of displacements in the 1970s, Mexican authorities were ineffectual in efforts at both coerced and voluntary resettlements in the 1990s.

In the Petén, CI quickly backed off from efforts, which had been supported both by the Guatemalan government and USAID, to relocate communities from Laguna del Tigre PA after its research station was burned. After that, it began working on health and land use planning projects with these communities, and the Guatemalan government handed letters of agreement allowing these and many more communities to stay in the park. TNC and Defensores de la Natureleza, on the other hand, were able to design a voluntary relocation program that was reportedly relatively successful, and reportedly few or none of the voluntarily displaced families have returned.

Thus, it can be said that PAs in Latin America are not displacing long-resident local communities but that there are ongoing tensions around the displacement of more recently arrived communities. Some indigenous and human rights organizations argue that no community of poor people should be displaced for trying to grow food for their families. Conservation advocates argue that it is a violation of national laws for these communities to establish themselves in PAs and that this process continues a pattern of failed development at the expense of biodiversity. They argue that it is the responsibility of government to provide more intensive production alternatives that do not require young farmers to continually move into forest frontiers.

In Brazil, the global NGOs' approaches regarding community participation and focus on community concerns such as tenure security and access rights vary widely. TNC's new Amazon program is designed around indigenous communities and aims to improve their overall capacity to manage large indigenous areas that might otherwise be threatened. WWF's program has a mix of a large program (ARPA) to establish and strengthen PAs, and long-term community projects aimed at promoting environmentally sound development options. CI is more focused on landscape-level initiatives in which community development appears to have a less prominent role, and has been more willing to challenge some actions by indigenous peoples. CI is quick to point to its work in the Kayapó indigenous reserve as evidence that it works successfully with indigenous peoples. However, this effort can be accused of tokenism since it is the only case in Brazil and it is useful to compare it to TNC's much larger program with indigenous reserves in Brazil.

Because of the vibrant nature of civil society in many emerging Latin American democracies, and the wide range of other stakeholders in conservation, the social impacts of global NGOs are mitigated. It may be only in the smallest, poorest countries where problems emerge in the Latin American context.

5. To what extent do current PA strategies contribute to, or detract from, the ability of impoverished communities in those regions to build livelihoods from the sustainable management of natural assets?

As mentioned above, the new landscape-level approaches seem to imply a relative abandonment of local-level ICDPs projects, but also force engagements with possible sustainable use activities in larger landscapes. Of the three global conservation NGOs, WWF clearly has the most active and consistent engagement with community-level sustainable development, despite assertions that social scientists and community work have lost influence in WWF in recent years. WWF's most notable program in this line is its community forestry for timber production efforts. Here WWF works at both the local community level, in organizing regional stakeholders, and trying to gain access to national and international markets for community timber products. In Mexico and the Petén WWF has been working on improving forest management through certification with existing timber production communities. In the Honduran and Nicaraguan Mosquitia and in Madre de Dios in Peru WWF is trying to develop new community forest enterprises from relatively low levels of community organization.

TNC hews closer to the line of traditional conservation activities but in certain areas is more actively engaged in sustainable use, such as the Calakmul region of Mexico, where it is supporting community logging; the Lake Atitlán region of Guatemala; and in projects with indigenous reserves in Brazil. CI would seem to have the fewest such programs. CI's most notable effort in this area is its conservation coffee program in Chiapas, Mexico, but is an effort that does not seem to be replicated elsewhere and it is also questioned internally. All three organizations, but particularly TNC and CI, seem to take a special interest in ecotourism, presumably because it appears to be the lowest impact of sustainable use activities and one that utilizes natural ecosystems that are generally not being used productively.

Given CI's apparent suspicion of many sustainable use activities, combined with its new resources, its interest in conservation concessions is understandable. Although its efforts have received considerable publicity, the conditions under which conservation concessions can be successful are still not clear. Situations where CI buys logging concessions from national governments in unpopulated areas, as it did in Guyana, would appear to be the most unproblematic cases. On the other hand, CI's failure in the Petén suggests that trying to introduce this option in community-dominated landscapes where much effort has been invested in sustainable extraction is not advisable. WWF's conservation concession in the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve does not necessarily contradict this. Although it is a region where there is a substantial amount of community logging, there have been few efforts to put this logging on a more sustainable level, so it appears to be less controversial for communities to give up some of their authorized volume. Thus, there is much to learn from these existing experiments.

Under its earlier ICDP paradigm in Brazil, WWF was extremely active in supporting the development of sustainable resource management by impoverished communities. Only a handful of these cases have been successful. WWF plans to continue supporting some of the more promising initiatives (e.g., marketing of timber products from the Chico Mendes extractive reserve in Acre state). Also in Brazil, there is no evidence indicating that the increase in financial resources controlled by the global conservation organizations—combined with their current focus on larger scale interventions—exerts significant

impacts among communities living in new or strengthened protected areas or in the landscapes between them. Some community-level projects are likely to continue receiving support, although such support will increasingly be determined by larger scale conservation objectives. Because the vast majority of communities in the Amazon have never received support from NGOs, the net effect is likely to be extremely small and—in comparison to earlier interventions under the ICDP paradigm—neutral.

XII. Final Reflections

Clearly the global conservation NGOs, but particularly CI, have very rapidly and recently acquired major new funds and clout on global conservation issues. Much of this funding is still so recent it is too early to say what its real impacts are going to be. One observer argues that these organizations are now “all about money.” This can be taken as a rhetorical overstatement, but it is obvious that the tendencies towards centralization and gigantism evident in the larger global economy are now making themselves felt in the world of non-profit conservation.

Conservation NGOs have as their primary mission the conservation of biodiversity, so advocates of community development and indigenous peoples are likely to always be frustrated that all of these resources are not being invested more substantially in their areas of concern. For the conservation NGOs, local communities and indigenous peoples are finally only one of a suite of possible options for achieving that end, complicated by the fact that under some circumstances these same elements can also undeniably be threats to biodiversity conservation.

Brechin et. al. (2003) have asked the right questions about the continuing tension around biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation and social justice, and they are worth repeating here. “Who benefits from biodiversity conservation? Should biodiversity protection be granted moral superiority relative to the ideals of human welfare and dignity? If so, on what grounds? Does the preservation of basic human rights supercede the goals of biodiversity conservation? If so, in what situations? How can the ideals of human dignity and nature protection be pursued in concert rather than in opposition? When human rights and dignity are sacrificed temporarily or permanently in nature protection (or vice-versa), what kinds of compensatory measures will be established and how will decision makers be held accountable?”

As we reviewed at the beginning of this study, academics and conservation practitioners can become quite heated as they debate the relative weight that should be given to sustainable use, indigenous reserve or protected area strategies. In practice, all of the GC-NGOs bridge this gap by carrying out both traditional protected area and sustainable use strategies. While it is not possible to quantify this, we can risk some tentative generalizations based on the literature review, interviews and field visits made for this study.

WWF has the most systematic programmatic dedication to a particularly sustainable use strategy with communities, through its community timber production

strategies. WWF also distinguishes itself by a long series of publications on working with indigenous peoples, and at least a planning attempt to integrate the ecoregion approach formally into indigenous areas. However, it has also been suggested that this activity takes up a relatively small percentage of its overall budget. CI is quite aggressive in a conservation science and protected areas approach, and this seems to have created more conflicts in some cases. The cases of Guyana and Suriname, not evaluated here, have garnered CI a lot of negative publicity. It has found itself in difficult situations, such as in the Petén and the Lacandon, and it has sometimes been clumsy in dealing with local actors, including an NGO it created. It has rejected community logging and in terms of community development prefers to focus on ecotourism and now conservation concessions. However, in the Lacandon, in the CL communities, it is working on a broader range of community development options. CI can also point to the conservation coffee program in Chiapas, which through the fall of 2003 could be considered a real model for community work (although it has reportedly had conflicts with the communities more recently)³³, and its work with the Kayapó indigenous reserve in Brazil. TNC has also been closely identified with a traditional protected areas approach, but in a few notable exceptions it is showing a willingness to engage sustainable use activities with local communities. These include work in community forestry in Calakmul, landscape planning activities in Guatemala and, most important, a major effort with indigenous reserves in Brazil.

But beyond the complicated specifics of their programs and actions in particular areas, the growing power and clout of these organizations raises questions about who they are accountable to. Few of their projects ever seem to undergo rigorous, publicly available evaluations, despite the fact that they frequently receive public or multilateral agency funds. The reliance of CI in particular on private foundation funds allows it to operate with even less accountability. WWF's reliance on a large membership base which sees it as focusing on charismatic megafauna makes it wary of communicating to its members the kinds of strategies it actually follows to achieve this goal. The exposé of TNC in the *Washington Post*, which did not include the group's international operations, suggests what can happen when large organizations with large amounts of money operate with little public accountability. Because of this, very little is known publicly about project success and failure for the global conservation NGOs, their relations to local communities, or anything else about their records.

What can be done by other stakeholders in this process at this particular historical juncture? The global conservation NGOs have major economic resources and political clout, but as we have seen, existing civil society organizations and government agencies can limit the influence that they have in any particular case, especially in the larger countries. Thus, in many cases, national forces may bring about pragmatic compromises between the equally legitimate goals of biodiversity conservation and environmental and economic justice. Nonetheless, it is important to understand more about the impact of these NGOs and to provide resources to other NGOs that may both monitor and provide contrasting points of view to these organizations. Thus, we close the study by making three recommendations for possible next steps in an evaluation of these processes.

³³ "Chiapas Coffee Growers Claim Betrayal by NGO." *The Herald Mexico*, August 23, 2004.

1. Landscape-level approaches are an important emerging new strategy for the global conservation NGOs, but their impacts on local communities, on conservation and development in general, and on public policy are still unclear. The power and influence of the NGOs is also an emerging reality which has still been little studied. Donors concerned with this process could fund both investigative journalism and academic studies of the performance of GC-NGOs at the regional level.
2. There are currently indigenous advocacy organizations, such as the World Rainforest Movement, that serve at least partially as watchdog organizations for the global conservation organizations. However, the social impacts of the NGOs go beyond just indigenous peoples to include non-indigenous local communities, local and national NGOs, and other constituencies. Donors could support a new “Conservation Watch” NGO that would monitor and report regularly on the activities of the global conservation NGOs.
3. In countries like Brazil and Mexico, and probably in other large LDC countries, substantial national conservation NGOs are emerging, and in some cases these NGOs may have a different point of view on community involvement than the global conservation NGOs. Donors may want to consider entering into a dialogue with some of these large national NGOs to begin to strengthen them to have a great international presence themselves. Just as LDCs now have their own transnational corporations, why shouldn't there be an LDC GC-NGO?

It is not possible to say that any one organization follows a strict protectionist or strict indigenous management strategy, although clear differences in style and strategy result in different mixes for different times as organizational strategies are played out in local places wherever they work. While there are areas of agreement that both protected areas and working with local communities are important, as sketched out above, the differences arise in budgeting and programmatic decisions when NGOs have to decide where to place scarce resources. The GC-NGOs will clearly continue to prioritize traditional protected areas over other conservation strategies, but for reasons discussed in this report, the pressure to incorporate sustainable use and stakeholder consultation strategies are not likely to diminish. Conservation and development will continue to move forward in a dialectical process and tensions around these issues are a part of the dynamic that can generate gains in biodiversity conservation, income generation for the rural poor and indigenous peoples, and environmental justice.

List of Acronyms

ARPA—Amazon Region Protected Areas

CI—Conservation International

COIAB—Council for Indigenous Organizations for the Brazilian Amazon

CONTAG—National Confederation for Agricultural Workers
CNS—National Council of Rubber Tappers
CPT—National Land Commission
DfID—British Department for International Development
EU—European Union
FUNAI—Brazil’s Protection Agency for Indigenous Peoples
GEF—Global Environmental Facility
GTA—Amazon Working Group
GTZ—German Technical Agency
ICDP—Integrated Conservation and Development Projects
KfW—German Development Bank
IBAMA—Brazil’s Environmental Protection Agency
ICDP—Integrated Conservation and Development Project
Imazon—Institute of People and Nature in the Amazon
IPAM—Institute of Environmental Research in the Amazon
ISA—Socio-Environmental Institute
PA—Protected Area
PPG7—Pilot Program to Conserve the Brazilian Rain Forest
TNC—The Nature Conservancy
USAID—United States Agency for International Development
WWF—World Wildlife Fund

Individuals Interviewed (Interviews took place in September-November, 2003)

WWF

Thomas Erdmann
Staff, Global Forest Program

Stephen Kelleher
Deputy Director, Global Forest Program

Mathew Perl
Director, Amazon Region Protected Area Program (ARPA)

Meg Symington
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Brazil Interviews

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José Maria Cardoso da Silva, Vice President and Director of Conservation International
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Paulo Gustavo Prado, Coordinator of Policy Program, Conservation International Brazil

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Appendix I: IUCN Protected Area Categories*

A protected area is defined as[1]:

An area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means.

This means that protected areas need not be limited to state-sponsored reserves, but can include those managed, for example, by indigenous communities, private landowners, industrial holdings, etc. To give greater coherence to the role and scope of protected areas within conservation planning and sustainable land use, IUCN and its World Commission on Protected Areas[2] have expanded on this basic definition and developed six modified categories of protected area. The new IUCN Protected Area Categories were proposed in February 1992 at the *IV World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas* in Caracas and agreed upon at IUCN's General Assembly in Buenos Aires in January 1994[3]. They are summarized below.

- **Category Ia: Strict nature reserve/wilderness protection area managed mainly for science or wilderness protection** - an area of land and/or sea possessing some outstanding or representative ecosystems, geological or physiological features and/or species, available primarily for scientific research and/or environmental monitoring;
- **Category Ib: Wilderness area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection** - large area of unmodified or slightly modified land and/or sea, retaining its natural characteristics and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed to preserve its natural condition.
- **Category II: National park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation** - natural area of land and/or sea designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.

- **Category III: Natural monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features** - area containing specific natural or natural/cultural feature(s) of outstanding or unique value because of their inherent rarity, representativeness, aesthetic qualities or cultural significance.
- **Category IV: Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention** - area of land and/or sea subject to active intervention for management purposes so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats to meet the requirements of specific species;
- **Category V: Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation or recreation** - area of land, with coast or sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.
- **Category VI: Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural resources** - area containing predominantly unmodified natural systems, managed to ensure long-term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while also providing a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs.

*Excerpted from: Dudley, Nigel and Sue Stolton with the assistance of Don Gilmour, Jean-Paul Jeanrenaud, Adrian Phillips and Pedro Rosabal. 1998. Protected Areas for a New Millennium: The Implications of IUCN's Protected Area Categories for Forest Conservation. A joint IUCN and WWG Discussion Paper, January 1998. Online Document: <http://www.iucn.org/themes/forests/6/notitle.html> Accessed October 10, 2003.

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