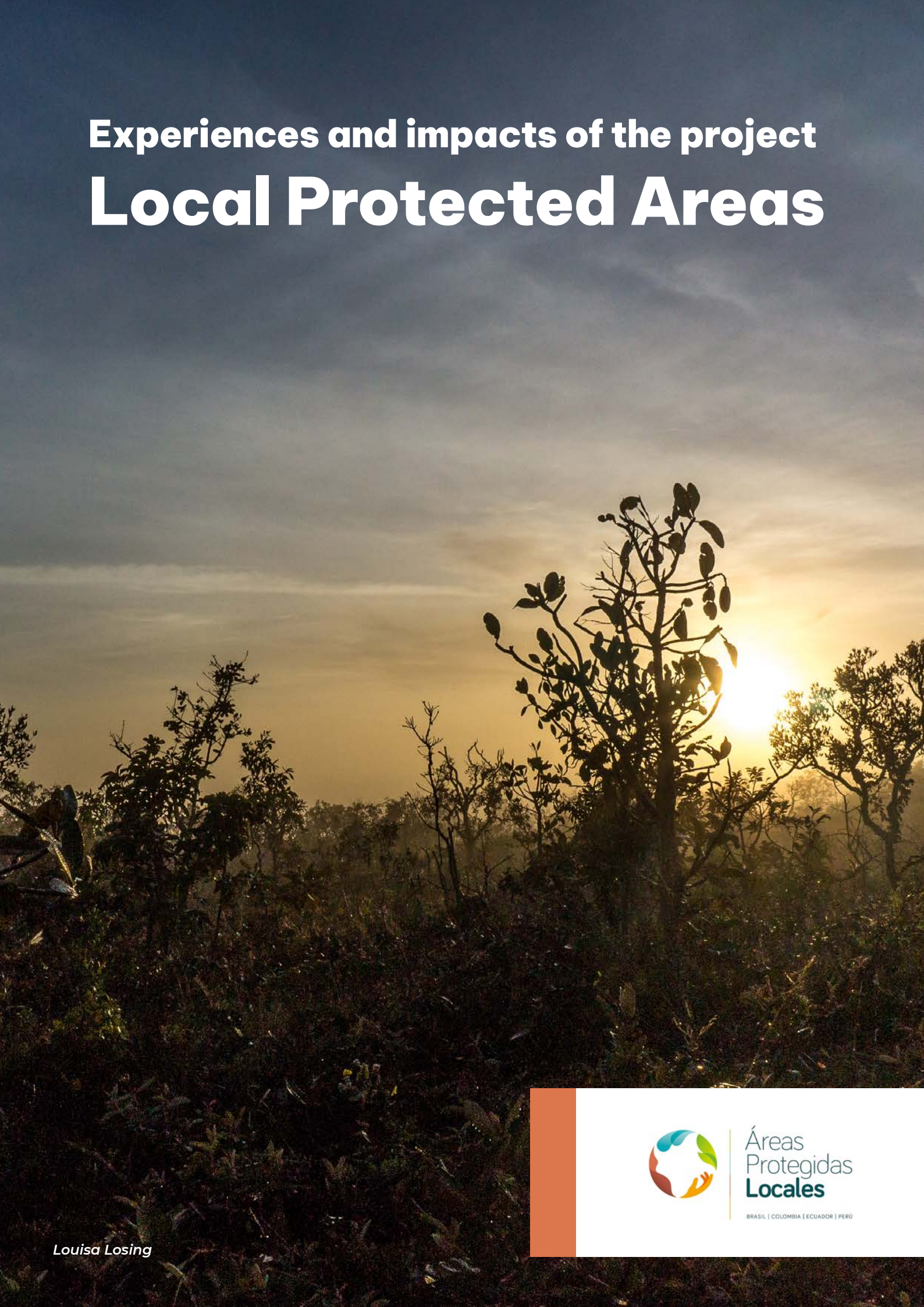


Experiences and impacts of the project

Local Protected Areas



Louisa Losing



Áreas
Protegidas
Locales

BRASIL | COLOMBIA | ECUADOR | PERU

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABEMA Brazilian Association of State Environmental Entities

ANAMMA National Association of Municipalities and the Environment

BMUV Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Protection, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection

CAPLAC Latin American and Caribbean Protected Areas Congress

CB27 Forum of Secretaries of the Environment of Brazilian Capitals

CBD Convention on Biological Diversity

WCPA World Commission on Protected Areas

CNUC National Registry of Conservation Units - Brazil

CONADIB National Commission on Biological Diversity of Peru

CONGOPE Consortium of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador

COP Conference of the Parties

DAP/MMA Department of Protected Areas of the Ministry of the Environment - Brazil

EaD Distance Education

Fedemunicipios Colombian Federation of Municipalities

GAD Autonomous Decentralized Autonomous Government - Ecuador

GIZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability

ICMS Tax on the Circulation of Goods and Services

IIED International Institute for Environment and Development

IKI International Climate Initiative

IPAM Amazon Environmental Research Institute

ISE Integration of Ecosystem Services

MAATE Ministry of the Environment, Water and Ecological Transition of Ecuador

MMA Ministry of the Environment - Brazil

MINAM Ministry of the Environment - Peru

Minambiente Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development - Colombia

OECD Other effective area-based conservation measures

NGO Non-governmental organization

UN United Nations

Resnatur Colombian Network of Civil Society Nature Reserves

SAGE Site-level Assessment of Governance and Equity

SAMGe System for Management Analysis and Monitoring

SINAP National Protected Areas System - Colombia

SNAP National System of Protected Areas - Ecuador

SNUC National System of Nature Conservation Units - Brazil

SPDA Peruvian Society of Environmental Law

TNC The Nature Conservancy

UC Conservation Unit

IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WCMC World Conservation Monitoring Centre

WCPA World Commission on Protected Areas

Marco Schäffer



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Introduction

Local governments have a key role to play in biodiversity conservation. One of the strategies available to them is the creation and management of protected areas and other effective conservation measures. Aiming to strengthen local governments in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru in this task, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH*, Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) from 2016 to 2022 implemented the Regional Project Protected Areas and other area-based conservation measures at local government level (project Local Protected Areas).

This document presents the most representative experiences of the project covering its most relevant implementation processes, results and impacts generated, lessons learned and good practices identified during its execution. The first chapter presents a context on local governments, protected areas and other effective conservation measures, the background to the project and its contribution to global biodiversity conservation goals. The second chapter provides an overview of the project's objectives, organizational structure and approach. Subsequently, the results and impacts of the implementation of the activities in the four countries are highlighted. The next chapter presents the flagship themes that the project contributed to the development of both at the regional level in Latin America and in each of the countries. Finally, reflections and recommendations are made to continue strengthening the role of local governments in the region and to give greater visibility to the benefits of protected areas and other effective local conservation measures.

In its years of implementation, the partners have worked intensively to position protected areas and other effective local conservation measures as territories to be strengthened, as they contribute to the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011-2020, and have relevance for the post-2020 framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Due to the existence of a growing number of conservation initiatives in Latin American countries and other regions of the world that involve diverse management and governance models, the project also shares what was overcome in terms of challenges in the management of the project, which had a team composed of diverse organizations working from different places, and whose actions had peculiarities from country to country, according to each political, economic, ethno-social and environmental context.

The project was implemented by *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH*, German Development Cooperation, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, a global association of local governments dedicated to sustainable development, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a global non-governmental entity composed of civil society organizations as well as governments. In all four countries, the respective ministries of environment were the project's policy partners: the Ministry of Environment (MMA) in Brazil, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Minambiente) in Colombia, the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition (MAATE) in Ecuador and the Ministry of Environment (MINAM) in Peru.

The project was financed by the Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) under the International Climate Initiative (IKI).

¹ En este documento, en general, se utiliza el término “otras medidas efectivas de conservación” para referirse a “otras medidas efectivas de conservación basadas en área (OMECA)”, que es la terminología utilizada en la Meta 11 de Aichi para la Biodiversidad. Fuente: Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica (CDB). Metas de Aichi para la Biodiversidad. Disponible en: <https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>.

Context

Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru belong to a group of 17 countries whose territories contain nearly 70% of the planet's biodiversity and are therefore considered megadiverse. The political will of the four countries to conserve this biodiversity is highlighted by their ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as well as by the creation and management of protected areas and other effective conservation measures. The four countries conserve between 16% and 30% of their terrestrial and marine territories under some form of protection, with national protected areas predominating.

Despite the predominance of national government actions in the creation and management of protected areas, since the 1990s other actors have begun to be recognized and involved in this process, such as regional and local governments, civil society and the private sector, enriching the possibilities for biodiversity conservation.

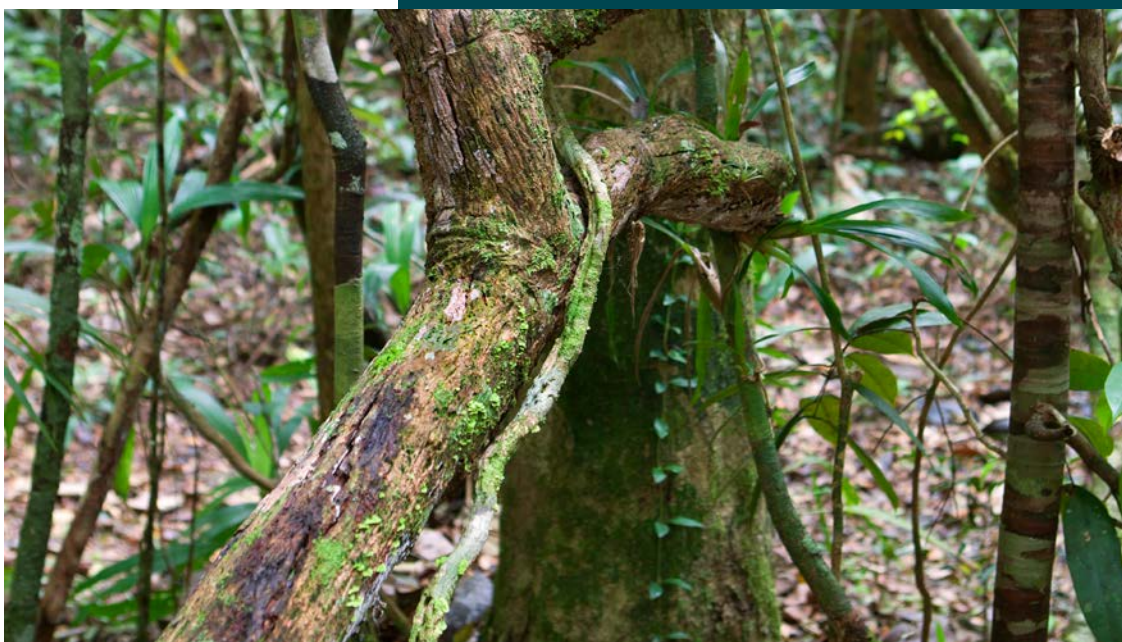
In the years prior to the creation of the project Local Protected Areas, the relevance of local governments and their role in the effective management of local protected areas were little addressed in international and regional discussions. They were even little considered internally in many countries, as they were not directly included in legal and institutional frameworks.

Few actors at the national level responsible for the administration of protected areas, or at the most immediate subnational level, gave local governments the space to participate in decisions on the management of biodiversity and its associated ecosystem services located in the territories under their jurisdiction. One of the explanations for this reality, found in the findings of the first months of project implementation, was that there was a marked gap in the more specialized technical capacities of local government actors regarding this management. As a result, these actors were not invited to specialized technical discussion forums, either in each of their countries or in international forums, either due to lack of contacts or lack of knowledge of the issues to which they could contribute.

On the other hand, despite advances in the consideration and effectiveness for conservation on local protected areas, they still did not receive the necessary legal, environmental, economic and social recognition. Among the main reasons for this were the lack of capacity and limited financial resources, as well as the fact that many of the existing experiences were not widely known. Initiatives were rarely integrated into territorial development planning processes and strategies. In addition, there was a lack of understanding and knowledge about the importance of protected areas and other effective conservation measures for sustainable local development.

As part of integrated systems, protected areas and other effective conservation measures created and managed by local governments contribute to safeguarding water resources, endangered species and ecosystems, sacred sites and spaces for tourism, in addition to guaranteeing the preservation of natural resources used by local populations and providing the ecosystem services necessary to ensure a good quality of life for the inhabitants. They also contribute to ecological connectivity and thus strengthen the capacity of ecosystems to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change, increasing their resilience and reducing their vulnerability.

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² Source: WorldAtlas. The World's 17 Megadiverse Countries. Available at: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/ecologically-megadiverse-countries-of-the-world.html>

How did the project start?

The project Local Protected Areas is based on all the elements mentioned above. The project started by capitalizing on the internal discussions in the countries about the role of local governments and the way in which they participate in the management of protected areas or conservation-related issues, mainly carried out in national forums.

To mention a few examples: in Peru, a proposal for general guidelines for the management of municipal conservation areas had been generated in 2006. In Ecuador, local governments were officially included in the National System of Protected Areas (SNAP) in 2007 and ratified in the 2008 Constitution (article 405). In Colombia, discussions on conservation strategies created and managed by local governments had been ongoing since 2000. The sum of these internal discussions began to echo among the countries of the region and the topic was taken in 2007 to the II Latin American Congress of National Parks and other Protected Areas, in Bariloche (Argentina). At international level, discussions on local conservation also had

their own event for the first time in 2008 at CBD COP 9 in Bonn (Germany) and at IUCN World Conservation Congress in Barcelona (Spain).

Local governments are the most decentralized political and administrative institutions in each country, i.e., they constitute the smallest sphere of government. In Brazil and Colombia, they are called *municipios*; in Ecuador, *provincias*, *municipios*, and *parish councils*; and in Peru, *municipalities*.

Below is a timeline since 2004 with the motions and working papers on local governments approved or presented at international events. And also presented in the timeline are the actions that were promoted by different actors of international cooperation, governmental and civil society organizations interested in promoting the effective and equitable management of conservation areas at the local level. All these activities contributed to consolidate the idea of formulating the project Local Protected Areas.

Motions and work documents in international events

2004 ●

World Nature Congress of IUCN in Thailand.
Request to the IUCN Council to study and communicate to members methods in which they could better connect local and regional government managers. Congress resolution.

2008 ●

World Nature Congress of IUCN in Barcelona.
Resolution 4.037, with a calling to recognition of the expansion and consolidation of municipal conservation areas.

2010 ●

COP CDB Nagoya.
"Biodiversity action plan for subnational governments, cities and other local authorities" of the agreement.

2011 ●

Commitment of other actors, large groups and subnational authorities, referencing subnational governments, cities and other local authorities for biodiversity.

2012 ●

World Nature Congress in Jeju.
Resolution to the States and government agencies to strengthen the development of municipal protected areas to achieve the Goal 11.

COP CDB India.
Landscape of Biodiversity in Cities -
Actions and Public Policies.

2016 ●

IUCN World Nature Congress in Hawaii.
Motion 028. Incorporation of urban dimensions.

Actions promoted by Project partners

● 2007

Workshop "Analysis of local implementation of conservation areas", carried out during the II Latinamerica Congress of National Parks and Others Protected Areas (Bariloche, Argentina)

● 2008

Seminar "Completing National Systems of protected areas: Municipal Conservation Areas in Latin America", held during COP 9/CDB (Bonn, Germany).

● 2009

Publication "Municipal Conservation Areas: an opportunity to conservation of biodiversity and local development".

Figure 1. Timeline of events and motions related to the recognition of local governments at international level.

Contributions to global biodiversity conservation goals

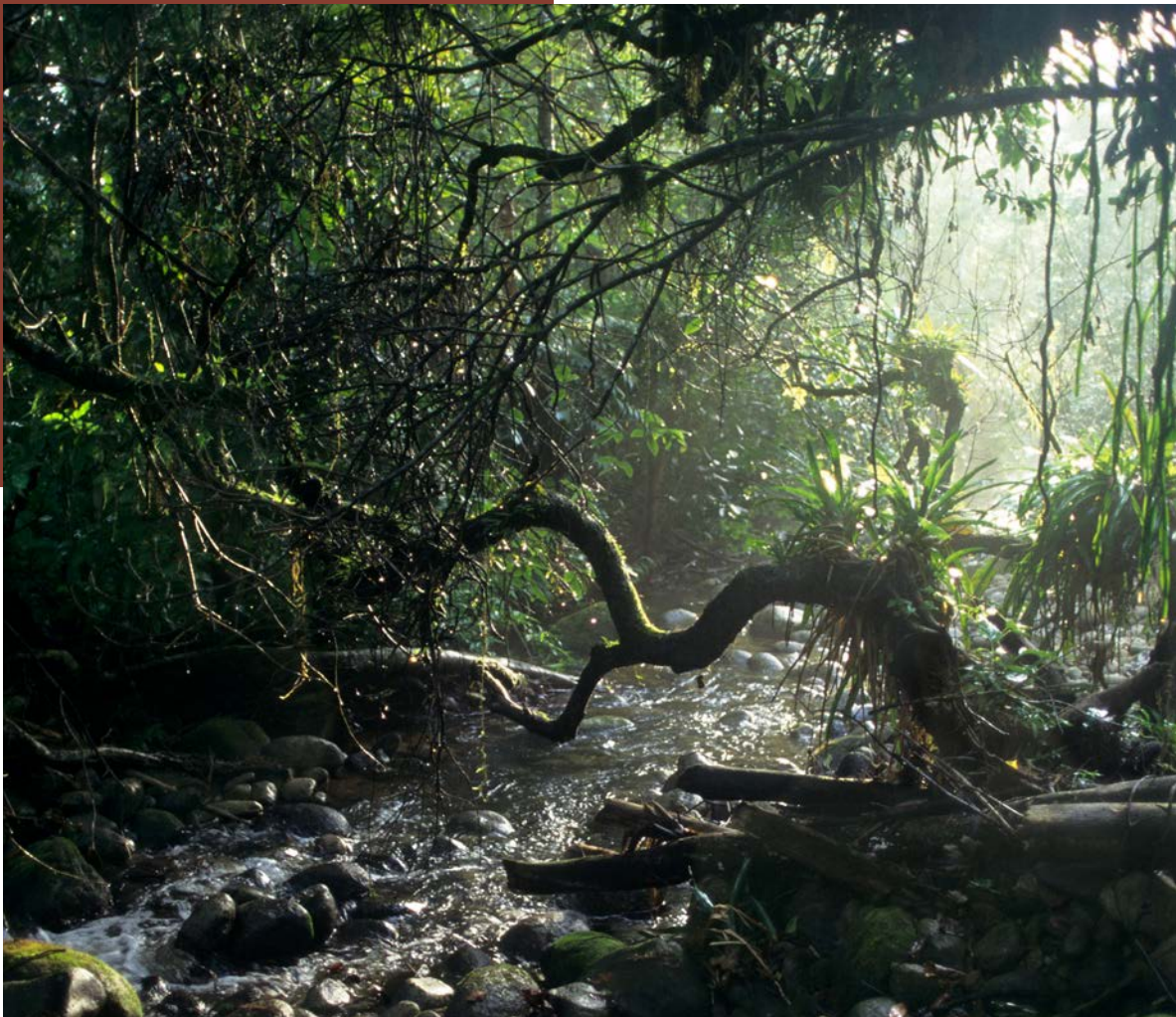
Protected areas and other effective local conservation measures contributed fundamentally to the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and the conservation targets set at national level in four countries where the project was implemented.

Protected areas have been defined as a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated, and managed through legal or other effective means to achieve the long-term conservation of nature, its ecosystem services and associated cultural values (Dudley, 2008). The designation of local protected areas is given to those areas created, managed and operated by local governments (GTZ, 2010).

On the other hand, the other effective conservation measures have been approached as a geographically defined area that is not recognized as a protected area, which is governed and managed in a manner that achieves positive and sustained long-term outcomes for on-site biodiversity conservation, associated ecosystem functions and services; and, when appropriate, cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic, and other locally relevant values (CBD, 2018).

In addition to providing important ecosystem services, these areas contribute to ecological connectivity and representativeness, integrate mosaics, promote greater participation of diverse stakeholders in environmental governance, and increase conservation effectiveness and equity, among others. Local governments, through the management of protected areas and other conservation measures, are crucial partners in the post-2020 biodiversity framework of the CBD and the proposed target “30x30”¹.

The process for developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework builds on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and sets out 21 ambitious targets to achieve a transformation in society's relationship with biodiversity and ensure that by 2030 the shared vision of living in harmony with nature becomes a reality. The objective of the framework proposes, among others, to encourage all stakeholders in biodiversity management, especially including local governments.



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¹ This is a proposal discussed within the framework of the United Nations (UN) for the post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework. The proposal foresees converting 30% of the planet into protected areas by 2030.

The project and its approach

In all four countries, at the beginning of the project in 2016, there were already protected areas or other conservation initiatives created and managed by local governments, but this contribution was not very visible and relatively few local governments were committed to protecting biodiversity.

Based on this context, the overall objective of the project was to **strengthen the conditions for local governments to conserve biodiversity through effective and equitable management of protected areas and other local conservation measures in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.**

To achieve this objective, the project was organized into three work packages as shown below:

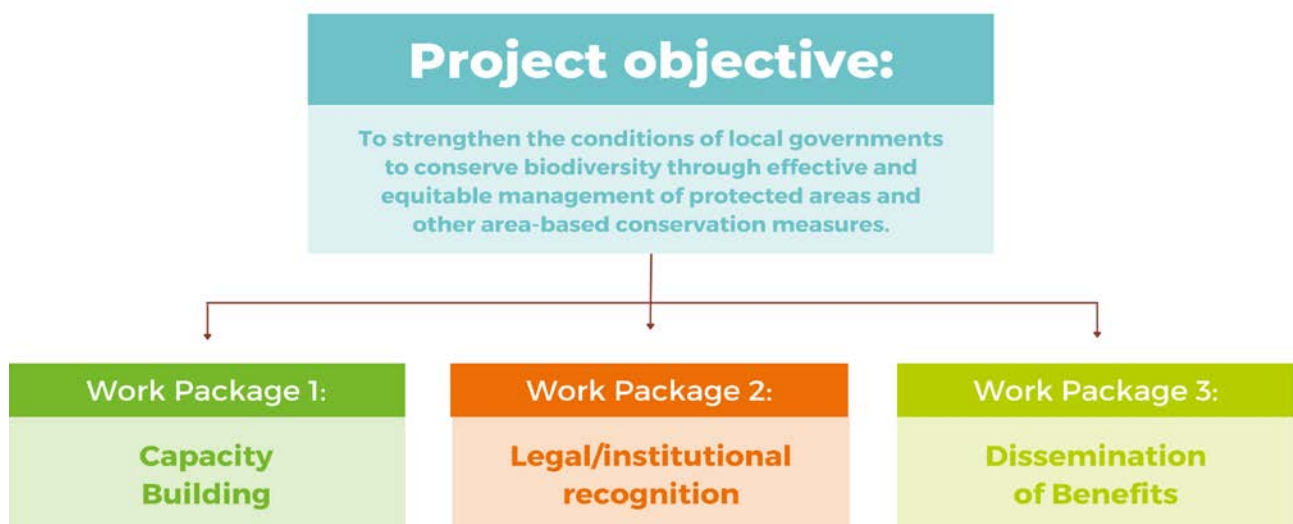


Figure 2. Project Local Protected Areas Structure

Although local protected areas are often smaller than subnational or national ones, the more local governments are involved in biodiversity conservation, the more people will participate and benefit from it, and the more mutually

reinforcing effects can be expected. One of the intended impacts of the project was to increase the number of local governments managing protected areas and other conservation measures, rather than to increase the area protected. Therefore, as an implementation strategy, the project built primarily on existing experiences, rather than funding pilot initiatives, working closely with local governments through their associations and networks.

The project supported initiatives to strengthen the capacities, governance and role of local governments in the institutional and legal framework of the four countries, so that these governments would have more capacities and tools to effectively manage protected areas and other effective local conservation measures. In addition, the accumulated knowledge on the benefits and challenges of creating and managing these areas was disseminated at the local, subnational, national, and international levels. Thus, the work carried out generated results and impacts from local, national, and regional levels for each of the proposed work packages.

Organizational structure of the project

For the implementation of the project, a strategic partnership was established among GIZ, IUCN, and ICLEI: three organizations working on different issues in South America, with particular and complementary characteristics in relation to the management of the areas and the scope of the project. This organizational structure was one of the project's success factors in achieving relevant impacts.

Implementing partners

GIZ², as a federal enterprise, supports the government of the Federal Republic of Germany in implementing its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. This cooperation focuses on climate change mitigation and adaptation and integrated biodiversity management. Active in all four project countries, GIZ played a central role in leading the project and liaising with political partners at the national level.

² <https://www.giz.de/en/html/index.html>

UICN³ is a global non-profit organization that develops actions aimed at influencing societies to conserve nature, and is made up of more than 1,400 organizations and some 18,000 scientists and specialists. As it is considered a world reference among people working for conservation, its participation in the project contributed to the recognition of the issue in the region, in the world, and among key stakeholders.

ICLEI⁴ is characterized as a global network of local governments for sustainability, composed of more than 1,750 local and regional governments from over 100 countries, which acts in the mobilization of local governments to achieve the Aichi Targets. Given its proximity and experience with this political and administrative sphere, its participation in the project has enabled dialogue, articulation and exchange among local governments.

In the course of the actions, the partners made available their own capabilities and resources and were able to learn what they could expect from each other and what their specific interests and contributions to the project were. The responsibilities assumed by each partner reflected their technical competencies and organizational characteristics, as detailed in the following figure.

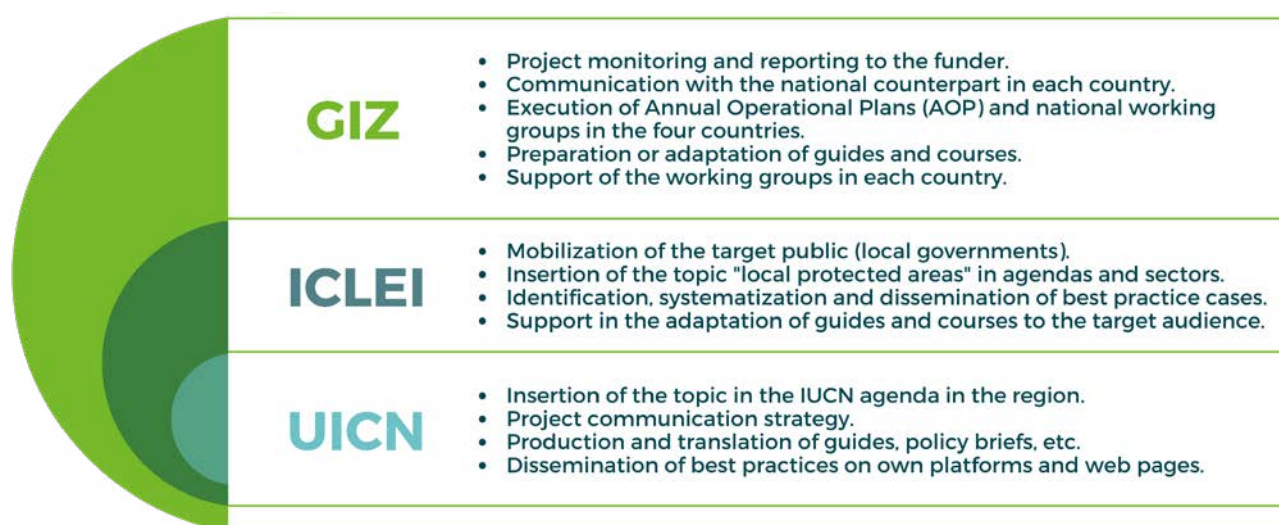


Figure 3. Division of responsibilities according to technical competencies and organizational characteristics.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The overall coordination of the project was carried out by GIZ Brazil. In each of the countries, inter-institutional working groups were formed to accompany and advise on the implementation of the project and to generate discussions and guidance on the different topics. These groups were coordinated by GIZ focal points who supported the execution of activities and ensured fluid communication with the respective ministry of the environment and the implementing partners.

Once a year, the Regional Conferences were held, these were meetings in which representatives of the four countries participated, these groups met in person (2017, 2018, and 2019) in one of the countries and virtually in 2020 and in 2021 to reflect on the issues, discuss progress and decide together on project activities at national, regional and international level.

The participants of the country working groups, in addition to the project's implementing partners were:

BRAZIL

Ministry of the Environment, CB27, and ABEMA (at the beginning of the project, also ANAMMA and ICMBio).

COLOMBIA

Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, National Natural Parks of Colombia, Association of Regional Autonomous and Sustainable Development Corporations (Asocars), Metropolitan Area of the Aburrá Valley (AMVA), Colombian Federation of Municipalities and Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Research Institute.

ECUADOR

Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, Decentralized Autonomous Provincial Government of Pichincha, Decentralized Autonomous Municipal Government of Limón Indanza, Metropolitan District of Quito, Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja and Consortium of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador (CONGOPE).

PERU

Ministry of Environment (MINAM), National Service of Natural Protected Areas (SERNANP), Peruvian Society of Environmental Law (SPDA), Nature and Culture International (NCI), Regional Government of Piura, Eba Mar Project (GIZ), Municipality of Vice and Association for Research and Integral Development (Aider).

Impacts

The agreement among GIZ, ICLEI, and IUCN took into account the complementarity of their characteristics in relation to the scope of the project. **In the case of ICLEI, its capacity for aggregation, articulation and dialogue with the target audience stands out**, as it is well aware of their demands and challenges. In turn, **IUCN's performance made it possible to enhance the impacts of the project through its commissions and its members**, who are recognized specialists in the field. Likewise, **GIZ's experience in training and cooperation with government agencies** had a positive influence on the dialogues at various levels and made it possible to include the issue in the legal and institutional frameworks of each country. This complementarity among the implementing partners provided the project with **good capillarity and visibility**, thus creating a **favorable institutional and political environment** for strengthening protected areas and other conservation measures **in each participating country, also generating impacts on a regional scale**. Nowadays, stakeholders at all levels

(federal, state/provincial, and local) recognize the **technical expertise** of the three partners in the field.

Since these institutions operate in several countries, the project also had an **impact at the international level** by including the issue on the agenda of events parallel to the Conferences of the Parties (COP), within the framework of the CBD, and by promoting the proposal to establish a working group on local protected areas at WCPA, which would increase the visibility of the issue at a global and strategic scale, in addition to the chapters on local protected areas and other effective conservation measures in the region in the **Protected Planet** report of 2020⁵.

While ICLEI and IUCN made available local best practices and other information on **knowledge management platforms** with open access to the public, the two partners also assumed the role of collaborating with the sustainability of the results generated by the project, which go beyond its implementation period.

⁵ Link to the Protected Planet Latin America and the Caribbean report <https://redparques.com/modules/ecom/documentos/publicacion/INFORME-2020-final.pdf>

ACCESS TO PLATFORMS

ICLEI's website has a specific section on local protected areas, available [at this link](#).

IUCN platform focused on the topic in South America, which can be accessed [here](#).

The implementation of the project through three institutions, each with different visions and areas of specialization, but which together managed to mobilize progress on the issue in Latin America, proved to be a success factor.

The working groups provided guidelines that facilitated the joint implementation of project

activities in each country. These spaces among different actors allowed the strengthening of capacities, the creation of bonds of trust, the exchange of knowledge, the development of new skills and the recognition of each member's expertise to contribute to the effective and equitable management of protected areas and other effective conservation measures.

Regional approach to the project

The four implementing countries of the project share similar characteristics as they are countries with high biological diversity, globally important strongholds of terrestrial and marine biodiversity. They have all ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and are influential parties in the negotiations and decision-making in these instances. Thus, the four countries assumed political commitments to international goals and initiatives, including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as a general framework, and specifically Aichi Target 11 and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). Within the UNFCCC, all parties have also committed to climate change mitigation and adaptation targets.

The project was conceived and implemented in these four countries because, having common characteristics, it was possible to obtain greater added value at the local, regional, and international levels through the exchange of experiences and knowledge. Due to the spaces for dialogue that were offered, the advances in conceptual, normative and methodological developments were achieved more quickly and effectively, being in many cases adapted to the realities of each country. However, one of the challenges of the project was to incorporate some of these issues in the country's institutions, such as the possibility for local governments to declare protected areas in Colombia and Peru.

Many of the activities were geared to the specific needs of each country and the project also provided opportunities for other countries to take ownership of the progress made and lessons learned in the four countries. As in the case of several countries in the region, in the multiple exchanges that took place to train and discuss other effective conservation measures, specifically with Costa Rica, an on-site exchange was generated for the application of criteria and contributions to the national dialogues.

The project created opportunities for regional dialogue to share lessons learned and best practices on protected area management and other effective conservation measures. Financial sustainability was one of the topics discussed in various spaces among the countries to learn about mechanisms and incentives that have been used to finance conservation actions in the areas.

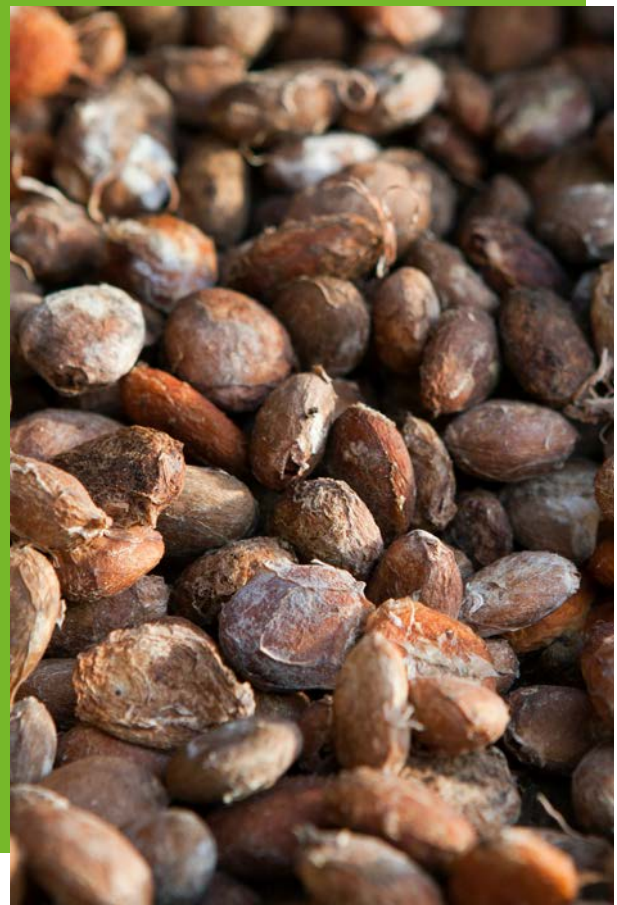
The exchange among ministries on legal and institutional frameworks was a central aspect of project implementation, highlighting their importance and demonstrating that a given experience in one country can serve as a reference for other countries. This is the case of the guidelines that were developed to create local protected areas, the articulation among institutions to strengthen multiplier networks and the multilevel approach that brought national and local governments together to discuss the management of the areas and their needs.

With respect to strengthening the role of local governments in national legal and institutional frameworks, it was necessary to take into account that the territorial structuring and the degree of centralization/decentralization of political administration is different in each country, which directly affects the degree of autonomy and integration of these governments in certain public policies. For this reason, the approach used by the project in relation to legal and institutional frameworks focused on the national level, considering the environmental and territorial legislation of each country, always taking into account the global biodiversity framework.

A challenge in institutional strengthening was the frequent change of environment ministers and/or part of their teams outside of election seasons. Each change entailed a new effort of rapprochement and dialogue on priority actions, which sometimes led to reconsideration of what was important for the respective ministry in the project, with consequent changes in the schedule of planned actions.

Most of the training took place through face-to-face and virtual courses and events such as exchanges, webinars and national, regional and international workshops, as well as manuals or guides whose content was based on the identification of the specific demands of each country, according to their respective political, economic and cultural contexts. As a result, national, subnational and local stakeholders had the opportunity to participate in these spaces and strengthen their capacities. More than 8,000 people participated

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in the different trainings, of which almost 5,000 graduated with a certificate, with a 57% participation of women.

The approach chosen by the project allowed different departments of the ministries of the environment and the institutions and organizations that participated in the project to implement specific activities to strengthen protected areas and other local conservation measures in their territories and, at the same time, to exchange knowledge and experiences among themselves and achieve visibility of both the areas and their management in Latin America and the world.

Impacts

The fact that the project focused on protected areas and other effective conservation measures at the local level through a regional approach considering opportunities, challenges, and common issues in the four countries led to an **increase in the type and number of actors** at the national/state/local level **mobilized around a common agenda**. Thus, there was an **increase in the visibility and positioning of the issue** in Latin America, which had its key point in the **Lima Declaration, in the III CAPLAC** and with the proposal for the creation of a working group on local protected areas in the **WCPA** of the IUCN and in the international conferences on biodiversity held within the framework of the CBD.

By recognizing **local protected areas and OECMs in the respective national systems**, the project has directly contributed to the **achievement of Aichi Target 11**, expanding the possible pathways for governments to meet or even exceed it. In countries such as Colombia and Ecuador, the team was able to mobilize local governments and their partners to promote national proposals for the new post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework. In addition, the project contributed to the preparation of two chapters (local protected areas and OECMs) of the **Protected Planet report**⁶ in order to publicize the efforts of local governments to achieve conservation goals.

All these actions served to convey to many people in the four countries and other Latin American countries the importance of local protected areas, as well as the role of local governments in their creation and management.

Louisa Losing



Municipalities and multilevel approach

From the outset, the project sought the scalability of actions to maximize impacts on the region as a whole. The project invested in training offers through multiplier networks and in the dissemination of existing experiences. This structure made it possible to reach representatives of local and subnational governments at the state/province/district level, as well as the management and technical staff of the ministries of the environment in the four countries where the activities took place.

Impacts

In the countries, relations were strengthened with some municipalities or local/regional governments. Some examples are:

In **Ecuador**, the project directly supported the Decentralized Autonomous Governments of Limón Indanza and the Metropolitan District of Quito to make the incorporation of local protected areas into the Decentralized Autonomous Government Subsystem of the National System of Protected Areas (SNAP) feasible by updating their geographic boundaries and technical documents. Also jointly with GAD Pichincha, the project supported the creation and declaration of the Chocó Andino de Pichincha Biosphere Reserve and, in a subsequent step, the validation and improvement of its management model, as required by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

In **Peru**, support was provided to the provincial government of Ayabaca, Piura, to identify and systematize the experiences of other local conservation measures. The results were presented at the National Forum on Natural Protected Areas, which allowed participants to exchange information on initiatives in other countries in the region. More recently, the project supported the preparation of the rationale and technical dossier for the creation of the Balcones Environmental Conservation Area (ACA), managed by the municipality of the district of La Brea (Negritos).

In **Colombia**, support was provided to five municipalities through the cooperation cycle of the southern Aburrá Valley roundtable and to the municipality of Belén de los Andaquíes in the application of OECM criteria, the SAGE methodology and application of the green list to the Andakí Municipal Natural Park.

In **Brasil**, the Program for the Acceleration of Protected Areas aims to promote an entrepreneurial and innovative look at the administration of municipal and state protected areas, based on intense learning about management tools and financial sustainability. Furthermore, it aims to strengthen the management of these protected areas and to expand their capacity for biodiversity conservation. In this way, the program aims to boost the participating Protected Areas so as to make them levers of sustainable local development of their territories, in an equitable and people-centered way, contributing to green economic recovery and job generation within the communities covered.

Through the approach adopted both at the regional and local government levels, it was possible to articulate a series of different actors (local, subnational, national, international) and of different nature (governmental bodies, Non-Governmental Organizations - NGOs, research centers, international cooperation agencies).

This multilevel approach was successful due to the following elements:



Some aspects that were key in the approach with municipalities and that leave some reflections are:

- Municipal elections, which are held every four years (every five years in Peru), are a challenge when working with a local government. With the possible change of management, the degree of priority given to the issue of biodiversity

conservation may also change. Therefore, collaboration with national associations and local government networks is important as it helps to overcome possible disruptions caused by elections and can generate and promote tools for capacity building of the new representatives.

- The fact that the project did not launch pilot initiatives helped to enhance existing experiences.
- When cooperation was established at the local level, the effect was positive, bringing local actors considerably closer to the project.
- The multilevel approach increased the complexity of the project, given the unequal access to information and the different perspectives of actors at all levels. However, it was precisely this strategy that made it possible for key stakeholders to work together and disseminate new knowledge in a horizontal or bottom-up way, which generated the desired impacts.
- The willingness of national governments to talk about the role of local governments in the management of their protected areas and their contribution to achieving biodiversity conservation objectives is an important precondition for the multilevel approach to work.

A fundamental aspect of the project was the dissemination and diffusion of the role of local governments and protected areas and other conservation measures; with project support and participation, experiences and results were shared at events in each country, at the regional level such as the III Congress of Protected Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean in Lima, Peru in 2019 and at the international level, such as the World Conservation Congress in Marseille, France in 2021. Many local governments from other countries in the region were interested in the results of the project. The last regional conferences (2020 and 2021), held virtually, were an opportunity for further dissemination of the results, approximately 13 countries were connected to these spaces which contributed to the gain of scale.

Results of the project

Increase in the number of local governments whose protected areas and other area-based conservation measures are recognized

Between 2017 and December 2021 the number of local governments whose protected areas and other conservation measures were nationally recognized increased continuously in all four countries. In 2017 there were a total of 222 local governments managing local areas and OECMs in the four countries. This number increased with 175 local governments (78%) to reach 397 local governments in December 2021. The following map (Figure 5) shows the increase in the number per country from 2017 to December 2021.

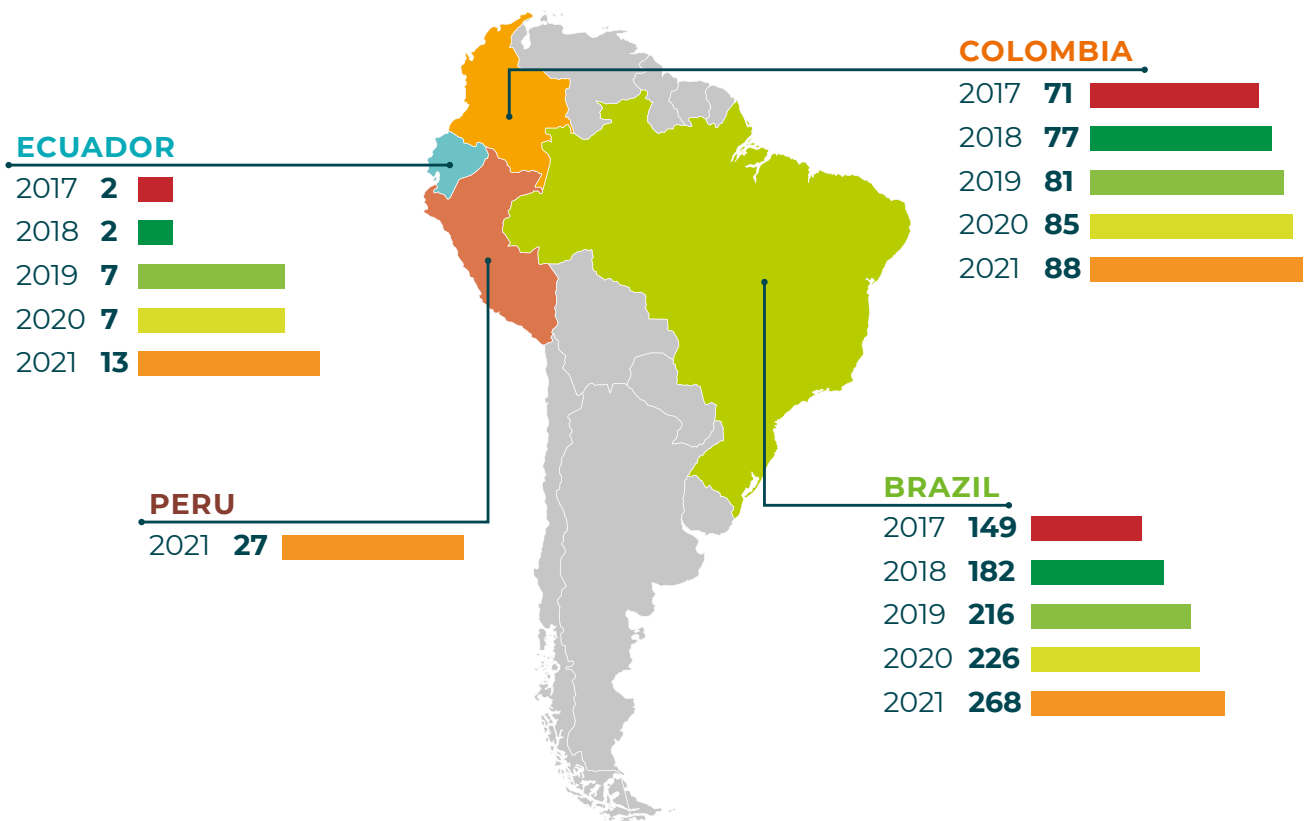


Figure 4. Number of local governments whose protected areas and other area-based conservation measures are recognized from 2017 to 2021.

Impacts

The increase shows the growing importance of local governments for biodiversity conservation through the creation of protected areas and other conservation measures in the four countries.

Strengthening the role of local governments in the institutional and legal framework, by country

The advisory and advocacy results were emblematic for having made it possible to connect the demands of local governments with legal and institutional instruments at national level. The team provided numerous inputs, with important contributions from the national working groups, which led to greater consideration of protected areas and other effective conservation measures in related federal or national legislation, as shown in the figure below.

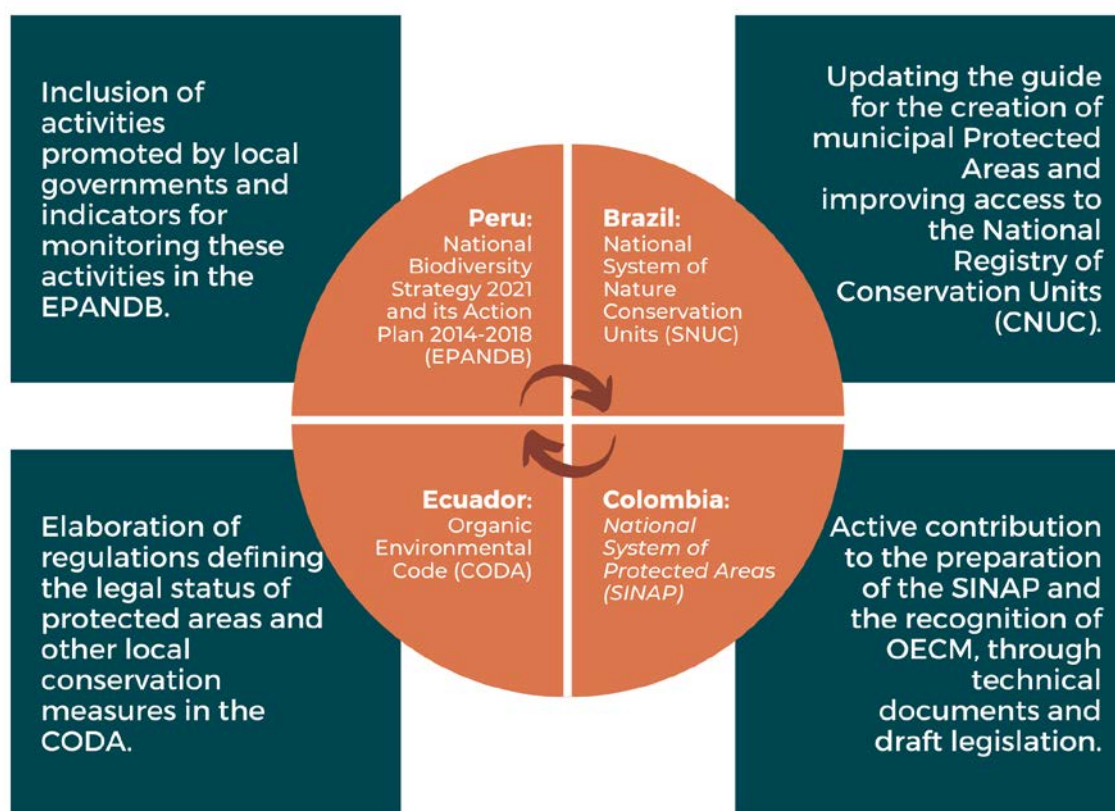


Figure 5. Consideration of local protected areas in the environmental legislation of each country.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

In **Brazil**, SNUC, in effect since 2000, covers protected areas at federal, state, and municipal (local) levels, both public and private. However, many local governments do not know how to register with the CNUC. MMA, for its part, faces difficulties in working systematically with all levels of the registry (federal, state, and municipal), given the existence of more than five thousand municipalities in the country.

Within the scope of the project, a guide prepared by the ministry to assist municipalities in this regard, entitled **[Roadmap for the Creation of Municipal Conservation Units](#)** (available in Portuguese), was reissued, which includes the step-by-step and models needed to create protected areas in this sphere of government.

Through ICLEI, the project also directly assisted 11 municipal management agencies to register with the CNUC. This support highlighted a number of challenges, ranging from dissemination of the SNUC and CNUC to local governments, to organizational restructuring, to adapting to the impacts of changes in the political-electoral environment.

In total, from the beginning of the actions until December 2021, more than 112 Brazilian municipal CUs were registered in the CNUC, corresponding to an increase of 2,325 km² totaling an area of 62,820 km² in 2021. The project supported this process indirectly, giving visibility to the importance of registering municipal CUs in the CNUC and training key actors to promote it. In addition, the project's partner institutions have mapped more than two thousand unregistered local protected areas so the project continues to indirectly contribute to increasing the number of registrations.

In **Ecuador**, SNAP encompasses state, local, private, and community protected areas. In 2017, at the start of the project, only two areas had been registered. By December 2021, six areas from thirteen GADs had been registered in the SNAP, three of which received support from the project. Together, they cover an area of 204 km². The community areas have different governance systems, but have come to be recognized under SNAP. The country's culture of political decentralization/deconcentration has favorable effects on biodiversity conservation.

In **Perú**, the National System of Natural Areas Protected by the State (SINANPE) does not recognize protected areas created by local governments. However, the so-called Regional Conservation Systems (SRC) were introduced, which assign an important role to regional and local governments in the management of local protected areas. Through the project, MINAM has registered 78 initiatives through the Conservation and Management Initiatives platform, of which 27 are locally managed. ([Link](#)).

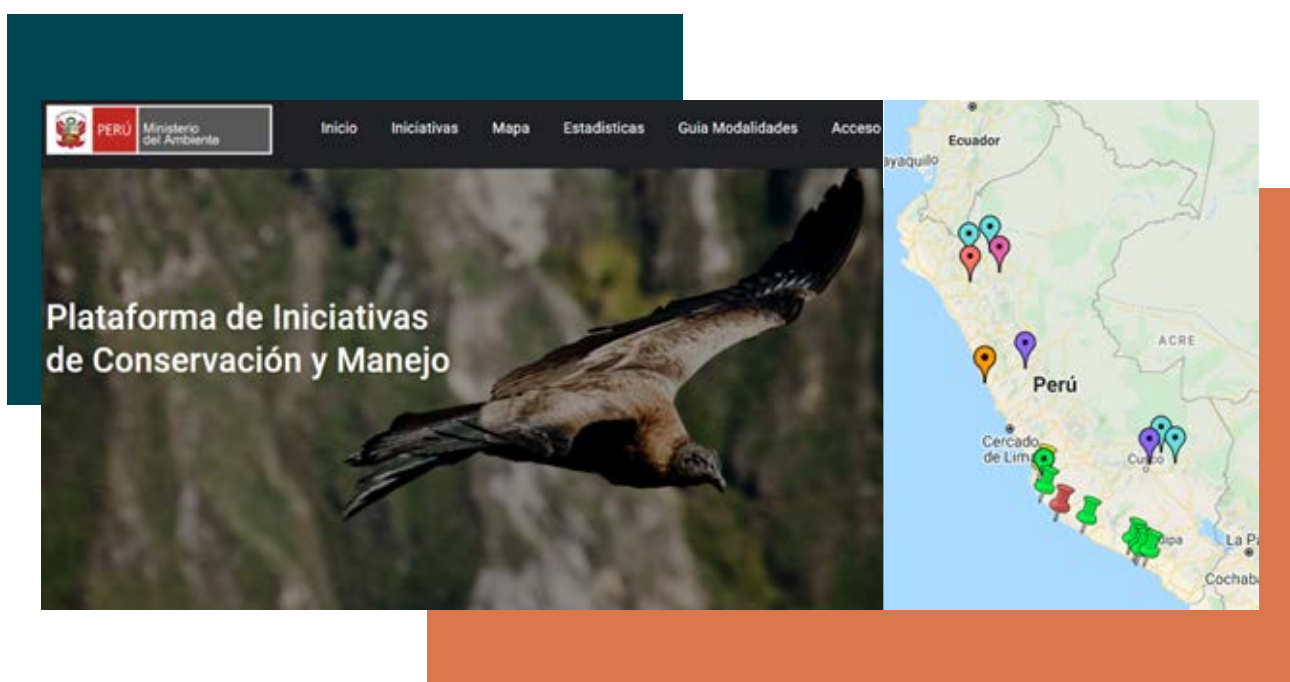


Figure 6. Registration and mapping of local biodiversity conservation initiatives in Peru.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Prior to the mapping, the project created the **[Guide to Biodiversity Conservation Modalities beyond the scope of Natural Protected Areas](#)**, which served as the basis for the registry. The guide considers 20 on-site conservation modalities, including categories of natural resource use that do not have biodiversity conservation as their primary objective, but may contribute to it under certain conditions.

In **Colombia**, SINAP does not include the category of protected areas that are managed and administered by local governments. The project generated a technical proposal on local protected area categories to propose a new policy for the National System of Protected Areas, as well as contributions to consolidate information on the country's municipal protected area systems and other effective area-based conservation measures.

Impacts

Giving visibility to protected areas and other local conservation measures **fills an important gap**: their inclusion in national systems, through mapping or registration, has the effect of recognizing them at all levels of government, **allowing local actors to access the benefits they provide** and reinforcing their articulation. This visibility also contributes directly to the **recognition of the role of local governments in legal or institutional frameworks** at the national level and, indirectly, to the improvement of local government conditions for biodiversity conservation. It also **contributes to national reporting on the achievement of global biodiversity targets, including Aichi Target 11.**

The challenges in accessing local governments are great.

The articulation and joint work with national associations of local governments or other local government entities contributed positively to the necessary communication and outreach to local government representatives. In this process, it was important to incorporate the perception of environmental authorities, which is broader, and this was reflected in the implementation of public policies for protected areas and other effective local conservation measures.

All these actions contributed to the consideration of inventories of protected areas and OECMs in the countries and it is proposed that the compilation of this information be a topic to work on in the coming years.

Marco Schäffer



Strengthening of multiplier networks and institutions

In order for the project to scale up and become more sustainable, a strategy of partnerships with entities that could multiply content and materials was adopted. At the beginning of the project, the spectrum of potential partnerships was broad, including government agencies at all levels and academic and civil society organizations, as well as some private sector actors. Over the years, partnerships were consolidated, but in no country was there significant private sector participation.

Based on this scenario in each country, the project strengthened different networks and institutions to become multiplier structures that can regularly offer technical assistance to local governments in protected area management and other effective conservation measures. The multiplier networks are institutions that work with local governments or are associations of municipalities. A good part of the project's actions were oriented towards working with these networks to become ambassadors in the dissemination of the project's key themes in their respective countries (including local and subnational governments, and also at international level).

Impacts

Below are some of the multiplier networks that were strengthened by country and other organizations and institutions involved in the implementation of the project, see figure 7:

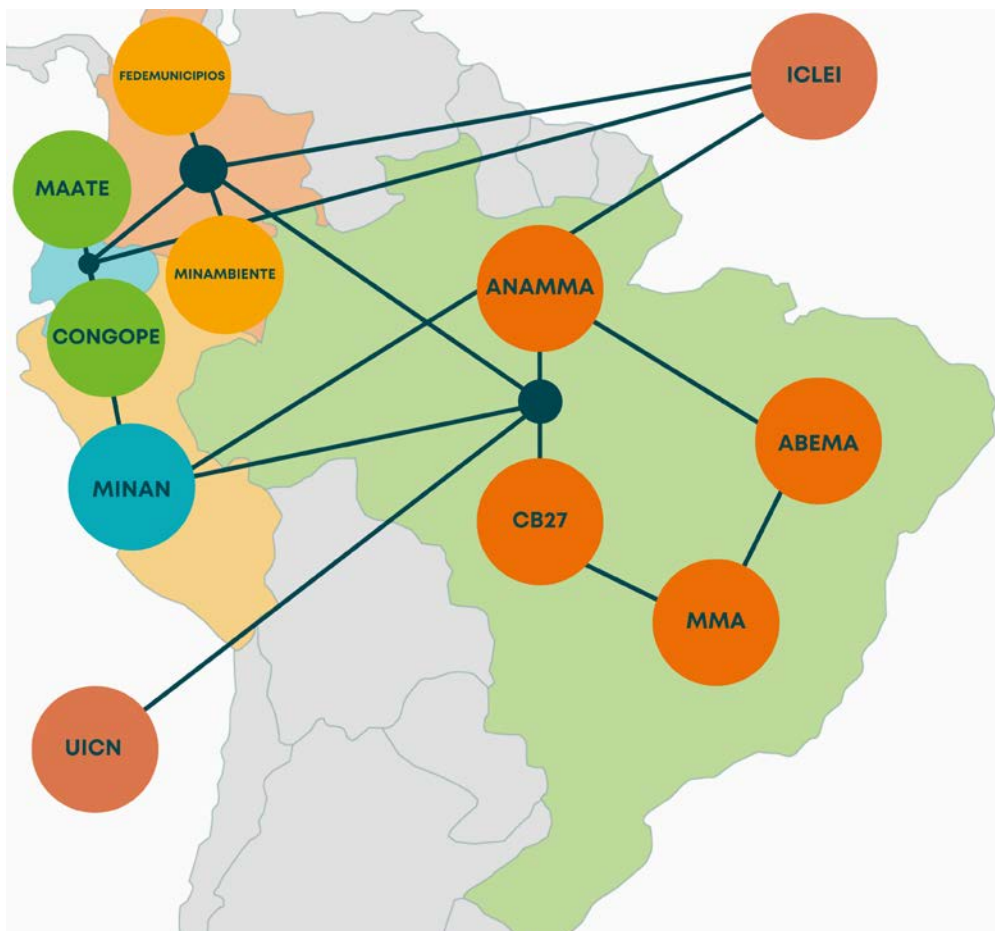


Figure 7. Multiplier networks strengthened within the framework of the Project.

In **Brazil**, the multiplier network is ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability). Efforts were also made to coordinate and work jointly with the National Association of Municipal Environmental Organizations (ANAMMA) and the Brazilian Association of State Environmental Entities (ABEMA). Through ICLEI's interlocution, the project approached the Forum of Environmental Secretaries of Brazilian Capitals - CB27, which broadened the scope of intervention. All these networks participated in the national working group, which facilitated their alignment. There were also specific partnerships with

NGOs, such as the Instituto de Pesquisa Ambiental da Amazônia (IPAM), the SOS Mata Atlântica Foundation and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and with the Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade (ICMBio).

- In **Colombia**, the multiplier network is the Colombian Federation of Municipalities (Fedemunicípios) with which there was a close relationship. In addition to the organizations in the working group, there was collaboration with the Asociación Red Colombiana de Reservas Naturales de la Sociedad Civil (Resnatur), which facilitated interaction with local governments and organized civil society. In addition to alliances with research institutions, such as the Humboldt Institute, or NGOs, such as Fundación Natura, partnerships were key to advancing issues such as equity and other effective local conservation measures. Through the Escuela Superior de Administración Pública (ESAP), the project significantly increased the scope of training.
- In **Ecuador**, the alliances signed with some local governments and the GADs were essential, especially with the Consortium of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador (CONGOPE), which is the multiplier network for the country. Interaction with other German technical and financial cooperation projects also provided good synergies. With academia, NGOs (Conservation International, Conservation and Nature International) there is even a memorandum of understanding.
- In **Peru**, the multiplier institution is MINAM. Several NGOs have assumed the role played in other countries by national associations of local governments. These include Naturaleza y Cultura Internacional (NCI), Asociación para la Investigación y Desarrollo Integral (AIDER) and Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental (SPDA). These organizations were part of the project's working group. The direct relationship with regional and local governments took place mainly during the training sessions. Collaboration with the National Forestry and Wildlife Service (SERFOR) was also very close.

One of the challenges to be taken into account is that municipalities are not recognized as multipliers; it is possible to work on the involvement and training of municipalities so that they can also assume this role.

At the regional level, both ICLEI and IUCN have acted as multiplier networks and have offered various exchanges of experiences and training on cross-cutting issues related to the management of protected and conserved areas. To strengthen itself as a multiplier structure and offer more specialized technical assistance, ICLEI created the Local Protected Areas Thematic Sub-Network in June 2020. The initiative is open to subnational governments committed to and/or interested in biodiversity issues, with a focus on local protected areas and other effective conservation measures. It also provides tools to its members to analyze the management of protected areas, among other issues. And IUCN has proposed the creation of a working group on local protected areas within WCPA to discuss issues of interest and challenges in the region.

Strengthening and Development of Local Capacities

Throughout its implementation, the project strengthened capacities, which was the focus of its first work package. Considering the regional dimension of its implementation, with a total of 8,726 municipalities in the four participating countries, it was necessary to find a strategy that could achieve good representativeness and also ensure the participation of a large part of the local government representatives and gain scale.

As a result of the project's capacity building efforts, **by the beginning of 2022 the project had trained 4846 people and held 27 exchange events** on topics related to municipal management of protected areas and other area-based conservation measures. **Thirty-five knowledge products were produced, including manuals, guides and primers.**

Capacity Development

Capacity building is a process by which individuals, organizations and societies as a whole release, strengthen, create, adapt, and maintain capabilities over time, continually realigning them in response to conditions as they change.

Source: GIZ. Supporting Capacity Development: A Guiding Framework for Practitioners. Available at: <https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2018-en-orientierungsrahmen-capacity-development.pdf>

From the beginning of the capacity building application, studies were carried out to identify the demands and needs of stakeholders and to build a baseline for action in the four countries. As a result, it was found that each country was at a different stage in terms of the creation and management of local protected areas and other effective conservation measures. The project then began to work with intervention focuses by country, although always linked to the defined objective and indicators. In the conceptual framework for capacity building that was subsequently developed, the measures were linked to the focal points identified for each context.

EXAMPLE - COLOMBIA

Colombia's Capacity Development Plan details the steps followed from the initial diagnosis to its construction, using as a methodological reference the GIZ management model called Capacity Works. According to this model, capacity development operates in four dimensions ("individual", "organization", "networks and cooperation" and "legal-political conditions"), which must be conceived as an integral process and encompass a set of individual and collective competencies.

The main target audience was identified as representatives of local governments and other organizations or institutions responsible for the management of protected areas and other effective local conservation measures: managers and technicians of the environmental secretariats of municipalities or equivalent agencies at the provincial or district level.

The main resources used for capacity building were:

I

networks and multiplier structures

II

online or face-to-face training modules on relevant topics related to the management of protected areas and other local conservation measures

III

exchanges to share experiences and lessons learned among local governments to promote mutual learning

To increase the effectiveness of the proposed strategy, wherever possible, priority was given to taking advantage of the structures, tools and training materials made available by the partners and institutions of the working groups. Throughout the project, existing courses developed by other entities on environmental issues for municipalities were promoted and new ones were developed. From the beginning, the project relied on virtual training.

Technical issues related to virtual platforms were also taken into account and took some time to understand and resolve. In several countries, staff turnover and changes in the orientation of ministries had an impact on the definition of the topics of the training courses to be offered, which in some cases delayed their formulation and implementation.

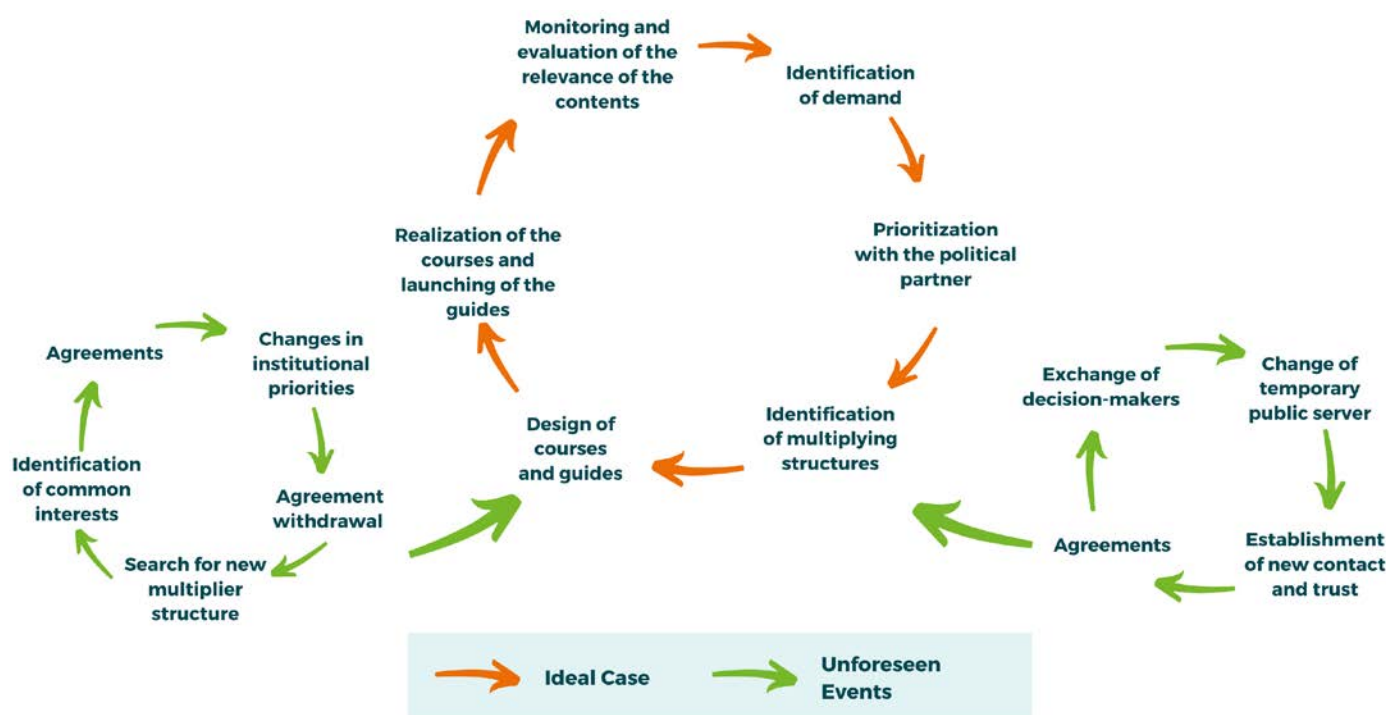


Figure 8. Training course development and delivery process: planning and contingencies.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Courses adapted or developed by the project

REGIONAL:

Integration of ecosystem services (ISE) in **land management with a focus on protected areas and other local conservation measures.**

Objective: to promote understanding, among local protected area managers and technicians, of what ecosystem services are provided by conservation areas at the local level, who they benefit, how to integrate them into planning and land use processes and how to communicate these benefits to society (more details later in this section).

BRAZIL:

Application of the Management Analysis and Monitoring System (**SAMGe**)

Objective: to disseminate SAMGe and provide guidance on how to correctly fill in the tool, in addition to showing the importance of the analysis of the results and planning of protected areas, in order to support the improvement of their management processes and conservation results. SAMGe is the official tool for the analysis and monitoring of federal protected areas management and is gradually being applied at the state and municipal levels as well, to include the entire SNUC.

COLOMBIA:

1. [Tools for biodiversity conservation in Colombia's municipalities](#)

Objective: to raise awareness and disseminate some tools for the management of local protected areas to representatives of municipal governments.

2. Biodiversity conservation at the municipal level: economic, financial and land management tools

Objective: to strengthen participants' capacities in the identification and selection of economic, financial and land management instruments for their application in biodiversity conservation actions.

Link to the [courses](#) on the Fedemunicipios website.

ECUADOR:

Training in protected areas and other local conservation measures

Objective: strengthen the knowledge of local provincial and municipal governments considering five learning areas

- 1) Environmental legislation and regulations;
- 2) Management of protected areas and other local conservation measures;
- 3) Financial sustainability mechanisms;
- 4) Integration of ecosystem services;
- 5) Strategic communication.

PERU:

Managing the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity with emphasis on ecosystems and species ([Link](#))

Objective: promote the understanding and application of approaches for the sustainable management of biodiversity, strengthening the capacities of regional and local government officials.

Training actions also included exchanges, especially those focused on other effective local conservation measures (see section on OECM). In addition, the project has generated a series of knowledge products, such as books, manuals and primers, aimed at expanding the existing information base for the consolidation and dissemination of concepts and facilitating processes leading to the creation and effective management of protected areas and other local conservation measures.

Access to knowledge products

The roadmaps, guides, manuals, and brochures produced with the support of the project are available [here](#) (ICLEI), [here](#) (IUCN), and [here](#) (GIZ).

Course on Integration of Ecosystem Services (ISE) in land management with a focus on protected areas and other local conservation measures

By consensus, it was decided to disseminate the integration of the value of ecosystem services in the planning, management and strategic communication processes of protected areas and other effective local conservation measures. Therefore, a virtual course on the subject was developed in the four countries. For managers, decision-makers, development planners and practitioners, understanding this issue can guide policies or other measures to help maintain these services.

Ecosystem services are characterized as services provided by ecosystems that benefit people (or simply as “nature’s benefits”). They are classified as:

- Provisioning services (food, raw materials, water, medicinal resources, etc.).
- Regulating services (pollination, control of extreme events, carbon sequestration and storage, wastewater treatment, etc.).
- Cultural services (recreational spaces, aesthetic appreciation and inspiration for art and design, benefits for the maintenance of people’s mental and physical health, etc.).
- Support services (support or habitats for species, maintenance of genetic diversity).

The e-learning course on Integration of Ecosystem Services, corresponding to the so-called ISE approach, was the result of the adaptation of another pre-existing course, developed and carried out by the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH*, the *Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ)* and the *Conservation Strategy Fund (CSF)*, within the scope of the global ValuES project, in more than 16 countries.

The initial adaptation of the course was done in Brazil and comprised the following steps:

I

Along with DAP/MMA, the concept and technical content were prepared, which served as the basis for the development of the course in virtual format.

II

The material was contextualized with a selection of local cases referring to actions carried out to apply the ISE approach in planning processes.

III

A company with a multidisciplinary team with experience in the development of digital content and the management of Virtual Learning Environments (EVA) was hired. In total, materials corresponding to approximately 35 hours of class were produced.

Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia adapted the Brazilian course, making the necessary adjustments to their contexts. This process took longer than expected due to the challenge of identifying concrete cases that could serve as examples in each country. The cases presented were based on real examples and were complemented with additional elements to demonstrate how the steps of the ISE approach are applied to a local protected area and its respective ecosystem services.

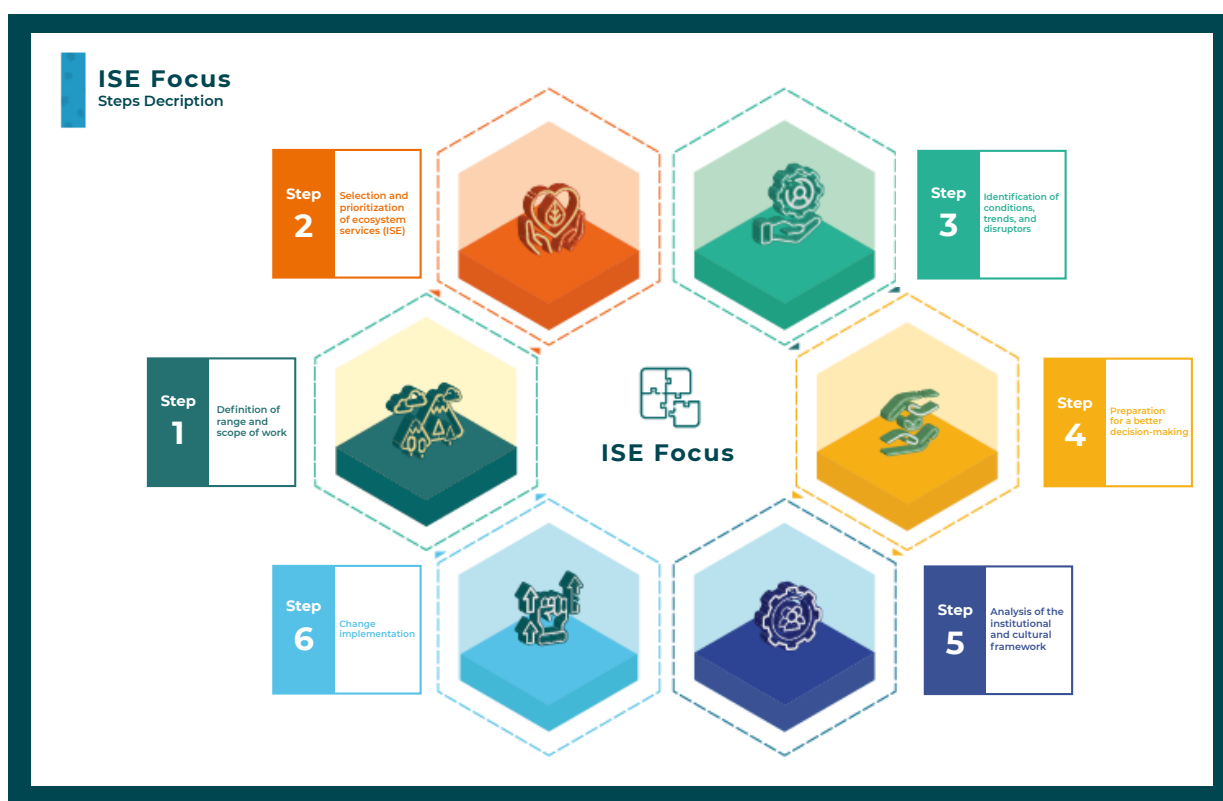


Figure 9. Six steps of ISE approach.

Source: adapted from the course *Integrating ecosystem services in development planning (Colombia course)* - introduction to the step-by-step approach of the ISE, conducted within the framework of the *ValuES* project.

In all four countries, the course was integrated into the learning platforms of the respective multiplier networks. The following table shows the institution that hosted the course in each country.

Country	Brazil	Colombia	Ecuador	Peru
Platform:	Ipê (Institute for Ecological Research)	Higher School of Public Administration - ESAP	Consortium of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador (CONGOPE).	Educativa Aprende - MINAM
Dissemination:	ICLEI ANAMMA	Colombian Federation of Municipalities - Fedemunicipios	Aula Verde	

Table 1. Institution offering ISE course in each country.

In addition, a training process was conducted in 2021 for 25 trainers of the ISE course in the four countries led by ICLEI to ensure the replication and sustainability of the course.

Impacts

Many of the topics on protected areas were already offered in a general way by different organizations, however, according to research, the project Local Protected Areas was the first to design courses with a focus on local governments. The topics offered in the training measures responded to the demands of each country.

The effects of these actions are related to the main objective of the project, since capacity building contributes directly to **improving the conditions for biodiversity conservation by local governments**, through effective and equitable management of local protected areas. For example, issues such as the incorporation of local protected areas and other conservation measures were considered in **urban planning (Master Plans)**.

Virtual education was a key tool to reach many more stakeholders and allow them a process of self-training. Therefore, most of the courses were conceived virtually, but this aspect was a challenge that was not completely solved, due to the availability of people's time to take the courses, internet connection and interest in the topics. As a support, having multiplier networks -such as ICLEI- for the dissemination and promotion of the courses is of fundamental importance to reach more people.

The arguments provided by the ISE approach can be very useful to show the value and benefits of local protected areas for the local population and society in general. The adaptation process of the ISE course could have focused more on policy contexts and instruments. Local cases could have been integrated into the course curriculum without the need to adapt all content to different national contexts. The time gained would have provided advantages in measuring the outcomes and impacts of the course.

The project underestimated the time allotted to digitize the course and conduct a pilot class in Brazil, and the process was completed a few months later than planned. Part of this delay was due to the large number of additional modifications requested after the course source material was approved. It is recommended that this digitization occur only after the theoretical material has been fully finalized.

The focus of the trainings on local governments is highlighted, in the region there are many training offers especially in protected areas, however, not with a local focus, the people who participated in these training spaces highlighted this focus. In addition, the identification of training needs and the choice to meet the demands of each country was the right one.

Leveraging existing courses and materials facilitated the implementation of the capacity building strategy. However, the courses had to be adapted to suit their content and language to the main target audience. To generate stability in a project with partners who, by nature, are subject to political processes, it is advisable to collaborate with actors who, by their very mission, focus on capacity building, such as national associations of local governments or formal and non-formal education institutions in the countries.

In terms of strengthening local actors, the results are more satisfactory when the role of state or district governments and the federal government is limited to training, follow-up and support to local governments. The trainings also had other results beyond those expected, such as the improvement of individual skills, with the multiplication of participatory moderation tools and methodologies.

Visibility and dissemination of the role of local governments and the benefits of protected areas and other effective conservation measures

Visibility of local experiences

When the project began in 2016, local governance and management of protected areas were little discussed in South America. Therefore, highlighting their importance among key stakeholders was a task that proved to be fundamental.

To raise awareness among stakeholders, a strategy of disseminating success stories (or best practices) in the management of these areas in each of the four countries was adopted through the PANORAMA platform (IUCN) and ICLEI's institutional channels in South America. Based on a technical-scientific approach, communication products were developed to:

I

inform and raise awareness of the importance of protected area management and other local conservation measures for biodiversity conservation

II

translate the technical-scientific knowledge developed under the project into easy-to-read and understand content.

Between 2018 and 2022, the following experience systematization products were produced:

- Web series **Local Voices**, prepared by GIZ, with eight episodes published, two from each country;
- Collection of **12 fascicles** (executive summaries), organized by ICLEI, containing experiences of good practices in protected area management and other local conservation measures in the four countries;

- Cataloguing of **12 good practices** in the **PANORAMA** platform, developed by IUCN based on the cases identified and analyzed in the consultancies, as well as additional ones that were added during the course of the project, such as the case on virtual education.
- **Series of podcasts** on Spotify on different themes of protected area management and other effective conservation measures.
- **Videos and interviews** with local partners in the four countries that were presented at the World Conservation Congress in September 2021.

ICLEI activated its network of municipal governments to systematize best practice experiences. With the support of consultants in Brazil, Colombia, and Ecuador, three successful cases per country were selected. In Peru, the work to identify three good practices was coordinated by GIZ with the support of the SPDA.

The consultancies included field visits to interview stakeholders and collect available information. After the visits, the information was organized and analyzed to understand and systematize the experiences, as shown in the following figure (Figure 10).

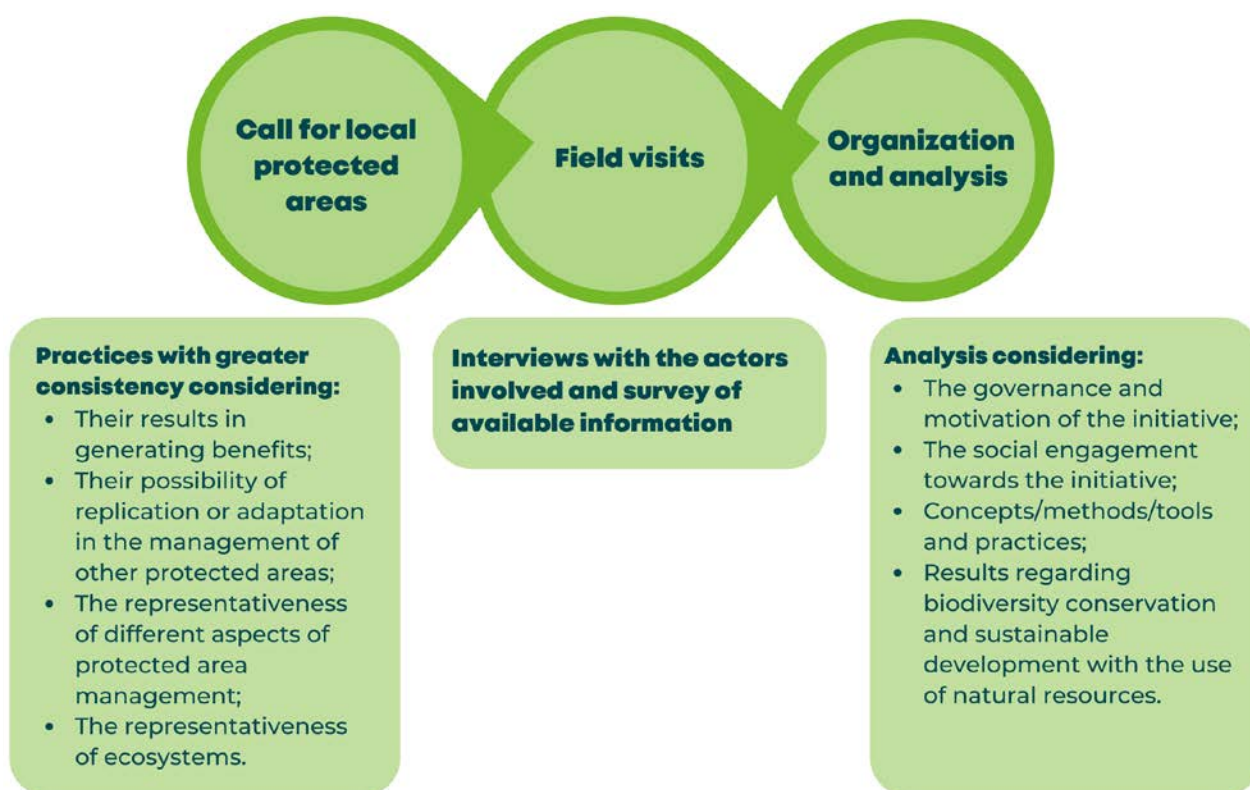


Figure 10. Stages in the identification of best practice cases.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The systematization of the 12 success stories in the management of protected areas and other local conservation measures was prepared by ICLEI⁷, following a model of fascicles developed with the support of the GIZ communication consultancy in the project. According to the model, each good practice described contains a maximum of two pages: fact sheet, context and challenge to overcome, solution to the problem, beneficiaries and lessons learned. Launched in 2019, the issues were made available on the ICLEI website. In the second half of 2020, IUCN adapted this format to its own pre-existing template to include the documentation of experiences on the PANORAMA platform.

While the documentation of good practices was being prepared, the first episodes of the Local Voices web series began to be produced. The technical-scientific reference for the content of the episodes was the work done in the consultancies. El objetivo de la web serie era destacar las acciones de los gobiernos locales para la conservación de la biodiversidad.

The eight episodes were based on recorded interviews with local representatives on how a protected area or other conservation measure was managed in the municipality. The interviews were conducted with the support of ICLEI and the scripts were prepared by GIZ, which also did the recording, with the support of IUCN. The audiovisual content was then transcribed in Spanish and Portuguese and translated into three languages (Portuguese, Spanish, and English). The episodes were disseminated through the institutional channels of the political counterparts and/or the project's implementing partners on the GIZ YouTube channel in Brazil.

■ Based on the documentation experience mentioned above:

It is recommended to document and disseminate good practices to explain a new or little-known topic. Increasing contact between the topic and the target audience and valuing experiences motivates stakeholders to engage. It became evident that it is important that reflection on the form and content of the product takes place simultaneously. The question is: does the chosen product format

⁷ Available at: <https://americadosul.iclei.org/biblioteca/?rel=2935&cat=21>.

have the potential to reach the target audience, gain scale and multiply? The development of the format of the systematized good practices, for example, took place after the development of the consultancies. If it had been produced as part of the consulting planning, it would have minimized the team's subsequent hours of dedication.

Even when no thought is given to scope design, it is possible to combine the format and function of the product in the course of an action. Three guiding questions help in this regard: Who will the product serve? Will it be possible to reach the target audience to be sensitized? Does the chosen format allow for this and the gain in scale? In projects where dissemination of benefits, mobilization of target audiences and systematization of knowledge are strategic, it is recommended that communication and knowledge management products be included as activities in the Annual Operating Plan (POA).

The careful collection of information by the consultants generated as a positive effect a raw material that can also be used by IUCN, taking into account that the case presentation format in the PANORAMA platform requires a different list of information than the one published by ICLEI.

The systematization of best practices enabled the approach to local representatives. As a result, a “mini-network” was formed that multiplied the number of people involved in the management of protected areas or other local conservation measures.

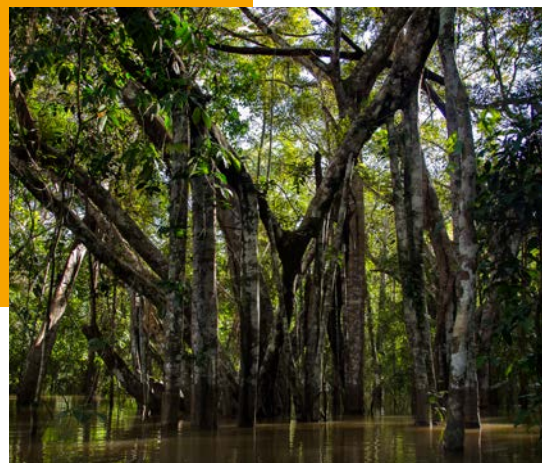
For dissemination, it is relevant to create partnerships with other projects and institutions and to participate in larger events, such as the World Environment Day, organized virtually by the UN, in Colombia in 2020. At the event, the project disseminated the benefits of protected area management by local governments far beyond the territories of the four countries.

Impacts

In terms of outreach, **the best practice experiences and the webseries were widely disseminated** in all national and supranational events in which the project participated. In total, the episodes of the webseries registered **more than 4.8 thousand views** from June 2019 to June 2022

In terms of impacts achieved, the greatest contribution was to **generate visibility** and conversations around the topic of “protected areas and other local conservation measures” in South America. Focusing on local experiences helped to weave a **content dissemination network that made it clear what kind of benefits a local protected area offers** to its surroundings. As a result, the

Ismar Santana



possibility of creating and managing protected areas and other conservation measures became tangible. It also contributed to the formation of **ICLEI’s Local Protected Areas Thematic Sub-Network**, as the themes and web series strengthened an identity among peers - in this case, actors in the local government sphere, who were able to better articulate around the theme.

Participation in events

Another approach used to raise the visibility of the experiences and promote dialogue on the topics in the region was participation in national and international congresses, with the organization of events and sessions aimed at significantly increasing the visibility of the topic in South America and in the international context, in a broad sense. Important participations were made in various events, among which the following stand out:

<p>COLOMBIA</p> <p>2020 International Environment Day.</p> <p>2019 and 2020 National Congress of Municipalities. Cartagena.</p> <p>2019 The power of metropolises and their role in the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems. Medellin.</p> <p>2018 Land Use Forum: Effective integration of protected areas and OECM. Bogota.</p>	<p>PERU</p> <p>2019 II Regional Conference on Protected Areas. Lima. III Congress of Protected Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAPLAC). Lima. Local Governments: Conserving biodiversity for the well-being of everyone. Protected Areas and OECMs at autonomous governments level. CAPLAC III. Lima. IV Forum of Protected Natural Areas. Lima.</p>	<p>FRANCE</p> <p>2021 Experiences of local governments in protected areas and OECM in South America. World Congress of Nature. Marseille.</p>
<p>ECUADOR</p> <p>2021 International Biodiversity Forum "Living in Harmony with Nature".</p> <p>2018 II Regional Conference of Local Protected Areas. Quito. International Biodiversity Conference "Biodiverse Territories, Territories of Rights". Cuenca.</p>	<p>BRAZIL</p> <p>2021 X Brazilian Seminar of Protected Areas and Social Inclusion (SAPIS).</p> <p>2019 IX Brazilian Seminar of Protected Areas and Social Inclusion (SAPIS). Recife. II Foro de Gestão Ambiental de Brasil (FBGA). Campinas.</p> <p>2018 Brazilian Congress of Conservation Units (CBUC). Florianópolis.</p> <p>2017 1st Regional Conference of Local Protected Areas. Sao Paulo. I Brazil Forum of Environment Management (FBGA). Campinas.</p>	<p>EGYPT</p> <p>2018 COP 14 CBD. Sharm El-Sheikh.</p> <p>ONLINE</p> <p>2021 V Regional Conference on Local Protected Areas.</p> <p>2020 IV Regional Conference on Local Protected Areas.</p>

Figure 11. Participation in and organization of national and international events

The conferences and congresses in which the project participated were already well-established events with a well-informed audience. The main contribution of the project was to enable the participation of local government representatives in them and to mobilize political partners for these occasions. In this way, the strengthening of local governments in the management of protected areas and other local

conservation measures gained more relevance within these events. The implementing partners were considered as references for their experience in the subject, so that local governments and other stakeholders now have references and points of contact.

Impacts

The dissemination of the benefits of protected areas and other local conservation measures at third-party events gave visibility to the issue, so that local governments in other Latin American countries and cooperating entities began to approach the project's implementing partners in search of support to strengthen these areas in their territories. Nowadays, technical discussions on the management of local protected areas, the identification of other effective local conservation measures and the recognition of the importance of local

governments in this regard are an integral part of the Latin American and national effort to strengthen the management of these areas.

Participation in events established to reinforce a new theme is key to create networks, disseminate knowledge and give a voice to local governments and other actors in the management of the areas, as well as being a very timely strategy in terms of cost-benefit, which requires a budget that guarantees coverage of expenses.



Regional Conferences

Throughout its implementation, the project held a series of annual international events called **“regional conferences”**. These brought together political partners, local government representatives, managers of protected areas and other local conservation measures, academics and NGO representatives from the four implementing countries and other countries. The objective was to discuss and deepen topics of interest to the project and to create key moments for the mobilization and formation of a community interested in strengthening the creation and management of protected areas

and other effective local conservation measures. Each year, it took place in a different country and under the main responsibility of one of the three implementing partners.

The **first regional conference** was held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 2017 and corresponded to the launch of the project. It constitutes a frame of reference, as it was when the first annual operational planning was carried out together with the partners, thus initiating the effective implementation of their activities. Its programming provided a mutual understanding of the context in which the creation and management of local protected areas is inserted in each country ([video of the Conference](#)).



The **second regional conference** took place in Quito, Ecuador, in 2018, within the framework of the Habitat III+2 international meeting, where urban solutions for building sustainable cities were discussed. The conference served to exchange experiences among local governments on good practices in governance and effective management of protected areas and other local conservation measures. In a multi-level dialogue, the environment ministries of the four countries reaffirmed their commitment to improve their institutional and legal frameworks in favor of local governments (II Conference [note](#) and [video](#) presentation).



The **third regional conference** was held during the III CAPLAC in Lima (Peru) in 2019. It focused on the presentation of successful experiences in the effective management of local protected areas and on legal and institutional frameworks for biodiversity conservation at the local level. In addition to the conference, the project participated in 10 sessions of the congress, promoting the participation and presentation of representatives of various local governments ([release](#) side event in the framework of the Congress).



The **fourth regional conference** in 2020 was moved to the virtual environment, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was divided into three sessions, addressing the following topics:

- local governments in the post-2020 framework;
- dissemination of capacities and knowledge; and
- articulation between national and local governments.

Participation exceeded expectations: more than 1,000 people registered for the event, with a total of 3,500 visitors from 13 countries, mostly from Latin America and the Caribbean ([Links videos IV Conference](#)).



The **fifth and last regional conference**, which was held at the end of 2021, was also virtual with on-site moderation. The event aimed to generate a dialogue on the most relevant achievements and results during the implementation of the project. It was divided into three sessions:

- **multilevel dialogue** and exchange of successful experiences between national and local governments in the management of protected areas;
- the **multiplication of networks** as disseminators of these areas and
- **successful experiences** in the management of protected areas and other local conservation measures.



The following table details the number of people who participated in the regional conferences over the years.

Participation in the regional conferences			
Year	Country	Number of participants	Organizer
2017	Brazil	150	ICLEI
2018	Ecuador	120	UICN
2019	Peru	70	GIZ
2020	Virtual	3.500	UICN, ICLEI and GIZ
2021	Virtual	2.956 <i>(1.471 in Spanish and 1.485 in Portuguese)</i>	UICN, ICLEI and GIZ

Table 2. Number of participants in the regional conferences of the project

Strategically, for its organization, the project took advantage - whenever possible - of an international event already scheduled in the host country, focusing on topics adjacent to its action. Thus, the regional conferences became more attractive to the invited stakeholders, allowing the crossing of agendas, saving travel resources and offering opportunities to expand partnerships.

Parallel to the conferences, technical visits were made to a protected area or other local conservation measure close to the city where the event was held. This provided an enhanced form of learning for the local government representatives attending the regional conference and field visit, as they were able to speak with local leaders and have a full cognitive experience. For the project team, the regional conferences were opportunities to conduct annual operational planning face-to-face. In 2020 and 2021, both the conference and planning took place in a virtual format and the field visits did not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Impacts

The regional conferences were strategic in building a **knowledge and advocacy community**. They contributed to all project components: capacity building, recognition of the role of local governments in legal or institutional frameworks, and dissemination of the benefits of protected areas and other local conservation measures. For the political partners, the conferences resulted in peer-to-peer benchmarking and **inspired multi-level dialogue and enhanced synergies**. For local government representatives, they served as a platform to **make visible** their protected areas, their respective creation and management processes, and their successes and mistakes. The international and regional perspective of the events reinforced the **understanding of the importance** of protected areas and other local conservation measures in **achieving Aichi Target 11** and mobilized stakeholders and project staff to actively contribute to the **post-2020 global biodiversity conservation framework**.

In addition, the Project was invited to contribute to the Latin American Alliance to Strengthen Protected Areas by 2020 (**ALFA** 2020), a strategic alliance between the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Pronatura Mexico, Redparques and other stakeholders, which was created to accelerate the full implementation of Aichi Target 11 in the Latin American region by 2020. As mentioned above, two chapters were contributed to the **2020 Protected Planet** report.



Providing local governments with opportunities for dialogue and leadership ensured high participation in the regional conferences and created a network of intangible stakeholders who expressed interest in engaging in future actions. The exchange of experiences among local governments helped to broaden understanding of the diversity of situations in which protected areas and other local conservation measures are found and to learn from each other.

For example, in the [visit](#) to the municipality of Piura in Peru, where the local government was implementing actions for the conservation of the “San Pedro de Vice Wetlands”, in the province of Sechura declared RAMSAR Site and the “Dry Forest of Piedra del Toro, La Unión and San Luis” in the district and province of Morropón. During this field visit, representatives from Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador had the opportunity to give management recommendations on issues such as biodiversity monitoring and dissemination, among others. Allowing the ministries of environment of the four countries to learn about successful cases in the management of these areas and to

learn about the pending demands of local governments allowed for other actions to be carried out, such as support for capacity building, for example with the ISE course.

At regional level, the conferences allowed actors from other Latin American and Caribbean countries with an interest in the topic to delve deeper into it. In these spaces, several countries such as Argentina requested support for the development of similar initiatives in their country.

Although practical in logistical terms, holding regional conferences linked to the annual planning meetings of the team and implementing partners was not always advantageous for technical and institutional alignment. The overlapping of events (conference, planning, and field visit) provided limited and insufficient time for clarification of some strategic issues. It is recommended to invest time in planning/reflection with counterparts prior to the regional events and then follow up on the implementation of activities after the conferences.

In the final CAPLAC declaration, the project also contributed decisively to the launch of a joint declaration of local governments (Lima Declaration), claiming the recognition of its importance for biodiversity conservation (the original declaration and all the documentation of the III CAPLAC can be found [here](#)).



André Lima

Emblematic topics

In addition to the results and impacts presented above, the project developed several relevant topics for the management of protected areas and other effective conservation measures at the level of local governments in the Latin American region, which were incipient or were just being introduced at the international and national levels.

These issues and the results generated through the project are presented in detail below due to their importance and impact in the region:

Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM)

Aichi Target 11 calls for biodiversity conservation through both protected areas and OECMs. Seeking guidance on the interpretation and application of this concept, in 2015 the CBD requested IUCN to create a working group to develop technical guidelines on this topic. Based on the results of this working group, in 2018 the definition of OECM was stipulated and adopted by the Parties to the CBD through Decision 14/8, as well as the criteria associated with it.

Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)

According to CBD Decision 14/8, the OECM concept corresponds to “a geographically defined area, distinct from a protected area, that is managed and administered to achieve long-term positive and sustainable outcomes for the conservation of biodiversity in situ with associated ecosystem functions and services and, where appropriate, relevant cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic and other values”.

Source: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Decision Adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity: 14/8 - Protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-08-en.pdf>

International guidance on OECMs as defined within wpcap guidelines

Criterion A: Currently the area is not recognized as a protected area
Criterion B: The area is governed and managed

Geographically delimited space
Authorities with legitimate governance
Managed

Criterion C: Provides a sustainable and effective contribution to the in on-site conservation of biological diversity

Positive results for on-site biodiversity conservation
Long-term sustainability
On-site conservation of biological diversity

Criterion D: Associated functions and services of ecosystems and cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic and other locally relevant values.

Ecosystem functions and services
Cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic and other locally relevant values.

Source: International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). Guidelines for recognizing and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures. Available at: https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/guidelines_for_recognising_and_reporting_oecms_-_january_2018.pdf

The project was very active in the interpretation of the concept, in the generation of spaces for dialogue for its understanding and adaptation at the national level, as well as in promoting the identification of these areas, their strengthening and reporting to the global database. Although it worked with a regional approach to generate spaces for dialogue on the subject in Latin America, the project also carried out specific actions in the countries where it was implemented.

In **Colombia**, the project “Adaptation of the criteria on other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM) to the Colombian context” was implemented jointly by Resnatur with the support of the Humboldt Institute and Fundación Natura and financed by the Small Grants Programme (SGP) of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In addition, activities were carried out in conjunction with the project

“Integration of Protected Areas in the Amazon Biome (IAPA),” coordinated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and financed by the European Union. Cooperation focused on the evaluation of the international guidelines established in the [Guidelines for Recognising and Reporting Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures](#), prepared by the IUCN WCPA, which was translated by the project from English into Portuguese and Spanish.

Through cooperation, the guidelines of the guide were applied to 29 Colombian cases. From this, it was concluded that OECMs can contribute in the following ways:

- contribute to the recognition of different types of governance and other ways of doing conservation;
- speed up the creation of conservation areas and increase the amount of natural and cultural heritage conserved;
- increase the representativeness and connectivity of landscapes;
- increase the effectiveness of SINAP management by bringing together a greater diversity of actors and contribute to the
- connectivity of the system; and
contribute to a more equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of biodiversity conservation.

With these and other contributions, the project strengthened the state of the art of OECMs in the country, defining a reporting route in coordination with the Ministry of Environment, being the first country to report 3 areas to the [WCMC](#) global database: **La Ilusión Private Natural Reserve, Andakí Municipal Natural Park, and La Reseda Private Natural Reserve**, of 0.441, 268.12 and 0.809 km² respectively, which represents 0.03% of the national surface.

In **Ecuador**, the proposal “[Feasibility and replicability of other effective conservation measures \(OECM\) developed by Decentralized Autonomous Governments in Ecuador](#)” was developed in a participatory manner with MAATE, GADs, and civil society. This proposal highlights the need to officially recognize the OECMs of the GADs. In addition, the document mentions that the definition of the size and spatial arrangement of an OECM should be the result of a participatory technical process with input from MAATE, and that, at GAD level, OECMs should be integrated into territorial and environmental

planning. The proposal also includes a series of mechanisms for effective and sustainable governance, thus providing very concrete guidelines for stakeholders interested in creating or strengthening OECMs.

In **Peru** the applicability of 90 conservation initiatives under the appropriate OECM criteria was validated in a participatory manner with MINAM, resulting in 30 conservation initiatives with high applicability; of which 2 local initiatives located in the districts of Piura and Cusco were chosen to demonstrate in situ all the necessary support to demonstrate compliance with the OECM criteria. Likewise, in coordination with SPDA and MINAM, the normative proposal for the recognition of OECMs was prepared, which aims to establish provisions for the identification, recognition and management of Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) other than natural protected areas within the national scope.

Four regional exchanges of experiences on other conservation measures were also held with partner entities. Several key milestones in the identification, strengthening and reporting of OECMs in the Latin American region are presented below, and the following graph shows the progress made in each of the countries where the project was implemented:



Figure 12. Timeline: workspaces on OECM.

Source: Adapted from the document *Aporte a la política del SINAP "Otras medidas efectivas de conservación basadas en áreas - OECM"*, elaborated by the project together with Resnatur, Instituto Humboldt and Fundación Natura.

Advances of OMECs in the countries

Ecuador

- Publication proposal on OMECs feasibility and replicability
- Proposal for Ministerial Agreement
- Capacity Building
- Trilateral Cooperation Project Capacity building in the Cuyabeno, Güeppi, AiroPai, Huimeki, La Paya conservation corridor (Ecuador - Peru)

Peru

- Elaboration of conservation modalities guide
- Application of conservation modalities
- Creation of the Environmental Conservation Area ACA Balcones, Negritos, Piura (created under OECMs criteria) - in progress
- Regulatory proposal for identification and recognition of OECMs at national level - in progress



Colombia

- Joint implementation of the Project adapt OECM criteria to the Colombian context 29 cases
- Guide for reporting to the adapted global database - Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
- Dissemination of impacts and results in dialogue spaces

Brazil

- Reflection on the OECM criteria
- Participation in training spaces

Figure 13. Progress of the four countries on OECM.

Based on the exchanges and the accompaniments carried out, it was identified that:

- In Latin American and Caribbean countries there are a number of areas that can potentially be defined as OECMs, such as Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar sites, forest reserves, municipal areas and private conservation areas, among others. However, their recognition as such must be analyzed on a case-by-case basis.
- Most of the potential areas are under the management of sectors other than the national and regional governments. The identification of OECMs allows for the involvement and recognition of key actors beyond the environmental sphere.
- Countries do not have all the necessary tools to identify and validate OECMs.
- From the legislative point of view, there is no clear regulation that recognizes OECMs; however, Ecuador and Peru have made progress in reviewing and proposing regulations. This recognition can generate incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in other areas beyond protected areas.

Impacts

The project's support for the adaptation of the OECM identification guidelines in the countries involved was fundamental for Latin America and the Caribbean to raise awareness of the issue and clarify the **potential contribution that other conservation measures can make to achieving Aichi Target 11**. There was significant collaboration in **generating spaces for dialogue on OECM**, which were **not limited to the four participating countries**, and other Latin American countries were mobilized. As a result, the foundations were laid for the analysis of the OECM concept and its implications to be **included in national environmental policies for national protected area systems**. With the maturation of the technical discussions, **positive impacts can be observed in the national reports** for the international database of the World Conservation Monitoring Center (WCMC), which can also cover the **post-2020 framework of the CBD**. Through the implementation of the Project, support was provided for the creation of spaces for dialogue with 13 countries and participation in webinars and training at the international level.

By generating spaces for technical debate and identifying OECMs, the project strengthened the concept and increased knowledge of existing realities. From there, it was possible to provide feedback for discussions on criteria and technical guidelines at the national, regional and international levels, as well as to disseminate the international guidelines defined by the IUCN.

The scope of the actions was broadened thanks to partnerships with other projects and stakeholders, adding efforts and available resources. The commitment of the countries to recognize the value of the OECMs was of fundamental importance, and this commitment was made possible by the project's contributions to national environmental policies.

In Colombia, support was provided for the development of a route to distribute the OMECs to the WCMC global database, which was adopted by Minambiente and two areas were reported, the first in Latin America <https://www.protectedplanet.net/country/COL>. In Ecuador, this commitment was reflected in

the inclusion of the term OECM in the name of one of MAATE's departments during its internal restructuring, demonstrating the importance given to the subject as a result of the project's actions.

In Peru, the approval of the OECM criteria by the National Commission on Biological Diversity (CONADIB) was supported and the applicability of these criteria in 90 conservation initiatives outside SINANPE was analyzed. Since then, a normative proposal has been developed with MINAM for the identification and recognition of OECMs at the national level. In Brazil, training,

discussions on the OECM criteria and knowledge exchange with other countries were supported, providing the country with several elements for defining the national route for identifying and reporting OECMs.

A major challenge, among many others, that remains in relation to the issue is how to measure the effectiveness of OECMs in demonstrating their contribution to achieving the Biodiversity Targets at the national and global levels. In addition, it is important to continue to discuss the governance and application of the criteria in each country.



Werner Rudhart

Equity in protected area management and other effective conservation measures

Aichi Target 11 states that protected area management should be effective and equitable. While what is meant by effective management is well defined in the literature on protected areas, the same is not true for equitable management. In the search for inputs such as data and proposals for technical standards to contribute to the CBD's post-2020 agenda, research institutions, governmental organizations and NGOs have been joining efforts to establish the concept and develop tools to promote, monitor and evaluate equity in protected area management.

As part of the general objective of the project, this aspect began to be worked on in its third year of execution and, since then, has been discussed in some spaces in a dynamic manner.

Equity

The conception of equity is related to that of social justice. Both have three dimensions:

I

Recognition: respect for the rights and diversity of identities, values, knowledge systems, and institutions of the different actors.

II

Procedure - participation of stakeholders in decision-making, transparency, accountability, and conflict resolution.

III

Distribution - allocation of benefits and costs and mitigation of costs that may be incurred by some stakeholders.

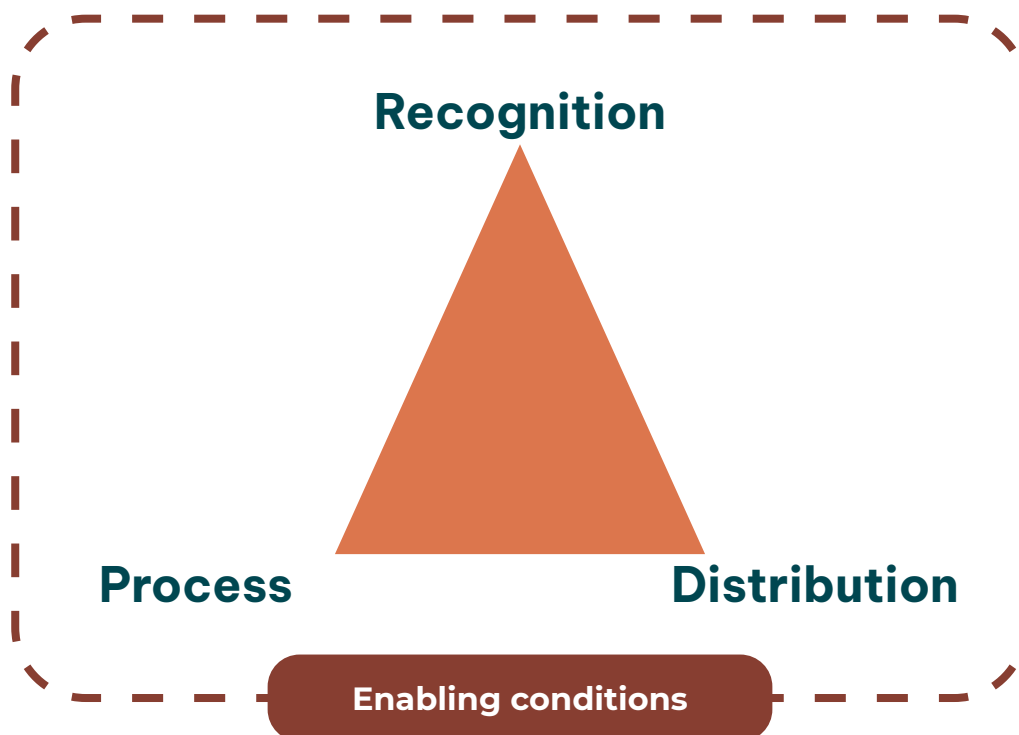


Figure 14. Dimensions of equity.

Each dimension houses a set of principles of equity in protected areas, directly associated with the precepts of good governance in this context, developed by work associated with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), and the World Conservation Union (IUCN).

Among the fundamental principles of good governance of protected areas, the following stand out: recognition and respect for the rights, interests, and knowledge of stakeholders; participation in decision-making; transparency, access to information and accountability; equitable distribution of benefits; mitigation of negative impacts.

Equity dimensions		Equity principles for protected area management and governance
Recognition	<i>Respect for the rights, values, identity, and knowledge of different social actors. Consideration of diversity and minority and “minority” social groups.</i>	Recognition and respect for human rights, in accordance with international and national law.
		Recognition and respect for legal and customary rights over land and natural resources.
		Recognition and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples and traditional communities, including self-determination and free, prior and informed consent.
		Recognition of and respect for all relevant stakeholders and their diverse interests, levels of ability and power to influence.
		Recognition of and respect for different identities, cultures, knowledge systems, values and institutions.
Procedure	<i>Effective participation of the different social actors in decision making and conflict resolution.</i>	Full and effective participation of all relevant stakeholders in decision-making.
		Transparency, supported by timely access to expressive information in appropriate formats.
		Accountability for the fulfillment of responsibilities and for other actions and omissions.
		Access to justice, including effective dispute resolution procedures and redress procedures.
		Fair and effective law enforcement
Distribution	<i>Fair distribution of benefits, costs and risks, both in relation to results and processes.</i>	Identification and evaluation of the distribution of costs, benefits and risks and their impacts on well-being.
		Effective measures to mitigate negative impacts on indigenous peoples and traditional and local communities.
		Benefits shared equitably among relevant stakeholders.

CONDITIONS / CONTEXT

A fourth dimension can also be considered: the context that influences and the conditions necessary for the effective viability of the other dimensions of equity. This field includes, for example, questions related to: power dynamics, gender, education, among others.

Some conditions are required for equitable management such as, for example, recognition of all existing protected area governance types (Franks, P.; et al., 2018). Since CBD COP 10, held in Nagoya in 2010, equity is considered an element of “good governance” of protected areas. Consequently, the assessment of the equitable management of a protected area implies an assessment of governance. This implies an analysis of the relationships of recognition and rights between stakeholders and of the accountability mechanisms (transparency).

Taking into account the concepts surrounding the conception of equity, the initial effort of the project consisted precisely in finding an appropriate response to its context of action, taking into account the social and ethnic diversity of the countries involved. Initially, specific activities were developed in Brazil, Ecuador and Colombia.

In **Brazil**, the event “Equity in the management and governance of protected areas: from international discourse to local implementation” was held in December 2019, as part of the IX Brazilian Seminar on Protected Areas and Social Inclusion (SAPIS), which promoted a reflection on the concept, its application in the management of protected areas and possible ways to monitor this application. As an unintended result, the DAP/MMA founded a working group on the topic, which discussed possible tools for its integration, such as a primer to strengthen the topic and a methodology to assess the state of the art of equity in the SNUC.

The theme of equitable management of protected areas was presented in several papers at the 10th Brazilian Seminar on Protected Areas and Social Inclusion (SAPIS, 11/2021). The results of a study and several case studies from Brazil were discussed. The forum is of great importance for the exchange with local governments

and the professional public; due to its innovative character and the great demand on the subject, many people from Latin America participated.

In Brazil, work has begun on a guide for the equitable management of protected areas. To this end, nine case studies are being worked on and a synthesis document for local protected area managers is being drafted in simple language.

In **Ecuador**, the project supported MAATE in the construction of the Proposed Technical Standard for the Participatory Management of Protected Areas, which contemplates the ways in which local governments can participate in the management of protected areas within their jurisdiction. This proposal was supported jointly with the GIZ Bilateral Program for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Heritage in Ecuador and the Trilateral Cooperation Project for Capacity Building in the Cuyabeno, Güeppí, Airo Pai, Huimeki, La Paya Conservation Corridor (Ecuador-Peru).





In **Colombia**, the Site-level assessment of governance and equity (SAGE) methodology was applied to assess governance and equity at the local level within the framework of the Euroclima+ program supported by Expertise France, GIZ and with the support of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). This methodology is based on IUCN governance principles for protected areas and has been developed by several institutions in recent years. In 2019, IIED began its experimentation in Latin America, Africa and Asia. As part of the project, the pilot was carried out in the municipality of Belén de los Andaquíes, including adapting the methodology to the local context and training conservation professionals on it for its subsequent multiplication, as well as conducting field workshops and analyzing the respective results.

As a result, inputs were generated to plan actions to improve equity in the municipality's OECMs, such as frequent visits to PMN Andakí by area managers, inviting local communities to discussion spaces related to the Park, adjusting the Park's vision and mission in the new management plan. The results also provided information to other local and state governments and the federal level on how to improve equity in protected areas and other effective area-based

conservation measures in areas such as **SAGE: A new tool for assessing protected and conserved area governance and equity** in the framework of the World Conservation Congress in Marseille in 2021 and in a webinar with the four countries of the Project in April 2021.

SAGE

SAGE methodology comprises 10 principles for equitable governance, which are based on the IUCN principles of good governance for protected areas (see Table 3). The method is applied through a one- or two-day workshop with key stakeholders of the protected area to be analyzed. In the first part of the workshop, the stakeholders are separated into groups by institutional nature and answer a questionnaire. For example, in the case of the Belén de los Andaquíes pilot project, participants were divided into:

-  local and regional governments,
-  indigenous peoples,
-  community action groups, and
-  NGOs, civil society and academia.

In the second part, the results are jointly analyzed on the basis of an adapted performance table (score card), and differences in the perspectives of the different actors, as well as their causes, are identified. When desired, action plans are drawn up to improve equity in protected area management. An article on the case was published in **Parks Magazine**, vol. 27, May 2021.

SAGE aims to improve protected area management and provides information on equity at local and national levels, as well as to the CBD itself. IIED is working closely with IUCN, which intends to include the method on the Green List.

*Sources: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). **Site-level assessment of governance and equity (SAGE)**. Available at: <https://www.iied.org/site-level-assessment-governance-equity-sage/>International*

*International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). **SAGE: a new tool for governance and equity assessment**. Available at: <https://www.iucn.org/news/protected-areas/202001/sage-a-brand-new-tool-governance-and-equity-assessment>*

The application of SAGE methodology is simple and provides essential information for the creation of strategies to strengthen protected areas and other conservation measures. It also offers the opportunity to discuss the positions, concerns and needs of the actors involved in the management of the area, which strengthens the links between them and empowers them.

In the process of adapting the methodology for the pilot initiative carried out in Colombia, the principle of “coordination and

collaboration” was added, which proved to be of great interest to participants and has the potential to ensure the sustainability of actions in the long term. On the other hand, some principles offered by the original method did not find much adherence.

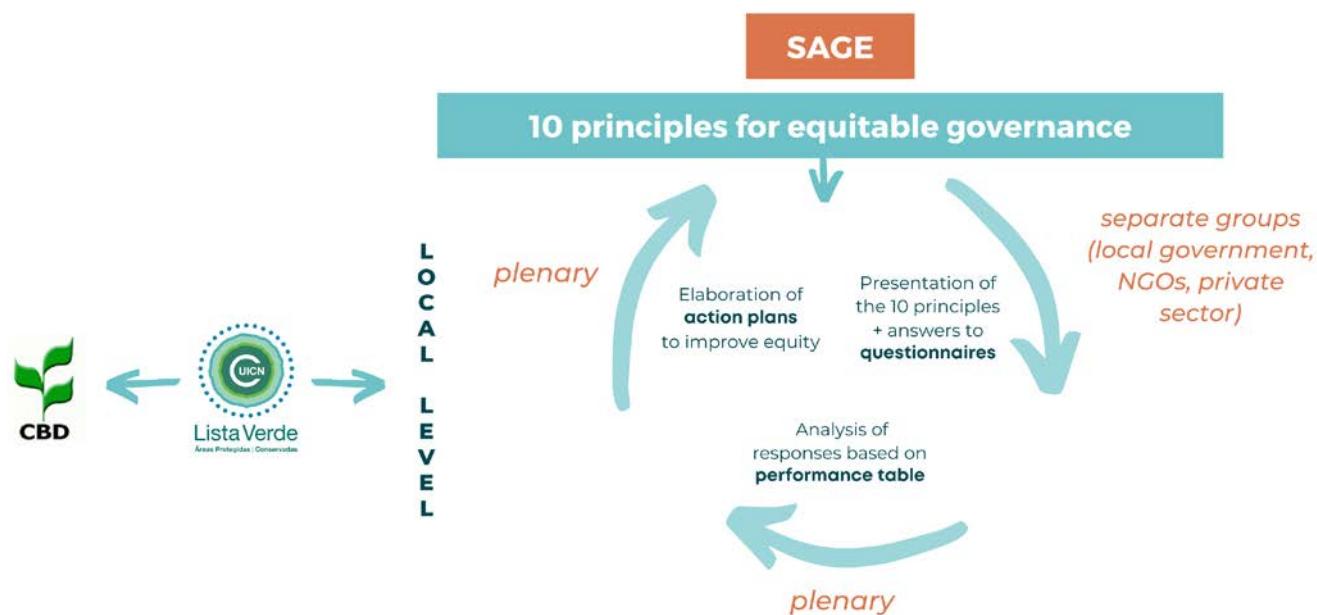


Figure 15. Overview of SAGE methodology and its interrelations.

Source: Elaborated by the author

SAGE: Principles of governance and equity for conservation.

Source: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

Site-level assessment of governance and equity (SAGE).

Available at: <https://www.iied.org/site-level-assessment-governance-equity-sage>.

Impacts

The results in favor of equity are still incipient, but the actions carried out have contributed to **improve the management capacities** of local protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, mainly at the local and federal level. The project has succeeded

in giving **visibility** to a concept that has been little applied and in **generating a work agenda** in which the actors involved have been deepening and developing strategies and tools to assimilate and disseminate the principles of equitable governance.

It is crucial that the political partner is committed when working with the introduction of new and complex concepts. The multiplication effect is greater and the approach can be more systemic. Likewise, a topic such as equity, which involves social dynamics linked to issues of ethnic-racial identity, gender and power relations and access to benefits, among others, must be worked in close dialogue with the populations of the local protected areas or OMECs and their environment.

Through the actions carried out, it became evident that in some areas the instance in which equity is “given” is the management councils, and it

is necessary to strengthen it in this decision-making area. With more time for implementation, the topic could be integrated into the scope of the project, which could include analysis of the state of equity in the different studies carried out and the integration of specific indicators.

It was also perceived the need to articulate with other organizations working with equity and governance issues in protected areas in order to learn and align mutually. It is also recommended to analyze how to better articulate equity with the processes linked to the IUCN Green List and OECMs. The potential for dialogue is great and should be explored.



Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas

IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas Programme aims to encourage, achieve and promote effective, equitable and successful protected areas in all partner countries and jurisdictions. In line with IUCN’s core mission ‘A just world that values and conserves nature’, the aim of the Green List is to enhance the contribution that equitably and effectively governed protected areas make to sustainable development through the conservation of nature and associated social, economic, cultural and spiritual values.

In Colombia, the Metropolitan Area of the Aburrá Valley initiated the nomination of the [Cerro El Volador](#) Metropolitan Regional Natural Park (PNRMCV) to the Green List, becoming the first experience in an urban context to be part of this process. Similarly, the self-assessment process was carried out for the Andakí Municipal Natural Park, registered as an OECM in the WCMC world database.

The application of the first phase of Green List self-assessment standard made it possible to identify strengths and weaknesses in the management and administration of the areas, taking into account that many actions or activities are carried out to maintain biodiversity values and ecosystem services. In addition, it generated important reflections regarding the standard and how it can also be applied to OECM and in other contexts such as urban contexts. Based on this exercise, the Aburrá Valley Metropolitan Area has continued with the self-assessment [process](#) and expects to carry out the candidacy procedure in 2022.

Cooperation and exchange among local governments

Within the framework of the Local Protected Areas project, ICLEI is working on the consolidation of its cooperation methodology with the objective of supporting local governments in the construction and strengthening of territorial sustainability, through the exchange of experiences and multiplication of capacities, and the formation of a network of multiplier municipalities for the configuration of cooperation agreements with a focus on protected areas and other effective conservation measures.

The methodology was developed by ICLEI in a participatory manner throughout 2019, with a pilot initiative carried out with [Brazilian municipalities](#) between April and July 2020. The cycle consists of three stages:



as shown in the figure below. Some action fronts occur throughout the process, in a cross-cutting manner: research and information management, governance, partnerships, social participation, communication, operation and process management, evaluation and monitoring.

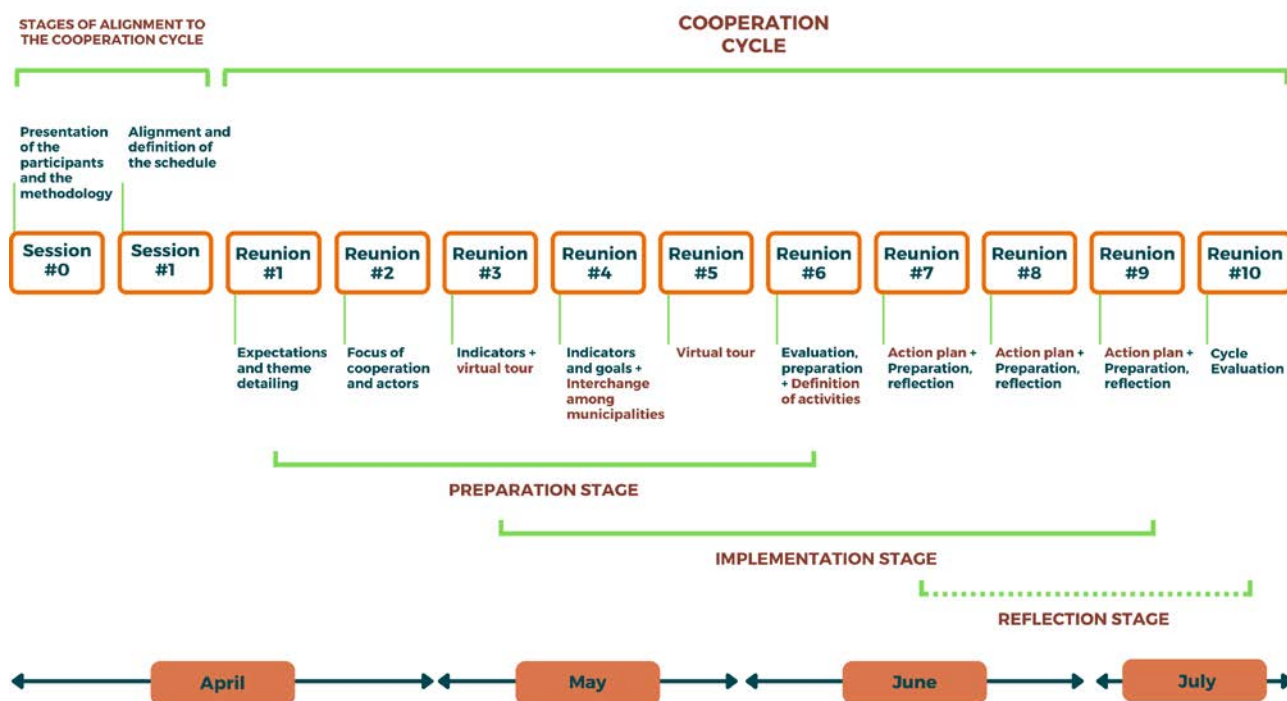


Figure 16. Stages of the cooperation cycle.

Source: Presentation document of Local Government Cooperation Cycle developed by ICLEI.

The municipalities of João Pessoa, in Paraíba, and São Leopoldo, located in the Metropolitan Region of Porto Alegre, in Rio Grande do Sul, participated in the pilot. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meetings were held virtually. Also, since it was not possible for the municipalities to conduct the field visits in person, a virtual visit was conducted, with the support of videos and presentations. To ensure the active participation of the municipalities and, at the same time, allow for observation and critical analysis of the methodology, ICLEI hired a consulting firm to facilitate the processes.

The thematic axis defined for the cooperation was that of financial mechanisms, described by the participating municipalities as “instruments for raising funds outside the municipal budget for the management of municipal protected areas”. Taking into account the

mechanisms that had already been accessed, it was proposed that they exchange experiences. The cooperation model also provided for the definition of objectives and a series of indicators that would make it possible to recognize whether the objective of the cycle had been achieved. Similarly, the impact of the cooperation itself was measured and the evolution of the participants' skills was monitored. At the end of the pilot, an action plan was drawn up for inter-municipal cooperation in the medium and long term. The results were presented at the virtual seminar launching the Thematic Sub-Network of Local Protected Areas founded by ICLEI.

The Cooperation Cycle had a relatively short duration in order to achieve more concrete results. The action plan created foresaw the joint action of the two municipalities for a few more months, with follow-up by ICLEI.

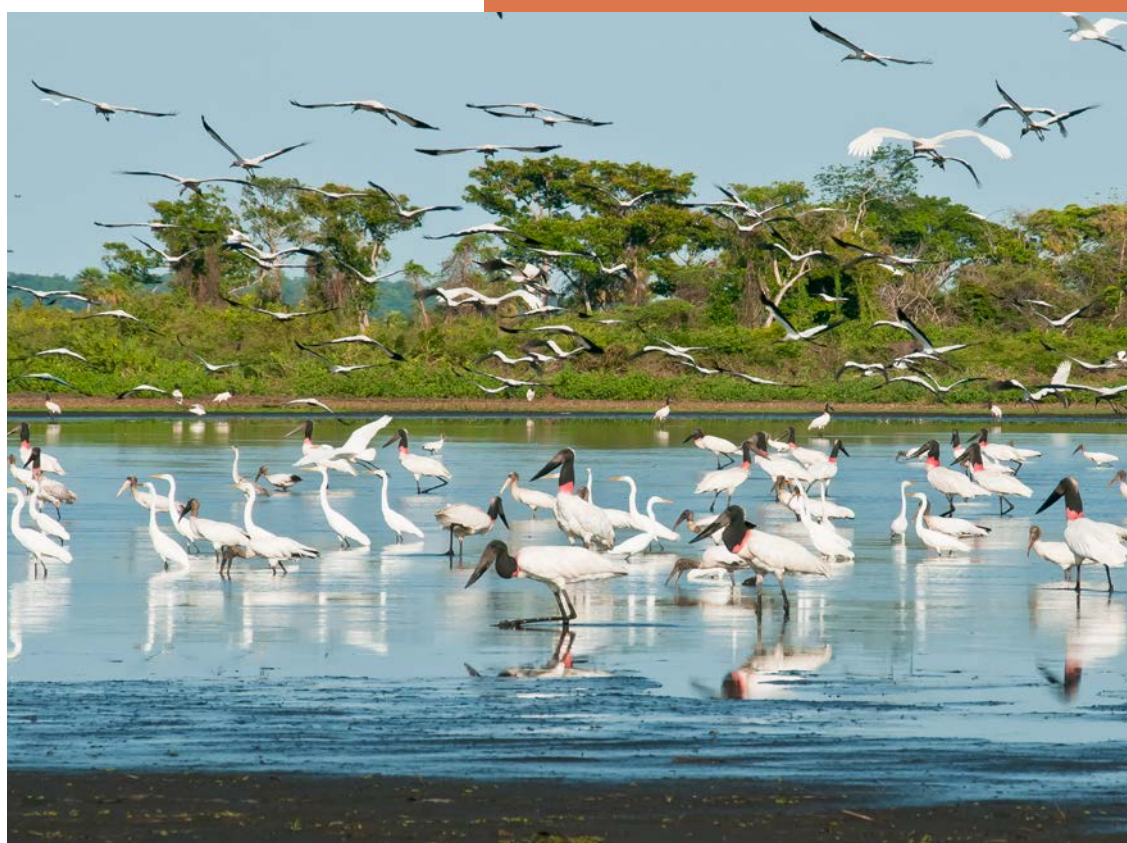
Cooperation cycle in Colombia

The cooperation cycle in Colombia resulted in the commitment and signing of an agreement by the heads of five municipalities. The process with the municipalities of Mesa de Conservación del Sur del Valle de Aburrá consisted of three stages: preparation, implementation, and follow-up, involving different groups of stakeholders. The objective of this planning was to subsidize reflections and gradually contribute knowledge and experiences.

This interaction process involved the facilitation and accompaniment in each of the joint or individual work sessions by ICLEI Colombia and ICLEI South America staff, in order to provide the conditions for the best possible exchange of knowledge, experiences, opportunities, tools, shared guidelines on issues, common strategies and replication of successful cases at scale. Environmental entities such as the Metropolitan Area of Aburrá Valley (AMVA), Corantioquia and National Natural Parks participated in the process. The cooperation cycle developed its activities focusing on issues such as the existence of common challenges (physical and institutional barriers), similarities in

terms of context, search for replication of successful experiences, optimization of resources, improvement of public policies, strengthening and integration of subnational governments and progress in achieving national goals related to the management of green, protected and conserved areas.

Based on this experience, the mayors of the five municipalities signed a commitment agreement for the implementation of actions. In addition, the mapping of ecological connectivity areas was carried out, which strengthens decision-making processes in terms of biodiversity and ecosystem services, mainly related to green area systems and local protected areas. This includes, for example, the need to carry out constant monitoring at points that were defined as being of special importance for wildlife, identify whether there is human-fauna conflict and prioritize actions to protect natural cover, and a document was prepared with the methodology, conceptual aspects and main elements to be taken into account in other **cooperation cycles**.



Acervo MMA

Acceleration program

The Conservation Unit Acceleration Program aimed to contribute to the strengthening and development of capacities and governance of protected areas and other surface conservation measures specifically in Brazil. The aim of this program was to continue the activities initiated in the project and to develop and implement a program that would promote innovative thinking applied to the effective and equitable management of municipal protected areas.

The consulting firm selected to support this process for the development and piloting of the Sense-Lab Acceleration Methodology is an organization that works on strategy and innovation as the articulation of the organizations, systems and leadership necessary to face the main collective challenges of the present.

The program was addressed to local governments, having as target audience the management teams of the conservation units, but at the same time encouraging the participation of multidisciplinary teams composed of members of the City Hall, of different Secretariats and departments. The program sought to stimulate the participating team to think about what activities can improve the management of the protected area, presenting examples and elaborating a development plan through a structural review and making use of planning tools. Rather than reviewing the strategic guidelines and their territorial development models, participants were encouraged to transform the plan into local action plans aimed at putting into practice what was structured, always considering participatory governance in the territory.

Impacts

From the pilot initiative carried out, the Cooperation Cycle and the Acceleration Program proved to be innovative methodologies that require new applications to measure their impacts. In the case of the Cooperation Cycle, it may contribute to all technical and management issues in areas of interest to local governments through

peer-to-peer learning. The process involved mayors and governors who supported the process and signed a letter of commitment.

With the acceleration program, the methodology was tested in Brazil, in the Capivari-Monos Environmental Protection Area (APA), in Sao Paulo/SP, involving managers of the city's Secretariat of the Environment, as well as members of civil society working in the reality of the protected areas and generating spaces for dialogue and strengthening on the strategic management issues of the areas.

- The diagnosis of the participating municipalities, which is carried out prior to the Cooperation Cycle, can be done by applying the IUCN [Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas](#) or the Management Analysis and Monitoring System (SAMGe), in the case of Brazil.
- It is advisable to prepare a guide for the participants and communicate their responsibilities before starting the exchange. The commitment deadline should also be signed by each municipality before the cycle begins.
- The virtual process brought with it complexities, as participants had to assimilate several new methodological elements. At the same time, it offered more opportunities for participation, given the absence of logistical costs and travel time.
- It is recommended that the Cooperation Cycle be integrated into other capacity development processes for local governments, and that it be experimented with the participation of more municipalities - for example, in the context of metropolitan regions - and in other countries.
- It is also suggested to complement the cooperation methodology by developing model documents and a roadmap with the steps to follow to implement the cycle.

Financial sustainability of the areas or management of local governments

Resource transfer and financial sustainability has been one of the main factors found to limit the creation and effective management of protected areas and other effective local conservation measures. In turn, municipal managers and others responsible for the local environmental agenda do not know where and how to access resources, and information on economic and financial mechanisms is scattered and unspecific. It is also necessary that, in addition to access to resources, these actors can count on a good governance model and effective management of the protected area whose sustainability is to be guaranteed.

Each country identified its approach to this issue based on the demand expressed in the respective national working groups.

In **Brazil**, the [Practical Guide for Fundraising for Protected Areas and Other Conservation Measures at the Local Level](#) was developed, which describes the sources of funds that can be accessed directly by municipal managers. The document presents 15 funding mechanisms, including different types of compensation and various funds, among others, such as parliamentary amendments and ecological ICMS. In addition to these, 10 other funding opportunities are presented, such as obtaining funds from development agencies and banks (national and international).

ECOLOGICAL ICMS

The Ecological (or green) ICMS is a source of resources from the Tax on the Circulation of Goods and Services (ICMS). The legislation establishes that at least 25% of the total ICMS collected by the State must be transferred to the municipalities; 75% of this amount is distributed according to the criteria established in the Constitution, and each state may define its distribution criteria for the remaining 25%. Thus, the distribution criteria can be directed to the measures implemented by the municipalities related to the environment and relevant to the scale and context of each one. Thus, this mechanism can contribute significantly to the expansion of existing protected areas and the creation of new ones.

In 2019, the project partnered with IPAM, TNC and SOS Mata Atlântica Foundation to compile available information on the subject. A detailed document on state legislations related to Ecological ICMS was produced and subsequently published on [Proteja platform](#), which gathers content on protected areas in Brazil and is managed by civil society organizations. An unforeseen - but positive - effect of this action was to bring the Department of Protected Areas of the Ministry of the Environment (DAP/MMA) closer to organized civil society.

In **Colombia**, the document [Recommendations for the Incorporation of Conservation Areas and Economic Instruments in Municipal Land Use Planning](#) was prepared as guidance material for local governments and other stakeholders interested in promoting conservation areas and instruments that guarantee their sustainability. The work was preceded by a diagnosis of how Colombian municipalities approach the incorporation of environmental conservation into their territorial planning. To conduct it, case studies and participatory workshops carried out in different regions of the country were analyzed, from which the recommendations of the document were generated.

The booklet covers the following types of instruments:

- **Management instruments:** they enable streamlining land appropriation, land transformation or its conservation and allow actions to be carried out within the regulatory framework.
- **Economic instruments:** they have four classifications, characterized as “command and control of the market” (taxes, tariffs, fines), “education and training” (quotas, achievements), “economic” (compensation, incentives, subsidies) and “voluntary”.
- **Financing instruments:** these correspond to sources of resources for credits and actions such as project formulation and intervention in physical structures, characterized as “earmarked” and “development”.

Fedemunicipios, which operates with great capillarity in the country, was responsible for disseminating the document. The content was also adapted to structure a free virtual course, offered by the ESAP platform since November 2020, in which 2603 people have

participated between 2020 and 2021. The municipalities have stated that both the booklet and the course have been very useful to broaden their knowledge on the subject and to know in detail all the tools they have access to and did not know before.

In **Ecuador**, a proposal was designed for a Financial Sustainability Strategy for protected areas/conservation of the GADs. The proposal was developed considering the SNAP's Financial Sustainability Strategy, based on the guidelines for the elaboration of Financial Sustainability Plans for the State's Natural Areas Patrimony, which had been implemented previously. The financing mechanisms contemplated in the strategy correspond to fees and tariffs, international cooperation resources and public funds, among others.

Sustainability

In the context of biodiversity conservation, sustainability is defined as the ability of a specific area to maintain itself over time and guarantee ecosystem services in the present, without harming the conditions for future existence.

A Training Course on Protected Area Management and Other Conservation Measures for Local Governments was also held in the country, which included a session on financial mechanisms. One of the objectives of the training was to disseminate the mechanisms identified in the Strategy for Financial Sustainability of the GADs, both at the level of local protected areas through the promotion for the development of financial sustainability plans and for the OECMs in the implementation of possible financial mechanisms.

In **Peru**, the project supported the diagnosis of 90 conservation initiatives under the OECM criteria, where the possible financial mechanisms available to these initiatives to manage the conservation of their areas were also identified. Such information

made it possible to learn about and systematize relevant information on locally managed conservation initiatives. A course on “Biodiversity conservation management, with emphasis on ecosystems and species” was held, which included topics related to the different financial mechanisms that can be developed in conservation areas outside natural protected areas. This course is still available on MINAM’s Aprende platform in a self-instructional format.

Impacts

The main outcome of the project was the systematization of existing and dispersed information on economic and financial mechanisms to assist local governments, which needed qualified material in an appropriate language. The trainings offered provided spaces for peer-to-peer mutual learning and enabled the maturing of approaches on how to increase the financial sustainability of local protected areas. The project mobilized individuals and institutions to address the issue and contributed to creating an enabling environment to move forward in this direction.

- For local protected area managers, financial sustainability is a central issue, and it is common for municipalities to claim that they lack resources for conservation.
- Access to financial mechanisms differs from one country to another, as it depends on the combination of different types of incentives between the national and local governments, as well as national environmental legislation. It is necessary to propose differentiated solutions on the issue, which are adapted to specific contexts.
- As legislation is constantly changing, the information shared on financial mechanisms needs to be regularly updated.
- One possibility to broaden access to knowledge on the subject, including the content of the courses and materials developed by the project, would be to present them in other formats, such as videos, for example.
- To disseminate the topic, it is also advisable to prepare a “case study” on national conservation objectives and the benefits of protected areas at the local level.

Final considerations

In contrast to the start of the project in 2016, protected areas and other local conservation measures **now represent a consolidated topic on the biodiversity conservation agenda** in Latin America. **Dialogue on OECMs has expanded**, identification criteria have been discussed and future regulations have been supported. Opportunities for capacity building and exchange among local managers were provided, as the project contributed to regional conferences, workshops and training courses, in addition to active participation in conservation events already consolidated in the region.

With the association of **multiplier structures** to conduct courses in the countries involved and taking into account the project's own implementation arrangement, technical assistance was regularly offered to local governments, which also directly contributed to progress in relation to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 - "Partnerships and Means of Implementation". **By mobilizing actors** from environment ministries and subnational and local governments through a **multilevel approach**, the project gained capillarity. In this context, **the creation of the Local Protected Areas Thematic Sub-Network** by ICLEI stimulated the multiplication of connections and learning generated among subnational governments in South America.

Good practices in protected area management and other local conservation measures in the four countries **were disseminated nationally and internationally** through the **PANORAMA**⁸ platform, the new **ICLEI** website, **IUCN** website and the **Voces Locales**⁹ web series, which consists of eight short episodes on how municipalities promote biodiversity conservation, bringing together reports from environmental representatives and managers from Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. The objective is to amplify the voices of municipal actors to share best practices, opportunities and challenges in the management of local protected areas. In this way, it was possible to learn about the state of the art of protected area management and, above all, of other local conservation measures in the four countries. As defined in Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, guidelines for more equitable management were disseminated among local governments and reflection on this concept was promoted.

⁸ <https://panorama.solutions/es>

⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDAUSmB9bl3jaUVtuUy3SiL4IvdPgpUNP>

All project inputs supported the **formulation and refinement of public policies** for protected areas and other local conservation measures. The dialogue mechanisms created by the national working groups in each country contributed to the implementation of more aligned public policies among governments at all levels and civil society actors. At the international level, the project actively contributed to the **recognition of the role of local governments in biodiversity conservation in the Lima Declaration** of the III Congress of Protected Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAPLAC). As a result of this declaration, some experts from the region proposed the creation of a **working group on local protected areas** within the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA).

The project consolidated an enabling environment to support local governments in the creation and effective management of local protected areas and other local conservation measures, with legal and political support structures, strengthened key entities and actors in terms of roles and responsibilities, and instituted mechanisms for dialogue among the parties. This has broadened the possible pathways to achieve Aichi Target 11, both quantitatively and qualitatively, or to go beyond. The experiences and knowledge generated through the project have become **diverse contributions to the debate on the post-2020 biodiversity framework**.

Another very relevant aspect of the project was the **multilevel dialogue**, mainly through the working groups of each country, working together and developing useful tools to strengthen the management of the areas. This also enabled improved dialogue between the national and local levels to share experiences and perceptions on the subject. The responsibility to conserve the areas is of all levels to promote development, conservation and involve more actors in the management of the areas and in technical assistance to local governments.

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