

conservation agreements private partnership platform

COLOMBIA - Saving mangroves to save communities' way of life

ACTIVE
until Dec. 2018

In the southwest corner of the Nariño Department on Colombia's Pacific coast, women clam collectors, called "piangueras," forage in groups, often accompanied by their children as they harvest the clams at low tide. These women are members of the 10 Afro-Colombian communities in the municipality of Santa Bárbara de Iscuandé that together form the Community Council Esfuerzo Pescador, the local ethnic authority.

In 2015 Conservation International (CI) Colombia and local NGO Asociación Calidris engaged the Community Council in a "conservation agreement" to ensure the sustainable management of the mangrove ecosystems and thus the piangua population. Approximately 2,200 people from 561 families are committed to conserve 12,000 hectares of one of Colombia's most pristine mangrove forests.

What is a "conservation agreement"?

It is a deal between a community and a group or person funding a conservation project. In exchange for making specific conservation commitments, communities receive benefits from the funder.

THE COMMUNITIES AGREE TO:

- Stop catching, selling and consuming piangua smaller than 5cm (the legal minimum size in Colombia)
- Establish temporary non-use areas, rotational extraction areas and experimental plots
- Participate in monitoring
- Establish community conservation strategy for piangua
- Monitor illegal activities inside the ethnic territory and mangrove areas

IN RETURN FOR:

- Trainings on monitoring ecosystems and species identification, leadership, and legislation
- Annual supplies for piangua extraction (boots, gloves, t-shirts, balaclavas, etc.)

INVESTMENT

CAPPP: \$60,000

Calidris: \$30,000

IMPLEMENTER

Asociación Calidris is a national NGO with more than 25 years of experience monitoring shorebirds along Colombian and other Latin American coasts.

PARTNERS

Esfuerzo Pescador Community Council

- Local ethnic council representing 10 communities

Corponariño

- Regional environmental authority

Visión Pacífico

- National program within the Environmental Ministry



MONITORING

This conservation agreement is embedded in CI Colombia's Conservation for Development (C&D) program, which has its own impact indicators, including:

- Number of sensible species protected (relative abundance)
- Number of hectares protected in strategic ecosystems
- Number of direct beneficiaries
- Number of institutional alliances created
- Quantity of funds over a 2016-2017 baseline
- Percentage of income per capita change over each conservation agreement baseline
- Number of informed persons (e.g., likes on social media)

RESULTS TO DATE

98% of local people following the size rules

150+ people trained on monitoring protocols species identification, administration and legislation

352 families receiving direct economic benefits

Adaptive Capacity Index increased by 16 points, meaning these communities are growing more resilient to external changes

PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

Supply chains: Given how much the communities of Iscuandé rely on fishing products to survive, we linked Esfuerzo Pescador Community Council to EcoGourmet, a program that enhances the technical and administrative capacities of artisanal fishing cooperatives to achieve responsible fishing.

Building small local enterprises: A regional assessment indicated that small enterprises as alternative economic opportunities for local associations could provide additional income and reduce direct threats to mangrove ecosystems. In 2018-2019 we will develop business plans for at least two different economic alternatives.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The conservation agreement has been approved by the Regional Environmental Authority as part of their activities, and we aim to integrate it as part of their annual action plan. Moving forward, our strategy is fourfold:

- **Strengthen the program's participatory monitoring systems** to measure the impact of conservation agreements in order to improve biological conservation, and develop local capacities to administrate natural resources and improve conservation priority actions,
- **Create a leadership program** and the first "School of Leaders" program "as a long-term strategy to strengthen local governance and improve adaptive capacity
- **Implement efficient communication strategies** to increase awareness of mangrove conservation and sustainable use in the area
- **Promote entrepreneurship** to minimize pressure on local ecosystems, provide new economic opportunities, and generate financial mechanisms to create a long-term sustainability for mangrove conservation



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