

Indigenous joint management of the Pilón Lajas Biosphere Reserve forest and watershed

Bolivia The Pilón Lajas Biosphere Reserve in La Paz and Beni Departments

In response to threats to local ecosystems, forest resources, and watersheds, the Tsimané Mosekene Regional Council was created to protect the rights of local indigenous communities and advance conservation and sustainable agriculture and forestry plans.

Nature-based Intervention:

Tsimané Mosekene Regional Council (CRTM) promotes the sustainable joint management of resources in the reserve including through the advancement of projects aimed to conserve and safeguard wildlife and promote sustainable agricultural methods. Sustainable agricultural methods have created alternative livelihood options including organic honey, coffee, and cocoa production managed by local associations. Furthermore, a sustainable forestry joint management plan and various methods for protecting water basins that supply water to thousands of people in the Reserve have been implemented. This same forest management mandate led to the expulsion of the logging industry in the Reserve serving to protect wildlife in the area.

Overview of context and outcomes:

The CRTM works in the Pilón Lajas Biosphere Reserve to conserve biodiversity and protect the rights of 22 indigenous communities inside the reserve. CRTM has consolidated the indigenous property rights over nearly 1,500 square miles of land. The Council has also constructed schools across 14 communities in the Reserve.

Case effectiveness on

Climate change

Mitigation: Not reported

Adaptation: Not reported

Ecosystem health

Ecological effect: Positive

Through the expulsion of logging, implemented restrictions on illegal hunting within the reserve, and the instigation of a joint management plan, populations of animals that were once observed to be seriously endangered or rarely observed are reported to be recovering. Anecdotal evidence reports that it is now common to spot groups of peccaries, monkeys, macaws and other species that were previously difficult to find.



Photo © David Geere

Targets poor/disadvantaged
Conducted at landscape scale

Intervention type

Protection

Ecosystem type

Tropical & subtropical forests

Montane/Alpine

Terrestrial production

Instigators

Local NGO or CBO (eg. indigenous)

National government/agency

Societal challenges

Biodiversity conservation

Economic and Social development

Food security

Water security

Literature info

Grey literature

Case methodology not reported

External case resources

Read resource 1

Socioeconomics

The Biosphere's watershed is reportedly better protected compared to before the formation of the CRTM. An estimated 30% increase in family income has been observed since 2005 due to the sale of surplus agricultural production and improved access to fruits and animals within the reserve. Jobs were also reportedly created for the management of the reserve.