MOUNTAIN FORESTS & BIODIVERSITY IN ECUADOR

IPROMO COURSE 2010

RAÚL CÓRDOVA

FOREST ECOLOGIST

TECHNICAL CONSULTANT FAO – ECUADOR

NEW FOREST LAW

PRACATINAT 10.07.2010

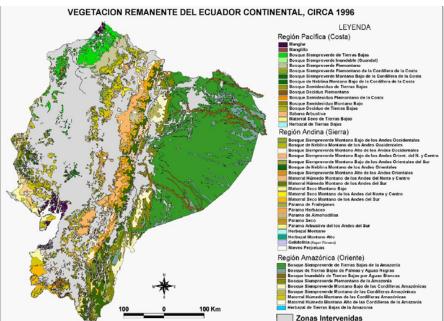
MAIN ECUADORIAN FORESTS TYPES



- Humid tropical forest (Amazon and coastal area).
- **Dry forest (coast and Andean valleys).**
- Andean Forest (High lands and west and east slopes).
- Mangrove (coast).
- Palm forest Moretales (Amazon area)

ECUADORIAN FORESTS - MAIN PROBLEMS





- Original forest cover loss: Coast 80%, Highlands 50%, Amazon 30%
- Highest deforestation in South America, aprox. 200.000 ha/year (illegal logging, inefficient control and monitoring of cutting and management programs, mobilization & commercialization, agricultural frontier expansion, corruption).
- Inefficient management, administration and control tools and instruments (legislation, research, technology, inaccurate forest data).
- Forest management focused mainly in timber products, NTFP, social and environmental functions and services undervaluated.















ECUADORIAN BIODIVERSITY

Ecuador is one of 17 megadiverse countries on the world (256.370 Km², 0.19% of the world).

Megadiversity due to:

- **Geographical position in the equatorial zone**
- **Andes mountain range**
- Influence of ocean currents on the coasts
- The continental 200 ocean miles &
- **Presence of Galápagos islands + 200 ocean miles**



ECUADORIAN BIODIVERSITY (cont.)

- **16.087 vascular plants species.**
- Around 2000 tree species.
- **4.011 endemic plants species.**
- There are estimated 20.000 plant species when the botanical studies are completed.
- **382 mammal species in constant increasing (9th position on the world and 4th in South America)**
- 1.626 bird species (4th on the world, 18% of the total world species).
- 441 amphibian species (3th on the world, 10% of the total world species.
- 396 reptile species (8th on the world).













Raúl Córdova



ECUADORIAN BIODIVERSITY (cont.) Ecosystems

- **4 natural regions (Coast, highlands, Amazonia and Galapagos islands).**
- 9 zoogeographic zones.
- **329** bioclimatic regions and 25 life zones.
- **46** plant formations from glaciers to tropical forest and beaches.
- ② marine zones and 2 bioregions in front of continental coasts and & 3 marine zones and 5 bioregions around Galapagos islands.
- **2** of the 34 hot spots on the world.



ECUADORIAN BIODIVERSITY (cont.) Human biodiversity

- ** 15 indigenous nationalities with their own language and culture (Awa, Epera, Chachi, Tsachila, Cofan, Secoya, Siona, Huaorani, Zapara, Amazonian Kichwa, Siwiar, Shuar, Achuar, Andoa, Highland Kichwa) and Peoples (Otavalo, Purua, Kitukara, Kayambi, Panzaleo, Pasto, Afro Americans, Montubio, etc.) + mestizo and white people.
- Indigenous nationalities and peoples are a very important part of the ecuadorian genetic biodiversity.







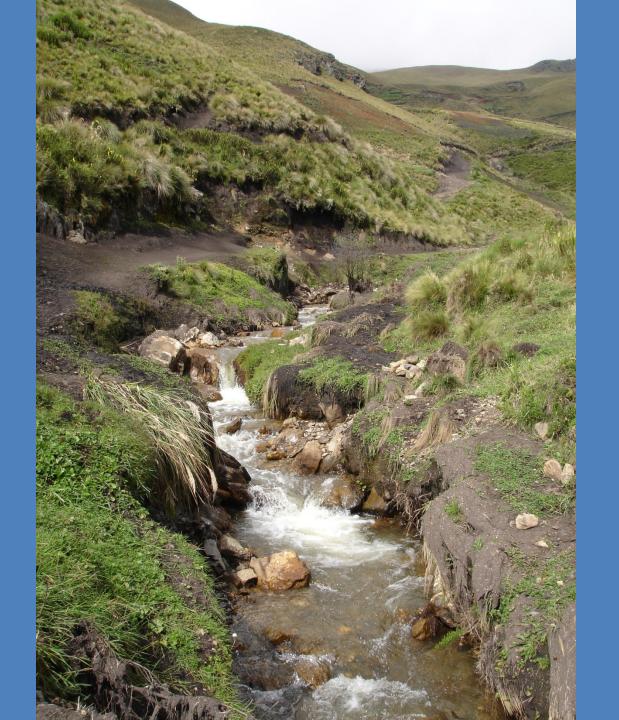
ANDEAN FORESTS

- All forests above 900 m in the west slope and 1300 m in the east slope (about 4'605.517 ha, remaining vegetation).
- Herbaceous páramo, dry páramo, shrubby páramo, frailejón páramo, etc.
- **64%** of the Ecuadorian floristic biodiversity are included in these forests, with a high levels of endemism (60%).
- One of the most threaten zones in Ecuador (agricultural activities, exotic monoculture forest plantations (eucalyptus and pines), grazing.

ANDEAN FORESTS (cont.)

- Very Important formations to produce and catch fresh water, most of the water supply of Ecuadorian cities and villages depends on these forests.
- Very important traditional Ecuadorian crops are produced in this zone (Potato Solanus tuberosum, Melloco Ullucus tuberosus Oca Oxalis tuberosa, Quinua Chenopodium quinoa, Chocho Lupinus mutabilis, Maíz Zea mays, etc.).
- Representative indigenous groups live and depend on these formations (many highland Kichwa peoples, Shuar and Achuar).
- Colonist people also depends on these forests incrementing the pressure (agriculture and illegal logging).
- **Solution** Of the most important mining areas.





















NEW ECUADORIAN FOREST LAW MAIN ISSUES

- Sustainable forest management based on the Ecosystem Approach.
- Use and conservation of the State Forest: primary and secondary native forests, plantations, agroforestry systems.
- Multifunctional forest use: timber, NTFP, environmental services.
- Forest management planning: zonification, inventory, property register, generate accurate scientific forest information, use of GIS techniques.
- Interinstitucional and intersectorial work.
- Second use limitation based on the environmental and social function of the property.

NEW ECUADORIAN FOREST LAW MAIN ISSUES (cont.)

- Participation: public & private sector, local communities, indigenous groups in specific who own the 70 % all the total forest.
- National Forest management Council.
- Decentralization and Desconcentration, specially in the control and monitoring issues to the local governments (municipalities).
- Forest incentives: National Forest Fund, tax exonerations, economical incentives for sustainable forest management practices.
- Sustainable forest development: research, certification, industry, forest extension

