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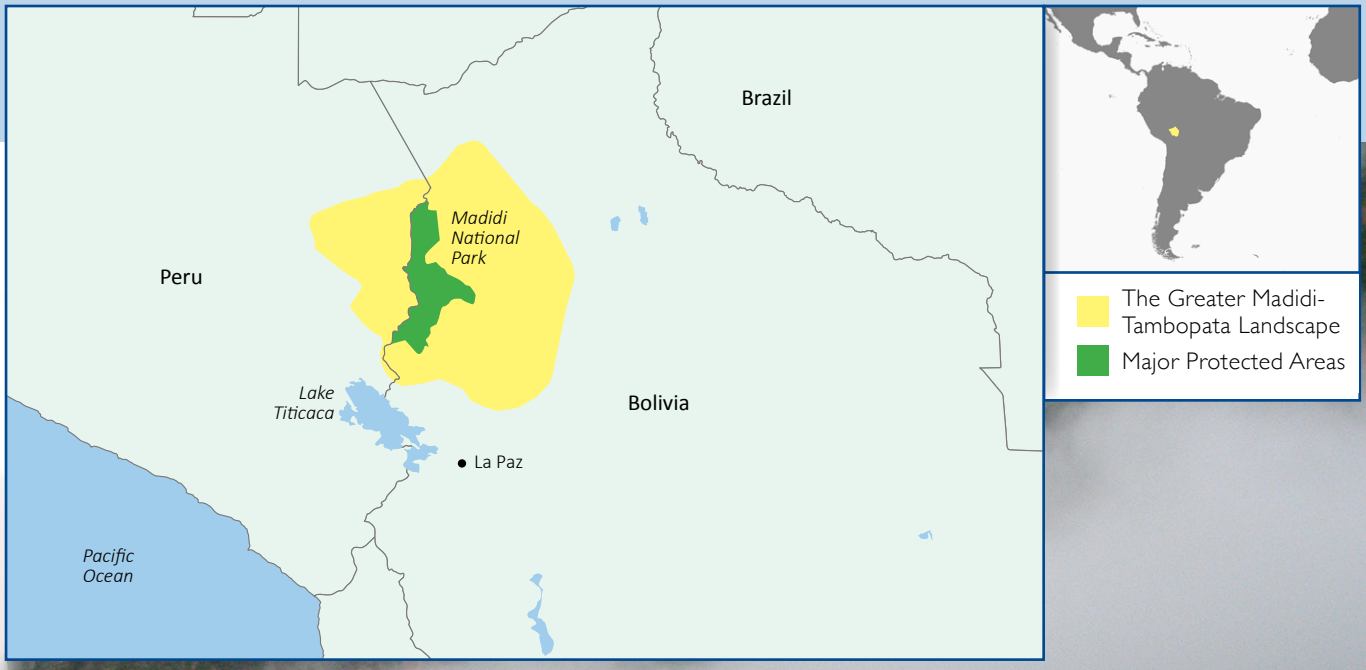
SCAPES LANDSCAPE PROFILE:

THE GREATER MADIDI-TAMBOPATA LANDSCAPE



MADIDI NATIONAL PARK, BOLIVIA, 2009: Mist rises above the Beni River, one of the main gateways to Madidi National Park. Photo by Andrew Tobiason, USAID

THE GREATER MADIDI-TAMBOPATA LANDSCAPE AT A GLANCE

- The Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscape covers 110,000 square kilometers of the eastern flanks of the Andes Mountains, spreading from northwestern Bolivia into southeastern Peru.
- SCAPES interventions included technical support to government authorities for protected areas management, assisting indigenous communities in land use plans and transboundary cooperation for wildlife monitoring.
- The project was implemented by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).

THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE

The Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscape teems with life. Flowing across the borders of Bolivia and Peru, it supports more than 1,000 bird, 300 mammal and 12,000 plant species. It also harbors the endangered Andean condor, jaguar, marsh deer, maned wolf, Andean bear, military macaw and giant otter. The Bahuaja Sonene National Park, for example, which is part of the Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscape covers less than 1 percent of Peru's territory but contains more than 33 percent of mammal and 25 percent of bird species in the country.

Like many of the world's vital landscapes, however, the Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscape is in peril. The threats are manifold: road construction; the expansion of gas, oil and hydropower projects; illegal timber extraction; mining; an expanding agricultural frontier; and proposed agro-energy projects. Together, these forces could rupture the delicate balance of life in the landscape and place unpredictable stresses on the people who depend on it. The Tacana people, for example, have lived in or near the Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscape for hundreds of years, and sections of the landscape are part of the Tacana Indigenous Territory (TCO), a legally autonomous region.

The Tacana people are not alone in confronting the region's conservation challenges. Government officials from the municipal to the national levels need detailed information and a broad set of skills to devise policy and put plans into motion. All parties, from indigenous leaders to transboundary authorities, must work in tandem to safeguard the integrity of the landscape.

APOLOBAMBA, BOLIVIA, 2008: Alpacas. Photo by WCS

APOLOBAMBA, BOLIVIA, 2009: In the high, snow-capped Andes, farmers raise alpaca in cold, harsh conditions. Predatory animals, like foxes, attack the alpaca young. Photo Julie Larson Maher, WCS

THE CHALLENGE

The Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscape was one of nine transboundary landscape-scale efforts under USAID's Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES) project. In this landscape, the project focused on five protected areas and six indigenous communities in Bolivia and Peru. By catering to the needs of authorities at all levels — from local and indigenous to municipal, national and transboundary — the project had broad appeal, and authorities have begun to gather and share information in pursuit of conservation goals.

WCS helped the Tacana formalize a process to develop and update indigenous territory Life Plans (management plans) that establish rights and regulations for land use. All 20 communities within the TCO implemented the methodology, and through censuses, participatory rural appraisals and field data collection, they were able to assess the previous decade of territorial management. The Life Plans include sustainable business opportunities derived from natural resources within their territory, and the project supported initiatives in ecotourism, timber management, livestock raising and wild cacao. The Tacana Indigenous Council (CIPTA), a governing body, is largely self-sustaining based on taxes levied upon and paid by these enterprises, and CIPTA is committed to public accountability in its finances to maintain social cohesion and promote stronger governance. The project's work with the CIPTA on these matters has helped the body become a model for other indigenous governments.

WCS also provided technical assistance to the national parks authority of Peru (SERNANP) to better monitor its protected areas. That included training in the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART), used to measure, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of wildlife law enforcement patrols and site-based conservation activities. By harnessing information and stressing accountability, SMART allows authorities to direct resources to where they are most needed. Based on the results in SERNANP, the government of Peru has committed to adopting SMART across its whole protected area network.

Project staff helped update the management plans for the Bahuaja Sonene National Park and the Tambopata National Reserve, and they provided technical assistance to other conservation areas. For example, they taught guards in Manu National Park how to use GPS to improve data collection, and they worked with the Tacana to monitor the sustainability of wildlife use, such as hunting and fishing. Using this information, CIPTA and project staff has created curricula for schools, so that teachers and children develop the consciousness and capacity to engage in conservation activities.

The project brought its conservation message to the Peruvian public through the *Bahuaja Sonene: Conoce, Inspira* initiative. This innovative outreach campaign relied on concerts, art and photo exhibits, a fashion collection and signature dishes in some of Lima's top restaurants to highlight the importance of the Bahuaja Sonene National Park and protected areas in general. The effort has now expanded to Manu National Park.

For landscape conservation to be viable over the long term, transboundary issues must be addressed. The project helped authorities in Peru and Bolivia with joint control and vigilance patrols. Park guards from both countries also agreed to monitor 10 wildlife species in a comparable manner in order to strengthen data collection. This brought down costs and built trust, not to mention its benefits for wildlife protection.

MANU NATIONAL PARK, PERU, 2013: A park ranger takes notes during training. Monitoring techniques refined in the Great Madidi-Tambopata landscape were applied to neighboring Manu National Park. Photo by WCS

THE LESSONS

Transboundary projects, by their very nature, must negotiate with representatives from more than one government. If one of those governments changes its commitment to the project, the project must adjust. In the Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscape, WCS had to relinquish its work in Bolivia, where it had invested the most, because the government of Bolivia requested that all USAID projects cease to operate in that country. Such high-level political matters are beyond the control of the project, and are often beyond USAID's ability to forecast when planning projects. Fortunately, by using adaptive management principles, WCS was able to shift its resources to Peru and achieve more there than it had anticipated at the inception of the project.

In Peru, two national parks within the Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscapeare threatened by the encroachment of some 30,000 illegal gold miners. Illegal logging for cedar and mahogany is a persistent problem, and coca growing and drug trafficking bring an additional element of lawlessness to the region. Dealing with potential violence makes conservation work in the Greater Madidi-Tambopata landscape even more challenging.

TACANA INDIGENOUS TERRITORY, BOLIVIA, 2009: More than 20 community-based enterprises promote the sustainable use of natural resources and inform about the high degree of biodiversity through ecotourism. Photo by Julie Larson Maher, WCS

TAMBOPATA NATIONAL RESERVE, PERU, 2010: Gold mining along the Tambopata River. Photo by Santiago de la Puente/CSA-UPCH