

COLOMBIA

Promoting Environmental Security and Poverty Alleviation in the Matavén area of Colombia

IES EnviroSecurity Assessments

A major proportion of the world's ecosystems and the services they perform for society and nature is being degraded or used unsustainably. This process affects human wellbeing in several ways. The growing scarcity of natural resources creates a growing risk for human and political conflicts and hinders sustainable development and the poverty alleviation that depends on it. Situations involving resource abundance can also be related to serious environmental degradation, increased community health risks, crime and corruption, threats to human rights and violent conflicts - in short, to a decrease of security.

The overall objective of IES EnviroSecurity Assessments is to secure the natural resource livelihood basis on the local, regional and international level. IES pursues this objective along the following mutually related lines: (1) the conservation of ecosystems and their related services, (2) the implementation of the international legal order, (3) the provision of economic incentives for maintenance of ecosystem services, and (4) empowerment of relevant actors and dissemination of results.



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The Institute for Environmental Security (IES) is an international non-profit non-governmental organisation established in 2002 in The Hague, The Netherlands with liaison offices in Brussels, London and Washington, D.C.

The Institute's mission is: "To advance global environmental security by promoting the maintenance of the regenerative capacity of life-supporting eco-systems."

Our multidisciplinary work programme - Horizon 21 - integrates the fields of science, diplomacy, law, finance and education and is designed to provide policy-makers with a methodology to tackle environmental security risks in time, in order to safeguard essential conditions for sustainable development.

Key objectives of the Horizon 21 programme are:

- **SCIENCE:** Create enhanced decision tools for foreign policy makers, donors and their target groups on regional, national and local levels;
- **DIPLOMACY:** Promote effective linkages between environment, security and sustainable development policies;
- **LAW:** Contribute to the development of a more effective system of international law and governance;
- **FINANCE:** Introduce new and innovative financial mechanisms for the maintenance of the globe's life supporting ecosystems;
- **EDUCATION:** Build the environmental knowledge capital of people and organisations.

Our mission and programme should be seen in the context of promoting international sustainable development goals and as a contribution toward long-term poverty alleviation.



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Recommendations from the Matavén Area of Colombia Case Study

A. ON MONITORING AND MAPPING

1. A continuous, radar-based monitoring system has to be developed and installed so as to assist the local (indigenous) authorities in the management of these territories and to effectively relate to the outside forces which impact on these territories and the management thereof or which may do so in the future.
2. The development of the system has to be done in close consultation with the local authorities, using their own cartography and ecological calendar and the cartography developed by the GEF project 2001-2004, so as to programme the monitoring also in conformity with the local needs in space and time.
3. The local communities and authorities have to be trained and empowered to make optimal use of the monitoring data and to act as "groundtruthers" for these data. This training can best be done by NGOs with permanent field presence in the region and with full knowledge of the local cultures and with intimate sensitivity for the timing of the various activities (the "rhythm of the region").
4. Consultations have to be set up about who, in the Colombian context, can best manage such a monitoring system, and with whom, in what form and at what time the data have to be shared. While data concerning the Matavén area itself obviously have to be shared with the local authorities, data about relevant outside forces may also have to be shared with higher levels of policy and authority.

recommended that the donor community investing in programmes to strengthen indigenous rights and conservation of biodiversity expresses its concern about this incompatibility to the national government of Colombia. In general, internationally induced forces to privatise and commercialise biologically and resource rich natural environments undermining existing legislation protecting biological and cultural diversity should be scrutinised carefully by the donor community.

9. As has been extensively discussed in the report mentioned under 8., further ratification and implementation of ILO 169 is of the utmost importance for the future of the Matavén region in particular and of the indigenous (territorial) rights in general. It is recommended to the international human rights diplomacy to take note of the conclusions of this part of the report and to promote the further ratification and implementation of ILO 169 at the appropriate fora.
10. Idem for the recommendations and the conclusions of the visit of UN Special Rapporteur Rodolfo Stavenhagen in March 2004 to Colombia - see also the analysis of the Stavenhagen report for the Amazon Programme of the Dutch Embassy of October 2005.
11. On 16 August 2005 an agreement (convenio) was concluded between ACATISEMA, the association of traditional indigenous authorities in Matavén and their Venezuelan counterparts at the other side of the Orinoco, the Asociación Comunitaria Caño Grulla, to regulate fishing in their section of the Orinoco. It is recommended to highlight this as a success of indigenous transboundary diplomacy and as further justification to strengthen indigenous authority and management in law and practice.

C. ON ECONOMICS AND FINANCE

12. The Matavén area is extremely rich in biodiversity. It is an important part of the Orinoco basin and its forests store and sequester large amounts of carbon and thus play a key role in the climate stabilisation. It is recommended to start the process of valuation of these ecosystem services and to deve-

5. Since the Matavén area is part of the wider Guiana Shield ecoregion, stretching from Colombia into Venezuela, Brazil and the three Guianas, the monitoring should be part of the monitoring system proposed by the Guiana Shield Initiative (GSI), in which an important role is to be played by the Brazilian SIVAM programme (Sistema da Vigilância da Amazônia), which is also a radar-based system. In this respect the system should contribute to address problematic transboundary issues between that part of Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil.

6. Periodically the maps as produced for this case-study for Colombia will have to be updated. It is proposed to do this as part of the updating of the interactive maps recommended by IES to the Amazon Programme of the Dutch Embassy in Bogotá.

B. ON LEGAL ISSUES

7. Colombia has one of the most advanced legal systems in the world. This holds especially for the constitutional provisions and legislation regarding indigenous communities. Also, Colombia has ratified the ILO 169 Convention, the most important international legal instrument for indigenous rights. Furthermore, Colombia is Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and it was under Colombian political leadership that the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was negotiated. As international agreements have pre-eminence in the hierarchy of Colombian law, it is important that the compatibility of proposed national legislation with these international arrangements is on the agenda of the consultations of the international donor community and diplomacy with the national government.
8. There is obviously serious incompatibility between the proposed Forest Law (Ley Forestal) and the under point 7 mentioned international agreements - for an extended analysis see the report "Contribución al análisis de la problemática en el resguardo de Matavén, Colombia: perspectivas nacionales e internacionales" by Fundación Gaia Amazonas as commissioned by IES. It

lopp systems of actual payments for these services. This should be done in close cooperation with the Guiana Shield Initiative which has applied to the European Union to set up pilot projects for payment mechanisms in the Guiana Shield eco-region, one of them in the Matavén region, and with the Nature Valuation and Financing-Network based at the Wageningen University. These services should remain in the public domain and not be privatised!

13. The proposed trust fund construction for the "Mosaïque of protected areas in Colombia" could be a model or even the actual vehicle for the long-term financing of the management of the Matavén region. It is recommended to carefully study this construction from this perspective.
14. Now that "avoided deforestation" has been accepted as eligible for compensation under the Climate Change Convention, Colombia should promote the operationalisation of a compensation mechanism, as soon as possible.



Matavén area - COLOMBIA

Colombia is a country where (indigenous) communities are driven off their lands by guerrilla and paramilitary warfare and the cultivation or the eradication of illegal crops. Forest restoration and compensation for ecosystem services may help to decrease conflicts. The violence, the cultivation of illegal crops and their eradication by pesticides and fumigation lead to forest destruction and serious water pollution. The conflicts are now also spilling over into the neighbouring countries. The challenge now for Colombia is to protect its wealth of ecosystem services and the indigenous people's culture and way of life. To achieve this it must be able to enforce laws, provide its people with security and viable alternatives. Fundamental to achieving the challenges are not only payments for ecosystem services, e.g. carbon sequestration, from foreign donors but also remote sensing monitoring of these ecosystems in order to prioritize problematic areas.

Coca Cultivation in Colombia

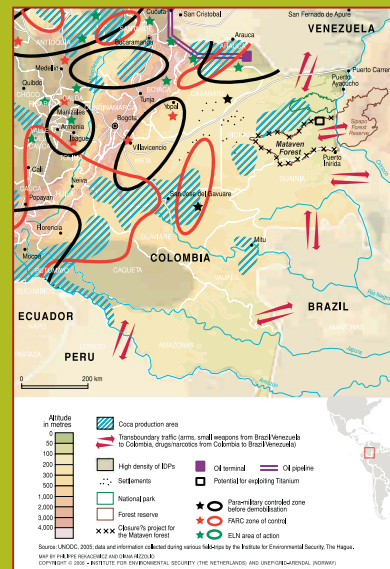
In a 15 year period starting in the 1970's 700,000 ha of Amazon rain forest was cleared for planting coca. In 2004 there were 80,000 ha of coca being cultivated in Colombia (UNODC Colombia, 2005). Colombia supplies 70-80% (estimate until 1997) of the global cocaine market.

Despite the fact that it is illegal, coca is a "good" means of livelihood for the coca growers. However, the presence of coca fields can result in environmental destruction, e.g. through deforestation, soil erosion and water sedimentation, chemical pollution, as well as conflicts over resources and forced displacement of people.

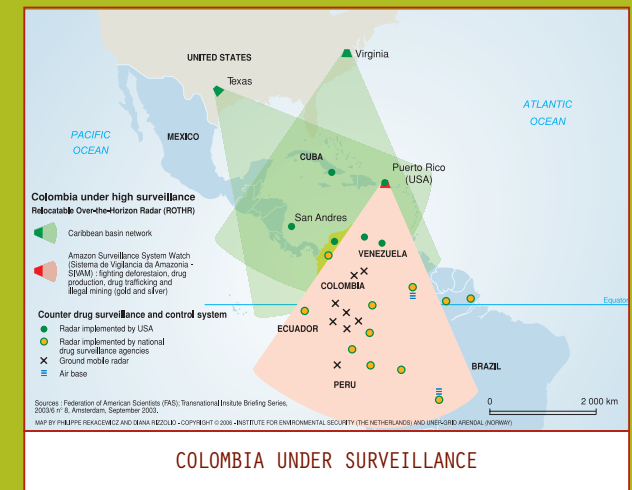
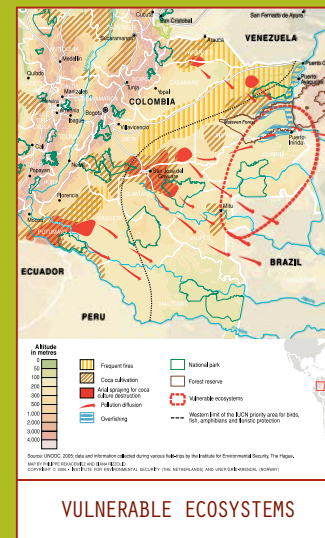
Matavén



COCA CULTIVATION IN COLOMBIA



THREATS TO THE MATAVÉN FOREST



The full report, legal analysis, and related documents for this case study are available on-line. Also the 'Vision' Interactive GIS Interface can be used to select and view maps with various analytical indicators for different time periods in this study area. Go to: