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“Utilisation of diversity in land use systems:
Sustainable and organic approaches to meet human needs”

Recuperation and Conservation of Native Fruit Species in Protected Areas, Bolivia

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Abstract

The diversity of tree-fruit species in the Amazon, apart from representing the nutritional basis of native populations and rural settlers, may provide sustainable alternative income sources for rural producers. Yet, climate change and forest conversion are threatening many wild species, some of which unknown, with very high genetic diversity including resistance or tolerance towards adverse conditions.

The ongoing habitat destruction means a loss not only of phylogenetic resources, but also of local ethno-botanic knowledge of high potential for future generations.

In order to develop, utilise, and conserve these resources we initiated and accompanied a participatory process with the objective to generate, document and transfer knowledge among and between traditional and other local populations in and around protected areas.

The methods used included ecological zoning, inventories, identification and characterisation, key species evaluation, regeneration management, species censuses of home garden collections as well as documentation and communication activities.

166 species from 35 botanic families were identified. 151 of these are native species, but only 15 are traditionally cultivated. The classification of the study sites lead to the identification of micro biodiversity centres, in which we develop participatory *in situ* conservation strategies.

We finally assess the potential and limitations a regional scaling-up of our approach to conserve and add value to biodiversity in the Amazon region.

Keywords: Bolivia, *in situ* conservation