Identification of Gaps in the Community Forestry within the REDD+ Project in the Peruvian Amazon

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Introduction

Conservation concessions (CC) within the REDD+ project have been promoted as mechanisms to protect the primary forest from anthropogenic disturbances in the Peruvian Amazon [1] [2]. However, economic activities by human settlements located in buffer zones of those concessions, have affected the common forest resources given to these groups.

Objectives

Determine the effects of the forest utilization on the communal land governed by the agroforestry community (indigenous origin) of Gran Pajaten located in the buffer zone of the CC Montecristo (81,055 ha), (San Martin, Peru). This buffer zone share areas which belong to the National Park Río Abiseo.
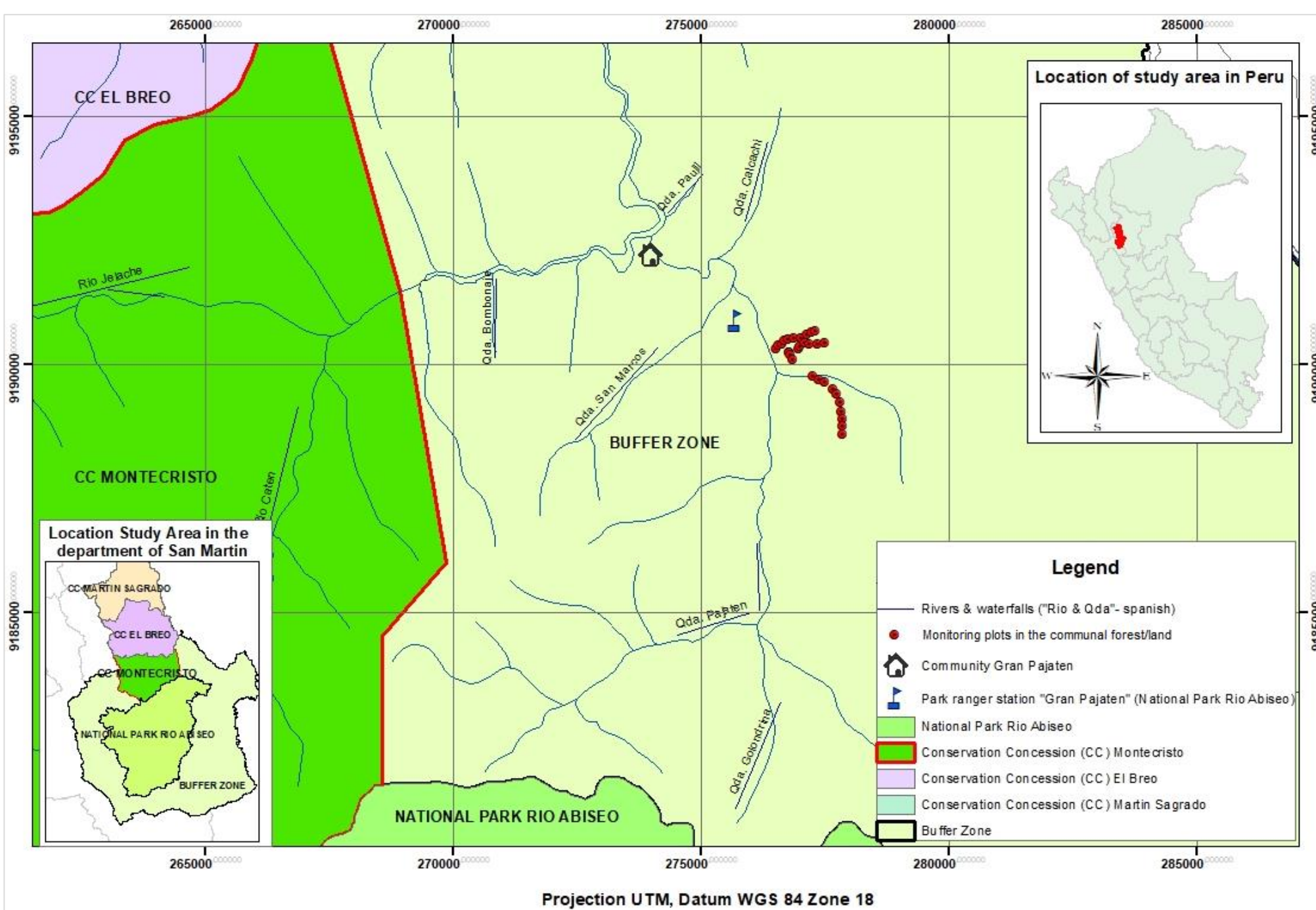

Figure 1. Location of the study area

Materials and Methods

Different workshops (Focus group approach) were implemented with members of the community of Gran Pajaten and environmental authorities [3].
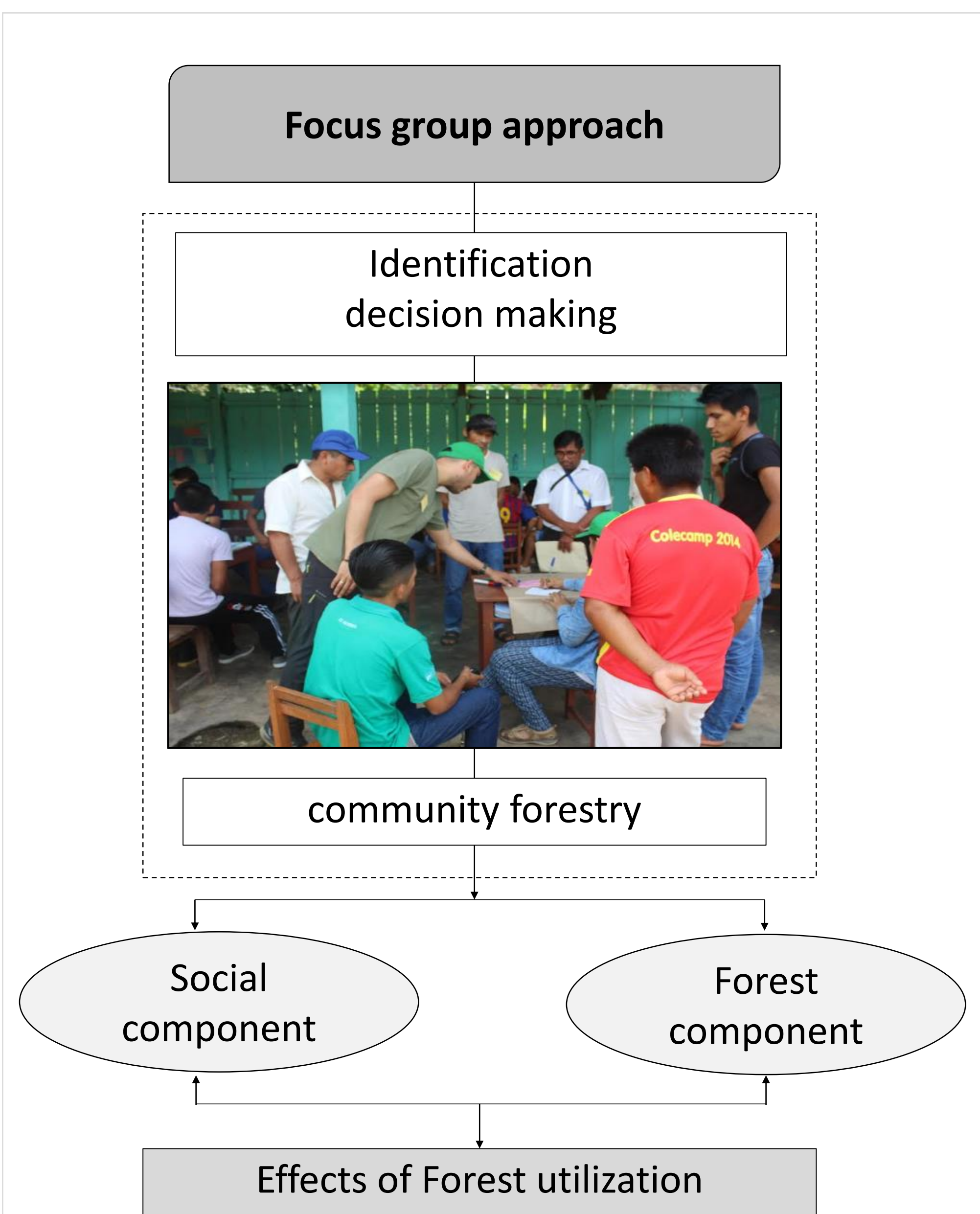

Figure 2. Focus group approach methodology

Results

- Decision making in the communal forest is made through the agreement of the Peasant Patrol or *Ronda Campesina* (*in Spanish*) which allows the community to harvest certain trees when it is very necessary. This agreement states: "It can be harvested up to two trees per person of the community, and only can be done with the purpose of self-consumption, for instance, fuelwood, construction of their houses, or improvements in their farms".

Table 1. Forest utilization information

Social component		
Population of Gran Pajaten	Approximately 300 people	
Property right of land	Without property title	
Main economic activities	Legal	Illegal
	About 80% of the population rely on agriculture as their primary economic activity, mainly cocoa, fruits, and other crops.	
Forest component		
Forest utilization based on community forestry	Selective logging based on an internal agreement only for self-consumption up to two trees per farm.	
Forest requirements to be harvested	Trees >50 cm dbh and good quality of timber	
Tools, materials, and mechanisms for harvesting		
wood extraction and transport	Mainly transported manually. When illegally harvested, transported through rivers	
Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)	No knowledge about thinning operations. Sometimes cutting vines, and not always taking care of understory (seedlings, saplings). However, they promote some species in their farms through tree nurseries (those that can represent some benefit to their agroforestry systems -AFS- with cocoa crops).	
Knowledge of certifications	Poor knowledge about FSC certifications.	
Relationship with conservation and rural development projects	Most members of the community are engaged in projects related to conservation, agroforestry, and reforestation promoted by different stakeholders.	

- Despite the significant decrease of illegal activities in the study area due to the intervention by the environmental authorities, this community cannot control illegal loggers who extract the wood anonymously, which is a complex situation because those practices are carried out in remote areas, and perhaps it could be made by people of the same community or neighboring communities.
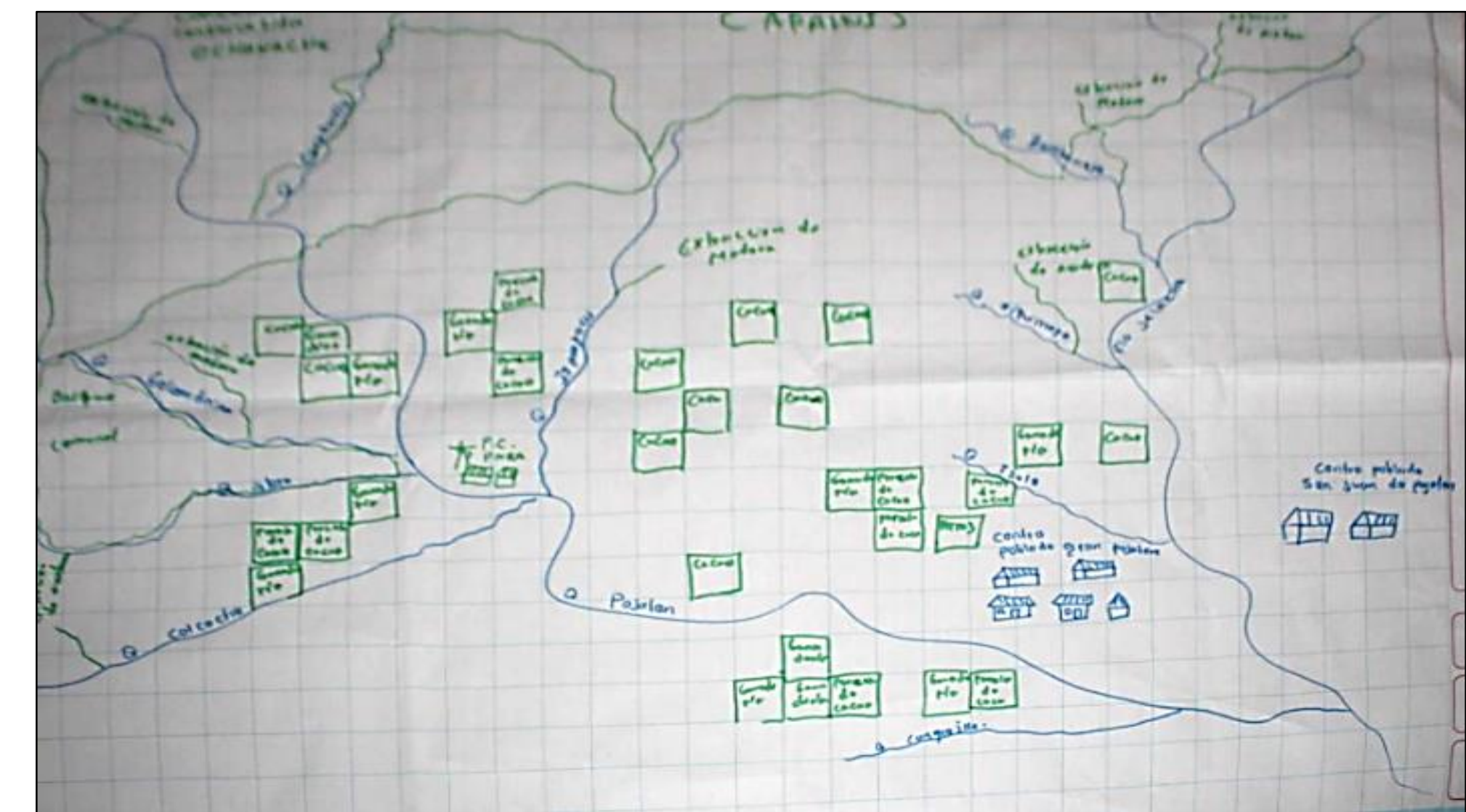

Figure 3. Social cartography - land use by the community

Figure 4. Illegal logging identification, track with forest rangers from APAHUI (Cooperative/Association of Cacao Producers of Huicungo) & SERNANP (Peruvian National Service of Protected Areas).

Valuable timber species in the study area

Alfaro (Calophyllum brasiliense) (SH)(Ca, Co)
Capirona (Capirona spruceanum) (HW)(Co, F)
Machinga (Brosimum alicastrum) (SH)(Ca ,Co)
Maschonaste (Clarisia sp.) (HW)(Co)
Cumala (Virola sp.) (SW)(Ca)
Ana Caspi (Apuleia leiocarpa) (HW)(Co)
Catahua (Hura crepitans) (SW)(Ca)
Copaiba (Copaifera paupera) (SH)(Ca, Co)
Estoraque (Myroxylon balsamum) (HW)(Co, M)
Moena (ND) (SH)(Ca, Co)
Caoba (Swietenia macrophylla) (HW)(Ca, Co)
Ishpingo (Amburana cearensis) (-)
Tornillo (Cedrelinga cateniformis) (SH)(Ca, Co)
Cedro (Cedrella sp, Cedrella odorata) (SW)(Ca)
Shihuahuaco (Dipteryx micrantha) (HW)(Co)

Medium economic value — High economic value

■ Timber species allowed for self-consumption by the community
■ Valuable timber species not allowed for internal use
Type of cutting SW= Soft Wood; SH= Semi-Hard Wood; HW= Hard Wood
Uses: Co= Construction; Ca=Carpentry; F= Fuelwood; M= Medicinal

Figure 5. Recognition of timber species used by the community

Conclusions

- Commitment and participation by the community in projects related to conservation and agroforestry practices promoted by different stakeholders.
- Forest management plans in the communal land are based only on selective logging through inaccurate practices of motor-manual operations.
- Poor practical knowledge by the community about sustainable forest management.

References

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