

THE COLLECTIVE AND THE INDIVIDUAL: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES TO THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS IN CHIAPAS, MEXICO

Dra. María del Carmen Legorreta Díaz¹
Dr. Conrado Márquez Rosano²

ABSTRACT

Although the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve in the Lacandon Jungle (Chiapas, Mexico) was created in 1978 and Lacantun Biosphere Reserve was created in 1992 under the UNESCO's Man and Biosphere programme, environmental authorities and local inhabitants have been unable to generate models for the sustainable management of the protected area's natural resources. This is of course a complex problem, given that the implication is that the public good of biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use prevails over diverse individual interests. We believe that this inertia could be unsettled by seeing this problem as an issue of democratic deficiencies in the relationship between the federal authorities and the communities that own large areas of the reserve. Although in recent years the communication and trust have grown to a certain degree between these two collective actors, there is still much to be done. But it does not only correspond to the authorities to face up to the diverse social and political challenges, but also to the communities' own institutions and ways of organization. This paper analyzes a set of tensions generated by various private individual interests that have prevailed over the interests of conservation and sustainable management in the reserve. We pay special attention to the role played by particular practices (opportunism) in the internal organization of the towns of Nueva Palestina and Frontera Corozal, located within the reserves and we analyze the effects they have on the failures and limitations to move towards a more sustainable management in the Lacandon Jungle.

¹ CEIICH-UNAM, clegorreta@unam.mx

² DCRU-UACH, cmar_ros59@yahoo.com.mx

Key words: Montes Azules and Lacantun Biospheres Reserves, Chiapas (Mexico), Environmental policy, Sustainable development, Collective action in the commons.

INTRODUCTION

In the case of the management of shared natural resources of protected areas of the Lacandon Jungle we are not faced with a challenge of collective action such as the free rider. In our opinion the problem here is a widespread political practice based on private interests (opportunism) limiting social capital, human, financial and it generate the continuing loss of natural capital. Given these dynamics we consider that the solution is to make a change in the political and cultural foundations that underpin this system of opportunism. These bases are in an overrepresentation of lack of wealth, the naturalization of practical opportunism and an identity of dependency and social vulnerability exaggerated. In this work we focus our thoughts on the logic underlying opportunistic practices. We know that this is not the only factor that influences the ways of effective management of protected areas of the Lacandon Jungle. We understand the importance of government action and other national and international actors such as NGOs. However, we believe that have not been sufficiently analyzed the endogenous factors (of the locality) which limit the sustainable management of the Lacandon Jungle and that it is very important. Our goal is to recognize the logic and internal power relations in the localities around the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve and Lacantún to highlight the importance of building on these social and human capital, and organization and collective action capable of managing natural resources sustainably and promote sustainable development.

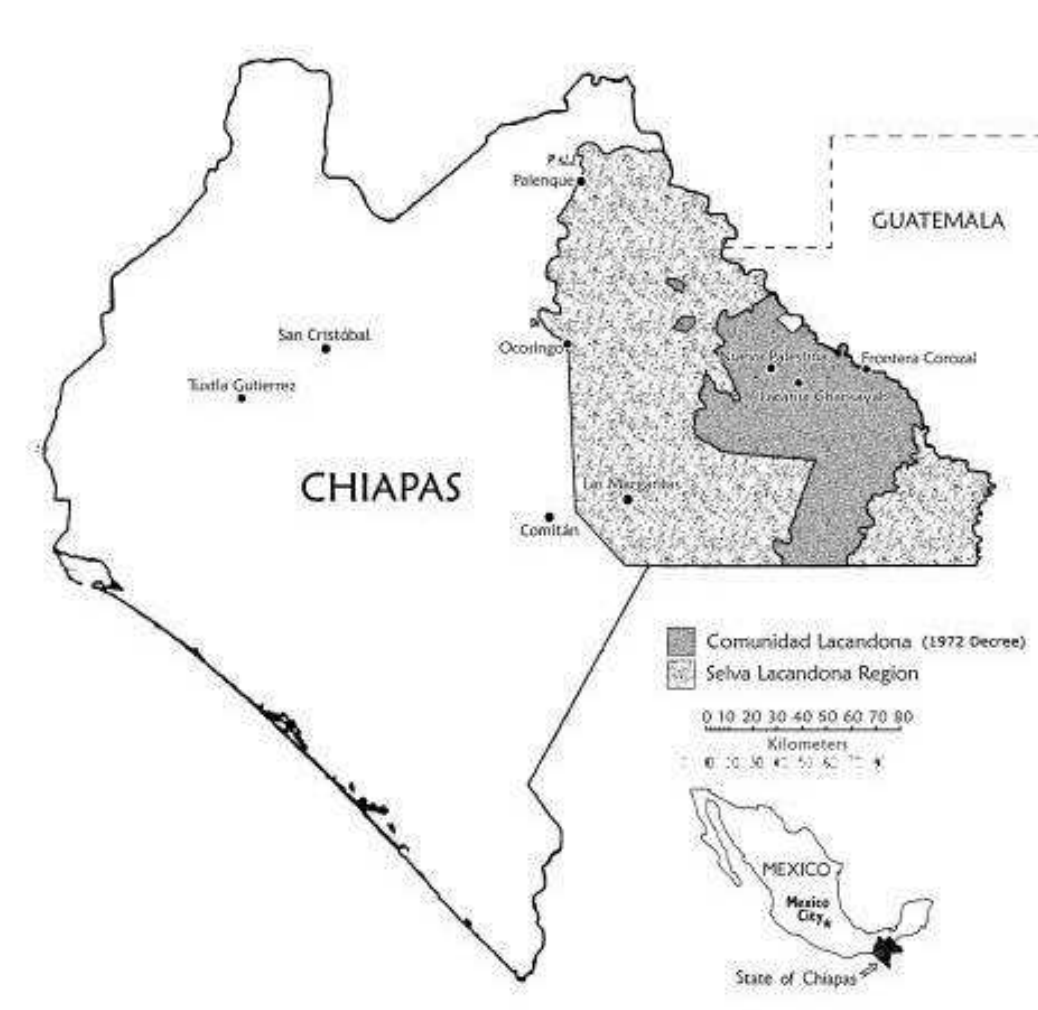


Figure 1. Location of the Lacandon Jungle region. Created by Paladino, 2005.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS IN THE LACANDON JUNGLE

The Montes Azules and Lacantun biosphere reserves are adjacent and at the present they are managed by the same department of CONANP. They are found in the Lacandonian jungle inside the municipal boundaries of Ocosingo and Maravilla Tenejapa. The Montes Azules biosphere reserve was the first to be created in Chiapas on the 12th January 1978 with an area of 331,200 hectares; and the Lacantun reserve was created on the 21st August 1992, encompassing an area of 61,874 hectares.

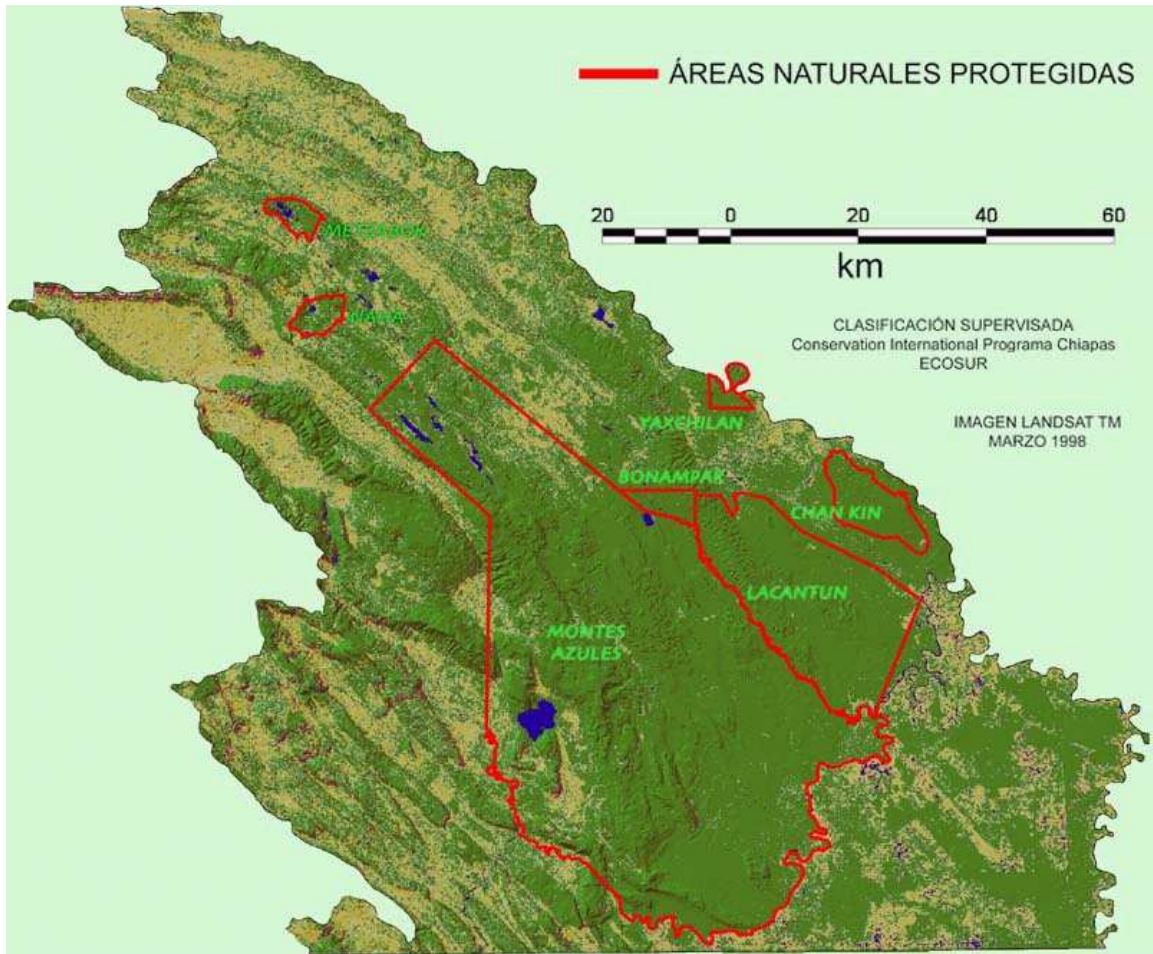


Figure 2. Protected Natural Area in Lacandon Jungle.

The populations of these reserves are mostly indigenous. Predominantly the Tzeltal group, followed in order of importance by Cho'ol, Lacandon and Tzotzil³.

The history of the founding and management of these reserves demonstrates how environmental policy has maintained a predominantly authoritarian course in Chiapas. In the Lacandon Jungle, this policy began in 1972 with the creation by decree of the Lacandon community and the obligatory concentration of Tzeltals and Cho'oles in two big communities: Nueva Palestina and Frontera Corozal. This concentration led to the removal of rights to representation of Tzeltals and Cho'oles inside the Lacandon community, although making up 94% of the population, because only a member of the Lacandon ethnic group can occupy the post of commissioner for community belongings.

³Indigenous groups named according to the language they speak.

In addition, this decree provoked the removal of the agricultural rights of 26 ejidos⁴ for 17 years in the Cañadas (Legorreta, 1994, 1998, 2008) and the still running land dispute over 72,000 hectares involving more than 40 groups.

Afterwards, as a consequence of decrees that created the reserves and of the environmental policy which was followed between 1989 and 1993, the population of the two regions has faced the following problems up to the present day: suspension for more than 35 years of the agricultural rights of 12 population nuclei established in the area, which was subsequently decreed as part of the REBIMA. In all cases, small farmers have spent decades asking for the regularization of land ownership, without exception the authorities have suspended the court hearing "for taking place inside the reserve". Given the unregulated agricultural situation, this population does not have access to credit, nor to any kind of support from institutions. On the other hand, the local population is confronting restrictions on using the forest in all areas, punishment for using fire as a method of agriculture, as well as serious restrictions on bequeathing lands inside the ejidos or Lacandon community. And in the case of the REBIMA: suspension of cattle raising subsidies, without giving alternatives, during a coffee and cocoa crisis and the ban on road construction in the REBIMA area. On the contrary, in 1992 CONANP decreed 4 new protected areas in the Lacandon Jungle area, which include 81,000 hectares and which are part of Lacandon community lands. (Tejeda, 2002).

An example, which demonstrates the authoritarian character of this policy, is the agreement between the Chiapas state government and the World Bank, which can be summarized in the following paragraph:

The Lacandon conservation programme, designed by the state and approved by the SEDUE (Ministry for Urban and Ecological Development), defines an integral strategy for the biosphere zone and the surrounding areas for the next 5 years. An institutional framework with multi sector projects has been developed, with a scope of

⁴Form of land ownership after the Agricultural Revolution in Mexico where the state gave land to communities to be owned and managed in a collective way.

almost 10 years. The principal element of the plan bans the felling of trees in the Montes Azules biosphere reserve (331,000 hectares) and includes strict regulations and policies for the reserve in order to protect it from human settlements. The government is all ready making a significant effort to resolve conflicts over land ownership in the reserve and to have its inscription, as well as the ban on road construction in the central zone. In order to reduce the pressure on the biosphere area, productive and social actions are taking place in the surrounding areas in order to provide alternatives to the exploitation of resources (for example, reforestation, use of rubber and coffee plantation; incentives to use areas with agricultural potential in a more efficient way; and disincentives for those actions which damage, such as pastures for cattle and agriculture based on slash and burn). Finally, measures will be put in place to discourage migration to the surrounding areas (for example severe limitations on land grants for new immigrants and human settlements)." (World Bank, 1991: 65).

The inevitable result is that up to the present day the environmental authorities have not even developed a broad strategy for sustainably managing natural resources in either of the two reserves, as stipulated in the decrees that created them and the MAB - UNESCO policy. Instead, the federal government (CONANP) and that of Chiapas have unilaterally decided that the "owners" and/or "beneficiaries" of the resources are not using the resources they were given. In this way, the population of these reserves loses access to resources vital for their survival.

One part of the region covered by the Montes Azules reserve fell under the influence of the EZLN (National Zapatista Liberation Army) movement. Before the EZLN uprising in 1994, an authoritarian environmental policy had predominated in the Chiapas state government in the whole of the Lacandon region, and in particular in the CONANP in the case of the Montes Azules reserve, but since the uprising, CONANP has permitted the exercise of a more democratic management in the running of the reserve which adjoins the Zapatista groups and other localities in the South West. Without a doubt, respecting the part of the Montes Azules reserve which adjoins the Lacandon community and the Lacantun reserve, an authoritarian form of relationship with the

population persists, united with client relationships and co-optation which were traditionally established with the representatives of the Lacandon community, giving rise to various conflicts. In this way in these two reserves many diverse forms of participation and citizen development can be found. As a consequence of the decree of 1978 and 1992, the population of the Lacandon community has been affected in the following ways:

- The unilateral declaration by 7 ANPs about approximately 70% of the territory, 6 of those totally inside the community, establishing strong restrictions of access and use of resources.
- Added to this, environmental authorities have not put together a strategy for sustainable development and organisation of land for the whole of the Lacandon community.
- Restrictions to halt the demand for land from owners children. In the year 2000 there were more than a thousand men over 18 without agricultural rights, 400 of them with families.
- Restrictions on the use of forests, in particular the Xate Palm, inside the ANPs.

PROGRESS TOWARD COOPERATION

Despite this background, the situation cannot be reduced to a simple interpretation that the local population is affected by the authoritarian government authorities. The problem is more complex. First, I want to stress that there is responsibility of all stakeholders and local people in management that does not put in the center the cooperation and sustainable development. Also, after this story, both sides have been learning about the power and resources offered by each and about the respect they deserve. This has led to increased availability of dialogue and negotiation. On the other hand, ANP also have given opportunities of trading and access to resources to formally owner local people and this has led to the following benefits:

- Development of citizenship skills.
- Access to information.

- Legal training, technical.
- Contacts, relationships.
- Participation, pressure, dialogue.
- Acceptance of co-responsibility.

EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

However, the social and environmental management are far from developing and from the sustainable management of resources that are being sought through the creation of protected areas. Although efforts have been made, the Jungle went from having 1, 404.715 ha in 1975 to 827.003 in 2000. This is a deforestation of 577, 712 hectares in 25 years. (Castillo, 2002:17).

The protected areas and forest areas in the Selva Lacandon are property of indigenous communities in two Mexican forms of land property called *ejido* and common lands. Its implementation, since the forties or so, was related to the agrarian reform process set out in the Mexican Constitution of 1917. Located at east of Chiapas state, the case of the Lacandon Jungle is particular because the allocation of land was located in a isolated region and originally little disturbed by agricultural activities. These lands were granted in most cases to former Indian laborers, having worked in coffee farms and ranches and livestock, and to settlers of ancient communities. At first, only the slash-burn milpa-tomb was practiced in the area. In these localities, different strategies were developed for use of their territory according to agricultural knowledge gained in part on the farms and into their former communities. Raising pigs enabled first cap, but was gradually abandoned by cattle, with the conversion of forest to pasture in parallel. Moreover, the coffee culture had cycles of development and decline, according to pests and diseases, market fluctuations and institutional support of the state. Thus, the forest area was considered for time as a potential source for development of agriculture and more than thirty years, the fragile intensification of livestock, expansion of the corn with the system of slash and burn and community population explosion caused massive

deforestation dynamic joins on the most important ecosystems and affected the rainforest.

The original endowment of natural resources, which had their communities, played a key role in the development of the ground. Indeed, they are the ones which conditioned the potential use of that enhancement (Molinero, 1990). However, processes of appropriation of these resources, ignoring their potential durability, have left a deep imprint of damage on the forest ecosystem as a whole. Cattle ranching, agriculture and various types of general forms of inappropriate development in relation to the natural conditions of each community, largely explain the large-scale transformation of jungle tropical ecosystem, whose destruction has accelerated over the past 30 years. The lack of alternative technologies and sustainable productive have forced farmers to over-exploit natural resources, and farming and livestock on land not suitable potential, highlighting the erosion process and the deteriorating vegetation for productive purposes.

Deforestation is not the sole cause of the deterioration of forest areas, other areas of tropical forest are subject to continual process of degradation, for purposes of lumber, picket fences, and timber heaters. Disruption or loss of flora conducted selectively affects the structure and composition of the original plant community. The process of deforestation is associated with a third element of transformation of natural ecosystems: the fragmentation, which can be defined as the fragmentation of continuous forest resulting in the formation of vegetation islands of different sizes. A fragment is a remnant area of native vegetation surrounded by a matrix of agricultural or other forms of land use. This change in the forest mosaic changes considerably sunshine, wind flow carrying nutrients (Sanders, 1991). Fragmentation can in turn affect biodiversity in slash areas, especially within or adjacent to the boundaries between remnant vegetation and the matrix surrounding it (Gibson, 1987). The effect of fragmentation of the original rainforest has not been sufficiently studied in detail. Nevertheless, it was observed that the presence of some wildlife species such as jaguar, spider monkey, or the Saraguato or the Quetzal and others are less present in areas of tropical forest fragmented.

Land degradation is a factor in deforestation in areas less suitable for agriculture. It is also one of the main problems faced by rural communities of the Lacandon Jungle, very dependent on primary sector activities for their livelihood. Farmers are increasingly aware of the necessity of conserving soil before the clearly negative impact of soil degradation processes, and which include the erosion.

The situation worsens when need to produce food increases in relation to population growth. Indeed, the basic elements of peasant food (maize and beans), when obtained under the same production techniques, cause overexploitation of the soil and consequently soil erosion. The erosion action of water is very active where rainfall is heavy, (about 1900 mm annually). When water can not infiltrate the ground, it flows over the land surface, relatively fast and it is able to carry materials in it by means of the strength of its water flow. It is clear that the effective coverage of ground vegetation is a key to prevent the processes involved in erosion. In these areas, where natural vegetation is lacking and when the rates of deforestation are very significant effects of extreme water erosion increases obviously, with the formation of systems of gullies where water erosion is concentrated. The categories of high to very high erosion are located in areas designated for maize production under slash-and-burn system. The erosion process is accentuated these dangerous areas because the areas of milpa concentrated gradually to mountains over the expansion of pasture areas in the plains.

On the other hand, the increase in corn demand, linked to the natural increase in population has led to the rejuvenation of wastelands and use of unsuitable soils, altering a balance that was with the original system of slash and-burn with the erosive process as a problem, this type of erosion is known as erosion induced (UACH, 1997). According to Trench and Buda investigations (2007), taking advantage of the Palma Xate is an extractive activity which has generated financial resources for over 30 years in the Lacandon jungle. Currently, it generates economic spill in more than 40 communities / suburbs in the Lacandon (without taking into account the jobs generated outside the forest). Mexico meets 60-80% of the international market (23 million dollars

a year.) It is an activity that brings more money to the peasant family economy in the region, especially among the socially most vulnerable. But its current forms of management are driving the decline of the palm in the forest because of the following practices: intensive extraction without rotation or rest of the population. Poor cutting technique. Null selection in the blade cut and to collect. Lack of local rules about use. Do not allow plants to mature and produce no seeds. Today the palm business is based almost exclusively on one species, *pata de vaca*. (Trench and Buda, 2007).

There are also important cultural and organizational barriers to sustainable management of the palm xate. La Palma is not an economic activity 'traditional' and the community rules and sanctions do not apply to their use. Strong internal divisions of the localities are not capable to make internal arrangements for their use. In many cases the crisis in which the resource is located is not recognized. There is ignorance and non-recognition of federal regulations. Gatherers, who are members of the community, organized the purchase from the logic of their individual interests. (Trench and Buda, 2007).

This brief description of the main productive activities shows the impact of agricultural practices in the state of deterioration and loss of natural resources. This impact affects not only threatens biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, but also destroys vital resources for the economy of the local population.

This situation shows that one of the main contradictions is that the local population lacks forest culture that allows for sustainable management of the ecosystem. Therefore a central problem to solve is the shortage of human capital to achieve sustainable management and ensure conservation of biodiversity of the forest.

SOCIAL SITUATION OF THE LOCAL POPULATION

Noting the social situation of the population living in the Lacandon jungle we see that this is not very satisfactory. The sum of the population found inside or who have

rights over the natural resources of the REBIMA (Montes Azules biosphere reserve) and REBILA (Lacantun biosphere reserve) consists around in 2005 of 46,827 inhabitants, who have a direct impact in the region. In the case of these two reserves, they are established inhabitants who have historically been subjected to marginalisation, over exploitation and domination (Legorreta, 2008, 2007, 2006). In the two regions made up by the reserves the population was subjected to domination by regional groups of the Chiapas oligarchy, whose power over the population was fundamentally sustained by the total exclusion of rights: to education, healthcare, contact, land, organisation and partnerships, etc (Legorreta, 2007; Marquez et al, 2003; Blanco, 1980) and by exercising paternalistic policies which encouraged relationships based on dependence and subjection. Therefore for a very long time, this population has suffered a very complicated situation of inequality, which demonstrates conditions of class, ethnicity, education and territory being in much marginalised zones, and having insufficient political opportunities to ensure their rights are represented and respected.

Due to long running pressure by the local populations, the SRA (Ministry of Agricultural Reform) provided the families of small farmers living in the region with land (Legorreta, 1998 and 2008). But, with the aim of protecting the land from the strongest economic sectors, the government distributed marginal lands. To this end, the indigenous population was sent to the Lacandon Jungle. This therefore concerns a people who find themselves in a very peripheral position, who have low levels of education who count on scarce organisational and cultural resources and the principal resource on which all their income depends is the land and what they obtain from it. Due to these conditions, they have a very precarious foothold and are at a disadvantage in the national and global economy. The policy that is currently applied in the biosphere reserves affects them above all through the principal resource they count on, in fact depriving them of that part of the resources they depend on for income.

In order to present some social indicators of the population which show us some of the inequalities facing the local population, we chose the population of the town of Ocosingo, which is where more than 90% of the population inside and who has

influence in the REBIMA and REBILA lives. Firstly, let's emphasize the fact that in the populations found in the regions of the Cañadas and North of the REBIMA, as in the Lacandon community, monolingualism is more than 35%.

It should also be emphasized that the same populations found inside the two reserves (REBIMA - REBILA) or close to them has the highest percentages of illiteracy. The population of the Cañadas and North of the REBIMA had a rate of illiteracy of almost 40% in 2000. The population of the Lacandon community was worse, having a level of illiteracy of 45%. The conditions of marginalisation of this region can be appreciated if we compare these figures to the national illiteracy average, which is 9%.

Another indicator which we took to demonstrate the inequalities is the level of income. According to the 2000 population and housing census, 86% of the population in the Cañadas and North of the REBIMA received salaries less than the minimum wage. Of 92% of the working population, only 6% received salaries more than one minimum wage but less than two minimum wages. In the case of the Lacandon community, about 77% of the working population received incomes less than one minimum wage in 2000 and only about 9% received incomes more than one minimum wage but less than two minimum wages.

LOCAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS

The central aspect to analyze the capacity of local people in sustainable management of natural resources is the internal organization. It is the main aspect because it represents the construction of social capital or institutional premises for the following actions:

- Decide how to use resources.
- Decide how to management (local institutions) of resources.
- •Access to capital and other resources.
- Access and create appropriate technology.
- Carry out production

- Industrialization.
- Marketing.

The internal organization of the population of the Lacandon Jungle presents from our perspective, the main problem of the internal organization and collective action of people in the Lacandon Jungle is the classic tension between general and particular interests. This problem needs to learn to put the immediate interests to develop cooperation for the common good (Crozier and Friedberg, 1977). Since this approach sustainable development represents a common good that requires the construction of organizations and democratic forces are able to counterbalance a diversity of interests that are expressed both within government and society.

Effective management described above shows the limitations of the communities to organize them and to make efficient management of resources. To understand these limitations should be noted that the decisions of the local population for the handling and management of natural resources and their relationship with public employees and environmental officials are taken in the context of a set of political traditions in the region. Is a population who feels and knows that they are subjected to abuse from those who have more power in the community (immediate superior officer) and foreign agents especial they resent constantly be subject to abuse by governments. An example that shows such blatant abuse of government agencies is that some public employees even higher level and service providers stay up to 40% of the investment projects of the Presidency. Another example is to have received land as comuneros and ejidatarios and have stopped using them because they belong to the same time to Protected Areas. In relation to the management of national and international resources to preserve the forest, local people know that most of the resources are left to the bureaucracy and that they receive just a little. This provokes the anger of local people, they are the ones who most need the resources and who depend more on forest conservation.

Some of the main conditions that allowed abuses of power are the social and physical isolation, misinformation, disability policy and technical, disorganization,

distrust, division, Multiplicity of internal conflict without solution. These characteristics can be summarized as lack of social and human capital. These conditions allow the lack of respect for domestic and foreign agents, in addition, lead to not receive more resources from abroad, or generate more income from their own abilities. We believe that external agent abuses the local population, have limited capacity to generate wealth not only by scarcity of natural resources, but above all by its internal logic of organization based on opportunism and the political-cultural foundations that underpin these logics. The conditions for internal an external abuse is, among other reasons, internally propagated by the way the practice of authority roles. When a man of the community plays any role of authority, (parent, party representative, agricultural representative, representative to the municipal office, etc.) does so with the intention to control people subordinate to him. The purpose is to obtain in the short term maximum personal benefits their position of authority (intermediary) allows it to obtain. To do exclude subordinates from participating in decision making and seek to exercise the greatest control over them, in order to restrict access to strategic resources, which include: land, money, information, networks, knowledge. Thus, contribute to weakening the human and social capital of the community. In this way any authority becomes the transmission belt and adverse abusive logic outside society. Albeit unconscious most of the time serving as accomplices to reproduce the conditions that allow the abuse from the foreign, limit the capabilities of internal generation of greater wealth and cause the inability to establish enterprises with continuous economic management.

OPPORTUNISTIC PRACTICES INTERNAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

In the case of the Lacandon Jungle the Population Prevalence of These Interests Following is Expressed in the social spaces.

- Patriarchal family (wife and Children Control)
- Economic Organizations. Example: Foliage Lacandon
- Management Institutions. Example: Lacandonia A.C.
- Community institution. Example. The role of Community Representatives.

In relation to the patriarchal family practices gerontocracy we can illustrate with the case of sub-community of Nueva Palestina. There are 851 community members and around 3,000 community members's children with no land. Most of the children of community members have no land and other means of work are limited. This creates a lot of money income restrictions. A part of them have access to a part of the plot of the father, but his parents do not allow them to recognize them as commoners. Not being recognized grounded children have no access to the assembly of the sub-community. They also lack access to resources provided by the state through projects rather than through the intermediary of the parent. Landless children and women (wives and daughters) are also barred from the assembly, even when it does take other decisions that affect non-agricultural urban organization of the community. In this way, women, children without land and land are subject to parental control. Lack of access to the assemblies has undermined the development of human capital and training in public affairs in the vast majority of women and children. So, even they are majority, they are those with less technical skills and less training policy. This situation leads to distrust and conflict between parents and children and between siblings that are difficult to resolve.

Another example of this logic lies in the functioning of internal governance (known in Mexico as caciques) through local assemblies and external relations controlled by the political representatives, religious and agricultural purposes according to their individual interests.

Then, we examine the case of the role of community representatives for this role is taken as the model for the rest of the population and because these representatives directly or indirectly involved in other forms of local organization and the relationship with the outside. The role of these representatives is characterized by making the internal organization of the community and the relationship with external actors according to their interests. Some of the expressions of these practices are:

- Concentration of land, resources and opportunities for mediation or representation in a minority. This concentration and abuse of power allows abuse of natural resources not only more powerful farmers, but also by the weakest. The poorest as be excluded from the most important resources (land, resources, government) they are obliged as a way of surviving in a disorganized collection of various forest resources such as palm xate, hunting, among others.
- Control of the assembly by the minority of Political and Religious Intermediaries, for Corruption and diversion of public resources in individual benefit.
- The exclusion of sons and Women in the assemblies. In case of sub-communities of Nueva Palestina and Frontera Corozal, the promise to control the children to prevent them from getting to the biosphere reserve of Montes Azules and Lacantún gives an important bargaining for representatives of the villagers to the government. This created a generation with more constraints for the sustainable management of natural resources and other productive activities. With this logic of political operations, instead of generating capacity the majority young population, it remains dependent on illegal activities, international migration and drug trafficking. The problem of illegal handling of the forest is then added the illegal handling of population, drug trafficking, and increased violence. The reason for this is that instead of choose to develop the human capital of the new generations has been mainly used politically.
- Coercion (punishment, imprisonment, threats to those faced with the standards set for convenience. Obviously, with such practices as representatives gain immediate but keep the majority of members of the community excluded economically, socially and politically. No reproduction of asymmetry and internal logic of power, as political logic of the whole system. These asymmetries prevent the development of human capital, which prevents the creation of social capital, physical, financial and progressive destruction of natural capital.

Despite these internal organizational dynamics most expect that the solution comes from outside. It appears to be limited awareness of responsibility. There is awareness that this logic of political performance keeps them were transferred to more resources, management of reserves and access to knowledge that will enable them to sustainable management of resources.

On the other hand, people who play at any given time the role of representatives in other connections will play the role of subordinates. The logic is to control those below. Those above that abuse of them, they hate them, fear them, but are subordinate because they feel they need it. There is awareness that abusive relationships are an uncomfortable but they're resigned because they consider it natural or the only possible. Not all the time the relationship with civil servants is of subordination. Sometimes they react with acts of protest and resistance, to put limits on what they see as abuses of governmental actors. In this way there have been several occasions where the majority of members of a given location come together to take collective action to protest against some action or pressure environmental or agricultural policy that affects them. For example in 1994 they arrested the director of the Biosphere Reserve Montes Azules accused of diverting resources. In general these actions are acts that ask for give them to more money, which because of their limitations rarely used as capital.

NATURALIZATION AND WIDESPREAD OPPORTUNISM

To understand the ease with which general political practices are undertaken in primary function of personal interests, we must consider historical tradition nurtured by the power relations of the farms and the old colonial communities. population that historically in the villages and farms had been subjected to this type of dependency cacique even by their own parents. (Legorreta 2006). In addition, these types of relationships have also been reproduced through the old clientelist relations with the state (Trench, 2008) with the merchants and employers in labor relations (Rus, 1994). Also, it should be consider that it is relatively a functional forms of organization, they have solved the reproduction material and social life as it is today. This is because

although it is abusive relationships they are always seeking to be some reciprocity. This means that such relationships are not only functional for the dominant, but also for the subalterns, because although they are not completely satisfied with him, they feel weak and dependent on his immediate superior, who helps to meet needs. In this dynamic underlying informal laws assumed by all as natural and inevitable (Legorreta, 2006 and 2008). This is well known that very few other forms of organization. So there have been and there are reciprocal rules, but rather to generate increased self reliance and symbolic material. A problem then is that the norms of reciprocity and networks established informal laws allow abuse of trust and reciprocity strengthen generates dependent abuse of power, loss of human capital and financial capital and natural. In these traditions the ongoing relationship is not an opportunity to prevent the abuse of trust.

LOGICAL INTERNAL OPPORTUNISTIC PRACTICES

Although there are protests against government abuse, as seen in most of its relations with the global society cannot prevent the abuse of power, this is because as someone have a chance they abuse those down and that undermines their social and political capital to defend. Each person in place of intermediary player reproduces misinformation, ignorance, mistrust, vertical organization. In this way there have been and there are, consciously or unconsciously complicit in the abuses of power.

From the representations that have regard to the relationship with the government, and the outside most of the members of the community develops a sense of themselves in assuming only as victims, dependent of both government- paternalistic – and its municipal authorities, caciques- and from that legitimize their own opportunistic practices. That is, most assumed as weak and overly dependent on intermediaries, their subordinate confident or resigned.

These practices weaken internally confidence and the ability to create local institutions. The immediate intermediaries (local representatives whom establish the link with the outside world and define the forms of internal organization) are co-responsible

for the creation and reproduction of the conditions of disability policy, social inequality and violation of the rule of law, which is reinforced by the isolation. This isn't seen by most of the local population. Because of this it is given within civil society social stratification that does not allow opposing government vs. civil society. There is no awareness of the value, importance and significance of the common good and by the representatives and the represented.

Then, it is not a political dynamic where the problem is to prevent such practices of a few like free raiders. It is a comprehensive, widespread political behavior that occurs in virtually all areas of the region and is expressed in all scales and types of organization: family, neighborhood, productive organizations, political parties, marketing organization, internal governance community. Estienne de La Boétie (1530-1563) argued that the subordination exists because its victims are complicit. This author wondered why such submission? His response was, because everyone sees the tyrant a picture of what he wanted to be. Under these conditions the non-cooperation is widespread, when it is obligatory, as in many family relationships between parents and children, or given to vie against other resources, too little to generate productive economic organizations.

Then the central problem from our point of view is a political culture dependent / individualist that widespread disabilities of democratic politics and of human capital. This tradition depends on how they have historically learned to play as intermediaries and how they assume subordination. They believe that depend mainly on what they get from outside, and they do not value enough their individual and collective capacity to generate, preserve and increase capital.

Exploring some of the representations of their relationship with the global society that we find some that we consider they influence the pervasiveness of political practices based on individual interest primary.

One of these perceptions is that the access to greater wealth depends crucially on whether they provided to them by the government rather than to others. This perception underlies the expectation that poverty will be overcome by removing resources that have more to give to them, instead of expanding their own capacities to generate for themselves. This is complemented by the idea that the cause of poverty is basically that those with power concentrated, and the solution is to try to concentrate from the level of power that everyone has.

No awareness and confidence of the role that representatives and local population can play in changing their lives. A central challenge is that the base population to learn that this type of representation and power relations are those that reproduce the patrimonial system that keeps them on social exclusion and marginalization, and that depends on them to change. As shown, the issue of power remains a taboo. There are research stations that monitor changes in natural resources. But there is a station to generate appropriate technology to enable sustainable development. But more serious is that there is no space where to discuss and learn openly about power and better forms of organization.

CONCLUSIONS

To recognize this form of internal organization or logic of the locations of the forest reveals the need to transform them as a decisive part of the solution to the problems of environmental management and sustainable development in general. A central aspect of this transformation is, from our point of view, that the local population and foreign agents that support discuss and review major policy ideas. Some of these ideas are:

- Question the identity they have of themselves based on representations of extreme weakness and dependence on external agents and conditions.

- Recognize that they can take their problems on their hands and solve them, instead of waiting for the settlement by the government.
- Appreciate that they would have the possibilities of conserving its natural capital and increase their financial capital if they increase their social capital.
- Recognize the possibilities of transforming the abuse of foreign in to an opportunity to build greater unity within the localities.
- Appreciate that the collective (common) achievements strengthen and increase individual benefits in a long term period.
- Reappraises their knowledge and their individual and collective learning.
- Analyze what they have lost due to the practices of exclusive pursuit of individual interests.

In brief, learn to conserve natural resources and the creation of wealth depends very much on how to relate: it depends on the unity of the community, social and human capital that they are able to create and not just a problem of resources and money. Therefore poverty and environmental degradation is a result of their current ways of relating, not just money constraints.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BLANCO, S. Mercedes, 1980, *Estudio de un proceso regional: el caso de la Frailesca, Chiapas*, Tesis de Antropología Social, México, Universidad Iberoamericana.

CASTILLO, Miguel Ángel, 2002, ¿Qué está pasando con los bosques y selvas en Chiapas?, en *Los Sistemas de Información Geográfica y los Recursos Naturales*, Revista Ecofronteras, No.17.

http://www.ecosur.mx/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=739

CERNEA, M., (ed.), 1986, *Putting People First: Sociological Variables in Rural Development*. World Bank Technical Paper 80.

CONANP, 2003, Estrategia de conservación para el desarrollo, CONANP, México.

CROZIER, Michel et Erhard FRIEDBERG, 1977, *L'acteur et le système*, Du Seuil, París.

DE MONTGOLFIER, J. y NATALI, J.M., 1987, "Le Patrimoine du futur : des outils pour une gestion patrimoniale". París, *Económica*, 248 p. (pp.112-137).

FOWERAKER, Joe y LANDMAN Tod, 1977, *Citizenship rights and social movements*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.

LEGORRETA, Díaz, Ma. del Carmen, 1994, "La reforma al artículo 27 constitucional y sus efectos en la Unión de Uniones de Ocosingo, Chiapas", artículo en Cuadernos de Centros Regionales No. 7, Ed. Centros Regionales de la UACH, México, 1994. pp. 11-17.

LEGORRETA, Díaz, Ma. del Carmen, 1998, *Religión, Política y Guerrilla en Las Cañadas de la Selva Lacandona*, Edit. Cal y Arena, México, 333 pags.

- LEGORRETA, Díaz, Ma. del Carmen, 2006, "Organización política de las haciendas de Ocosingo, Chiapas en el Siglo XX" en *Estudios Sociológicos*. México:COLMEX. Vol. XXIV, núm. 72, septiembre-diciembre de 2006.
- LEGORRETA, Díaz, Ma. del Carmen, 2007, "Organización y cambio en haciendas y comunidades de Ocosingo" en *Sociológica*. México: UAM-Azc. Año 22, núm. 63, enero-abril de 2007.
- LEGORRETA, Díaz, Ma. del Carmen, 2008, *Desafíos de la emancipación indígena: organización señorial y modernización en Ocosingo, Chiapas 1930-1994*, CEIICH-UNAM, México, 377 pp.
- LGEEPA. Ley General del Equilibrio Ecológico y la Protección al Ambiente, actualizada, 2001, Ediciones Delma, México. 445 pp.
- MARQUEZ Rosano, Conrado, Juana MORALES Cruz, Ma. del C. LEGORRETA D., 2003, *Diagnóstico social y diseño de estrategia operativa para la reserva de la biosfera La Sepultura, Chiapas*, San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, Informe convenio UACH-SEMARNAT, UACH,
- MARQUEZ Rosano, Conrado, 2006, *Déboisement et conflits d'appropriation territoriale. Les forêts tropicales humides de l'espace Lacandon (Chiapas)*, thèse doctorat en Etudes Rurales, Université Toulouse Le Mirail, octobre de 2006, France.
- MILTON, K., 1996, *Environmentalism and cultural theory. Exploring the role of anthropology in environmental discourse*. Routledge. London. United Kingdom.
- PALADINO, Stephanie, 2005, *We are the guardians of the Selva: Conservation, Indigenous Communities, and Common Property in the Selva Lacandona*, México. Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology, University of Georgia, USA.

RUS, Jan 1994. The 'Comunidad Revolucionaria Institucional': The Subversion of Native Government in Highland Chiapas, 1936–1968. In *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico*. Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent, eds. Durham and London: Duke University Press. Pp. 265–300.

SACHS, I., 1981. *Stratégies de l'écodéveloppement*. Paris, Editions Ouvrières.

SACHS, I., & Weber, J., 1996. Developing in harmony with nature. *South-South Program of Biosphera Reserves*. UNESCO, MAB, Belem, May.

SEMARNAT, 2003, *Tercer Informe de Labores*. México

SHCP, 1995, *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 1995-2000*. Poder Ejecutivo Federal. Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público. Impreso en México. 177 pp.

TEJEDA Cruz, C. 2002. *Apropiación social del territorio y política ambiental en la Selva Lacandona, Chiapas; el caso de Frontera Corozal, Comunidad Lacandona*. Tesis de Maestría en Ciencias en Desarrollo Rural Regional. Dirección de Centros Regionales. Universidad Autónoma Chapingo. 270 pp.

TOLEDO, CARLOS; BARTRA ARMANDO (coord.), 2000, *Del Círculo Vicioso al Círculo Virtuoso. Cinco miradas al desarrollo sustentable de las regiones marginadas*. México, SEMARNAP-Plaza y Valdés Editores.

TOLEDO, Victor Manuel, 1998, "Estudiar lo rural desde una perspectiva interdisciplinaria: el enfoque ecológico-sociológico". En: *Globalización, crisis y desarrollo rural en América Latina*. Memoria de sesiones plenarias del V Congreso Latinoamericano de Sociología Rural. México, ALASRU-CP, SAGAR-UACH-UAM-UIA. 1998. pp159-179.

TRENCH y Buda, 2007 "Regularizando' el aprovechamiento de palma comedor en la Selva Lacandona: Algunas reflexiones sobre los retos institucionales,

estructurales y culturales”, Ponencia presentada en Congreso de la Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Rurales, realizada en San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, México, 2007.

TRENCH, Tim, “FROM “ORPHANS OF THE STATE” TO THE COMUNIDAD CONSERVACIONISTA INSTITUCIONAL: THE CASE OF THE LACANDÓN COMMUNITY, CHIAPAS”, *Identities*, 15:5, 607 — 634, Publisher Routledge, England and Wales.

UNESCO, 1996, *Reservas de la biosfera: La Estrategia de Sevilla y el Marco Estatuario de la Red Mundial UNESCO*, Paris.

WEBER, Jacques, 1996, “*Conservation, développement et coordination: peut-on gérer biologiquement le social?*”, Coloquio Panafricano Gestión comunitaria de recursos naturales renovables y desarrollo sustentable. Harare, 24-27 de junio 1996.

WEBER Jacques y Jean Pierre REVERET, (Traducción Conrado Márquez), 2006, “La gestión de las relaciones sociedades-naturaleza: modos de apropiación y derechos de propiedad”, en *Geografía Agrícola* No. 36, enero-junio 2006. 119-124.

WORD BANK, 1991, *México: Proyecto de descentralización y desarrollo regional. Informe de evaluación*. Documento restringido. Latino América and Caribbean Regional Office.