

Collective forest and protected area management in areas of conflict: Integration of technical, juridical and social approaches in the creation of a model of administration of the protected areas of the Valley of the Cauca, Colombia.

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Abstract

The Department of the Valley of the Cauca, located in south west Colombia, is a biodiverse territory, in which the Choco and northern Andes encounter, possessing a unique cultural diversity which leaves no doubt about the necessity of having a structure of natural support where the protected areas are fundamental elements.

According to this experience, for an adequate management of it, communities must be involved in higher instances of decision making, so, from the year 2002, the Autonomous Regional Corporation of Valle del Cauca (CVC), a government entity, began the consolidation of the Departmental System of Protected Areas for the Valley of the Cauca (SIDAP), which consists of 8 local discussion tables and 234 stakeholders in 25 protected areas. The system is presented as a case study that considers an institutional form to manage a complex common, as are the protected areas.

All of the conceptual agreements obtained in the Sidap process can be exemplified in the Reserva Natural Especial RNE “Néstor Córdoba Camacho”, a afrocolombian community reserve. Black (Afrocolombian) communities established in the Pacific region of Colombia in the period between 1500 and 1600, when Spaniards brought them from Africa. Nowadays, their descendants have established a new cultural identity, similar from the African roots, but adapted to the life in the new continent. One key step was promoted by black leaders, with the creation by the Government of a law in 1993 that gave the black community the collective property of the land, giving power to the recently created black community councils, each one possessing real territories, where the establishment of protected areas is promoted (six already declared). This land tenure pattern in black communities is unique in South America, and in this presentation some insights are given about it, considering it as a type of institutional and policy change required for managing multi-functional commons at different scales: local and regional.

1. Introduction

Almost 42 years have passed since the publication of the article on "The Tragedy of the Commons" in Science (Hardin, 1968), which has generated decades of investigation of the natural and social sciences about the handling of the "commons" (National Research Council 2002). Far from being solved the topic, it is necessary to analyze social complex systems, where the collected theory can be applied. Such it is the case of the protected areas located in The Department of the Valley of the Cauca, Colombia, South America, as will be explained in the present article. This region is located in south west Colombia, in a very biodiverse territory, where the Choco and Northern Andes come together, with ecosystems so important as the tropical rain forest, the Andean paramus and the dry forests. The figures indicate that among the 30 and 50% of the flora and fauna species reported for Colombia, are in the Valley Department (CVC 2007). Near four million people inhabit the Valley and are concentrated in 60% of the territory, plaintiff of environmental goods and services. Additional to this, this region possesses a wide ethnic and cultural diversity, represented in five indigenous ethnic groups, afro descendant communities and rural communities, situation that leaves no doubt about the necessity of having a structure of natural support where the protected areas are fundamental elements for the conservation of the biodiversity and the generation of environmental goods and services.

For this reason from the year 2002, the Autonomous Regional Corporation of Valle del Cauca (CVC), a government organization in charge of natural resources management, began with the promotion of scenarios of participation denominated "the tables" of the Departmental System of Protected Areas (SIDAP) and the consolidation of local processes of protected areas where the technical and traditional knowledge is conjugated. Today, eight local tables and a departmental one are currently working, in which a variety of institutional and community stakeholders converge, coordinated by a technical secretariat. The system is presented as an institutional form to manage a complex common, as are the protected areas.

The agreements generated in these participation scenarios have been the base to work a strategy of management of protected areas which has been implemented in near 20 processes of protected areas, one of which is the Natural Special Reserve RNE "Néstor Córdoba Camacho", a protected area located in the Southwest of the department of the Valley of Cauca, in the municipality of Buenaventura, in forests of collective community property. This land tenure pattern in black communities is unique in South America, and in this presentation some insights are given about it, considering it as a type of institutional and policy change required for managing multi-functional commons at different scales: local and regional.

2. The SIDAP (Department System of Protected Areas) as an institutional form to manage a complex common, as the protected areas:

The Autonomous Regional Corporation of Valle del Cauca (CVC), is a government organization in charge of nearly 25 protected areas in its jurisdiction. From the year of 1954 when this institution was created, the management of the protected areas was

carried out in the conventional way, carrying out control and surveillance actions and with very few exceptions it incorporated the communities in the management processes. In the year 1995, according to a national government's demand, the necessity of identifying high-priority areas for the conservation for the mangrove and Paramus ecosystems inside the jurisdiction area, and when these analyses were made, it was evidenced the necessity to constitute a system of protected areas. The beginning of the process was formalized in the year 2002 through the building up of the process denominated "collective construction of the SIDAP" (Foundation Tropicico 2002). Since then, the system has advanced in the construction of key topics such as its definition, their components, principles, stakeholders' types, organizational structure, types of protected areas, among others.

2.1 Main agreements obtained

The results obtained in the process of the SIDAP are based on methodological principles, such as the qualified participation of all the related stakeholders, the promotion of reflection processes about the use of the territory, the exchange of traditional and technical knowledge and the constant feedback among local and departmental scenarios.

In the next section some of these agreements are presented:

2.1.1 What is the Sidap?

The SIDAP is conceived as the group of principles, norms, strategies, actions, procedures, resources, social stakeholders and natural areas protected in the Valley of the Cauca. Their objective is to articulate and to coordinate the in situ conservation initiatives, for the Valley department. It is important to clarify that the SIDAP is not an institution like such; rather it is conceived as a coordination space among the different sectors. The fundamental principles are responsibility, qualified participation, and justness (Foundation Tropicico 2002).

2.1.2 How is the Sidap organized?

To homologate concepts, to validate agreements and to consolidate processes of protected areas from the local perspective, the stakeholders of the SIDAP in the 2005 proposed to be organized in eight Local Tables and a Departmental one, coordinated by a Technical Secretariat.

Each local table covers a coincident geographical area with the administrative division of the CVC. This same institution does the Technical Secretariat with the support of the National Parks Unit (also a government institution).

The local tables don't have a defined number of stakeholders, and if someone wants to be part of them must demonstrate direct relationship with the topic and being presented by an old member. The participation is voluntary, but the table, can request the retirement of any stakeholder. The local tables should establish their operative plans, to

link stakeholders, to prioritize and to promote processes of protected areas. These local tables meet four times a year.

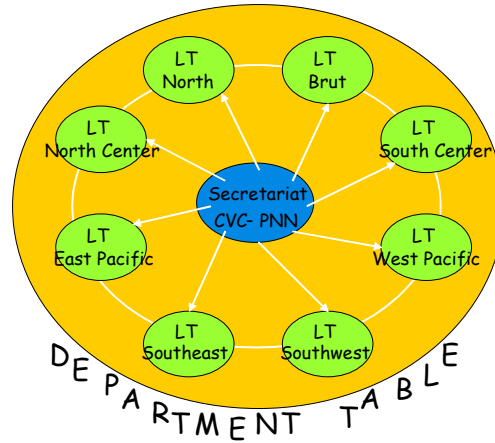


Figure 1: Organizational structure of the SIDAP. LT: Local table, PNN: National Parks (Ochoa 2005). Each LT coincides with a regional subdivision of the CVC.

The Departmental table is conformed by 44 stakeholders, of which 12 are government ones, with roles or direct incidence in the topic, reason why they have permanent character. The remaining ones are NGO, rural communities (among others), and are delegated autonomously by each one of the eight local tables. This table meets twice a year. In figure 2 can be seen a picture of one of the meetings of the Department Table. For the system to be socially recognized, it was very important to have official and formal recognition and this was achieved through the Resolution 752 of 2005, emitted for CVC itself, as the environmental authority of the region.



Figure 2. Meeting of the Department Table, held during 2006.

It is important to stand out the importance of the local spaces of making of decisions that are generated around the specific protected areas. In this sense these areas in a small working scale contribute to the environmental planning of the territory in a bigger scale, departmental, municipal or even national.

All action of the SIDAP should be participatory and to go by institutional moments (to define goals, to be qualified and to clarify roles among institutions), and community and social moments of socialization, qualification and agreement, with the related stakeholders (Foundation Tropico 2004). This focus in the making of decisions generates trust in the stakeholders, which is crucial in a context in which the institutional presence in the protected areas has been weakened during the last years.

In synthesis, the consolidation of the processes of protected areas is carried out through the obtaining of agreements, concepts and methodologies like it is described in the following diagram:

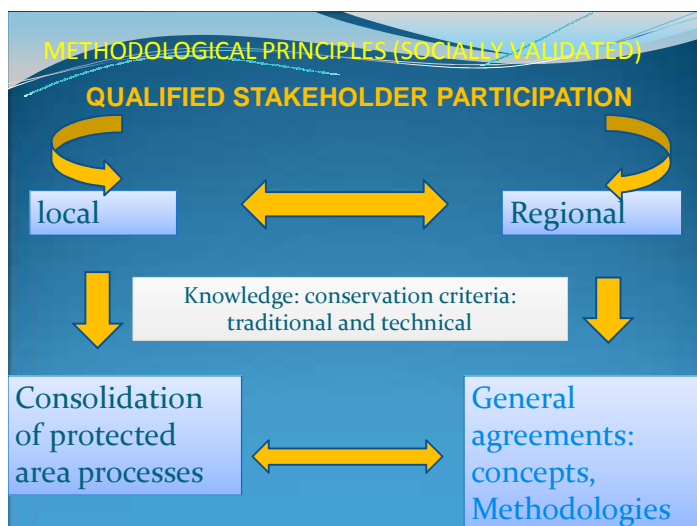


Figure 3. Methodological Principles for the implementation of the Sidap.

2.1.3 The importance of qualified participation

A very important aspect to take into account in participatory processes is to have a qualified participation, which means that people is informed about the process and have the basic skills which allow him or her to contribute to the process more effectively. In order to promote this, a series of training workshops has been designed in double via that consider some basic topics for the making of decisions. In these training workshops it is looked for to find common agreements as for the need of conserving areas for the accomplishment of criteria related with biodiversity. The following table shows how the training program is composed:

LOGICAL SEQUENCE	MAIN TOPIC	ELEMENTS GIVEN	PRODUCTS IN THE PROCESS
What it is necessary to conserve?	The Biodiversity	What it is and how this diversity is in the area; Criteria for the identification of areas, objectives of conservation and conservation targets	Group reflection. Map that contains conservation values (e.g. Localizations of sightings of threatened species); Surveys about conservation criteria obtained.
Why is it important to conserve?	Conservation ethics	Ethics and corresponsibility in the conservation of natural resources (what to conserve, for who, principles)	Group reflection; Conservation options
Why biodiversity is at risk? what can be done?	Environmental crisis	Causes of the environmental conflict, options for the conservation	Group reflection. Map of pressures, causes and consequences. Options for conservation
What about the laws?	The law of conservation	The policies and international and national regulations. The framework of the administration of protected areas in Colombia	Group reflection. Conservation options
What options do we have?	Protected areas	Territorial environmental planning, the protected areas, conservation objectives, categories of protected areas (the local, the regional, the national and the global levels).	Group reflection. Definition of the type of protected area to declare. Zoning and management guidelines.

The modality of the training should allow the contextualization of the topics and the reflection at every moment on the territory in question. As can be seen, each topic developed in the process responds to a logical sequence and it generates clear products. An example is the workshop about biodiversity which generates the map that contains the approximate location of the conservation values, which is a fundamental input for the later elaboration of the zoning map.

Lastly the number of workshops can vary between 4 and 8, with 40 stakeholders on the average. So far, this methodology has been implemented in a total of 35 declaration and management processes.



Figure 4. Training workshop held in Anchicaya.

2.1.4 The SIDAP as a model of administration of protected areas in a region

The experience in the construction of the SIDAP is considered a successful experience in the administration of protected areas in the Valley of the Cauca. At the present time, the CVC possesses smaller quantity of available officials to exercise the control on the protected areas inside the jurisdiction, reason for which the support of the community is considered central in the strategy. As was noted above, is important that government institutions adopt a people centred benefit (Michener, 1998), by involving communities on proposals from the beginning and trough empowering communities by giving them opportunities to influence the decision making process (Twyman, 2000).

It is important to stand out the corresponsability concept, which considers the constitutional duty that each person has in the safeguard of the natural resources of the nation. Another point of interest is the roles of the different stakeholders have in the topic of protected areas, which the system takes into account to grant specific responsibilities.

2.1.5 Other methodological elements built in the process

The following chart shows a summary of the methodological main contributions built by the SIDAP:

Methological elements	Support in the declaration process	Support in the management process	Source
Guide for Identification and actors' characterization	It allows to identify, to characterize and to prioritize the social actors inside a process	It allows to identify, to characterize and to prioritize the social actors, as well as to define action lines for each actor inside the handling plan inside a process	Arana, (2007)
General guide for the declaration of areas	It contains the basic procedure for any declaration process		Gómez et al 2007
Guide for the identification of appropriate protected area category	It facilitates the juridical analysis to select the category of protected area.		Trópico (2004)
Guide for the definition of conservation priorities	It allows the evaluation of conservation criteria for a given area, identifying the values to conserve	It facilitates the selection of the conservation targets	Reyes Gutiérrez et al (2007)
Guide for the prioritization of local processes of conservation	It allows inside a specific area, to determine which processes deserve to go into a protected area process		Rojas, (2006)

Guide for the financial sustainability strategy		It allows to advance in the strategy financial strategy for the area	García (2007)
Guide for the management planning		It offers the methodological rules to elaborate a management plan	Campo et al (2007)

In the following section it will be revised how these contributions of methodological type they have been implemented in a case of study.

3. Case study: A type of institutional and policy change required for managing multi-functional commons at different scales: local and regional: Special Natural Reserve (RNE) “Néstor Córdoba Camacho”.

3.1 Area of study

The area that corresponds to the Reservation is located in Southwest Colombia, South America, in the municipality of Buenaventura. Its elevation oscillates between 50 and 2200 meters over sea level, covering an extension of 23.998,60 hectares in the tropical and subtropical rain forest ecosystems. The precipitations range from annual 4000 to 8000 mm. with monthly average temperatures bigger to 24°C and relative humidity of 90%. The main road nearby is the Simon Bolivar road, an ancient passage from Cali to the city of Buenaventura. A total of six Community Councils area included in the area, which has created a political division between them (See figure 5). A very interesting possibility of conection exists among two national protected areas and the community reserve (see figure 6)

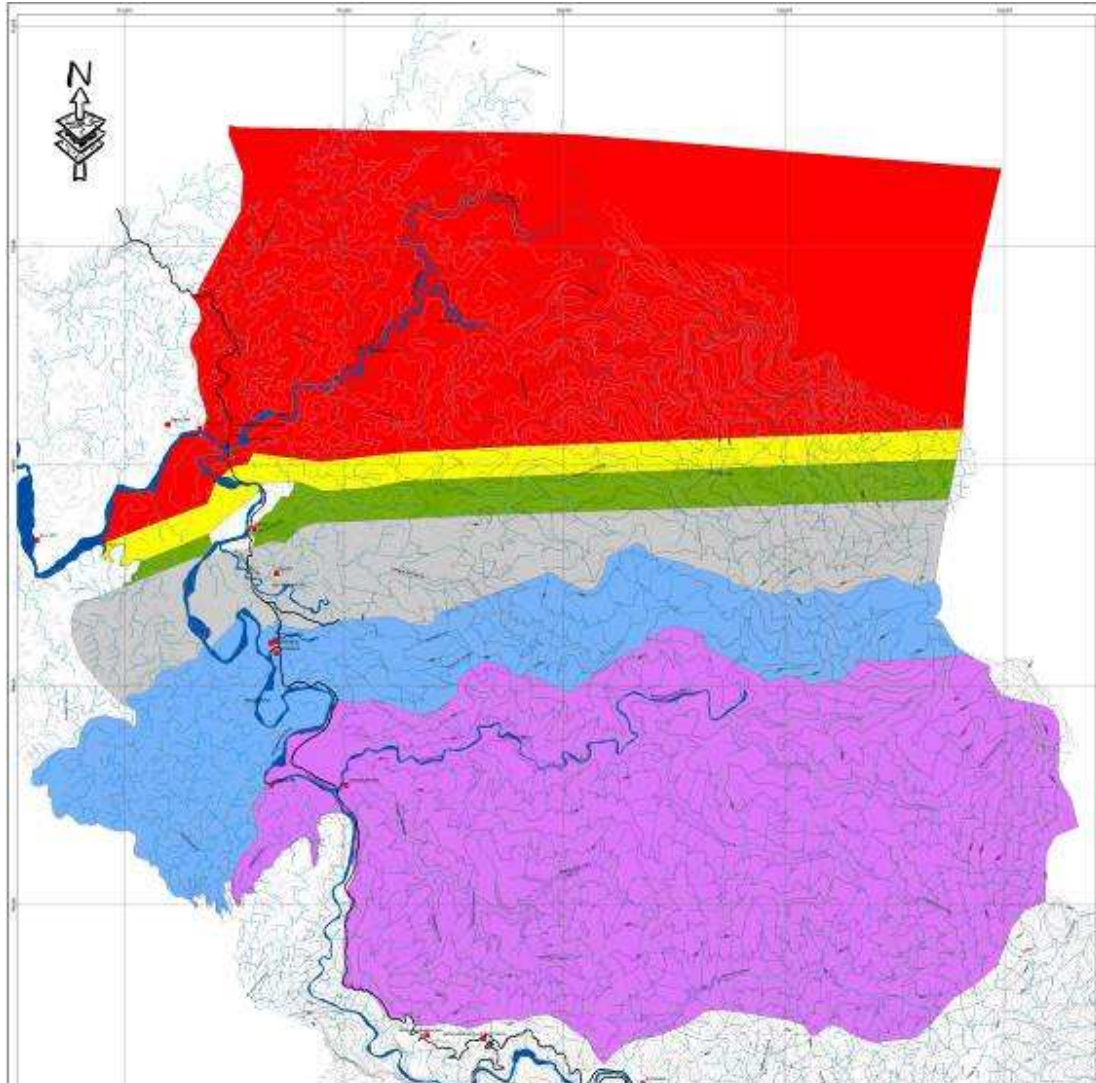


Figure 5. Six Community Councils, in the area of influence of the Natural Special Reservation, here shown in different color. See the fragmentation of the territory, due to this political arrangement.

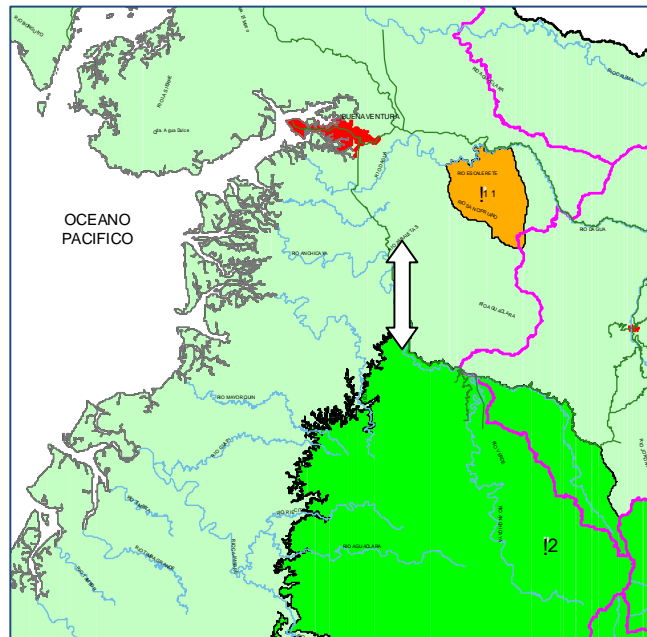


Figure 6. The two protected areas in contact with the Reserve, which is among the two protected areas (shown by the arrow). The area in orange color is the National Reserve of Escalerete and San Cipriano, the green area it is the Natural National Park Farallones of Cali.

3.2 The arrival of africans to the Pacific region of Colombia

Black (Afrocolombian) communities established in the Pacific region of Colombia in the period between 1500 and 1600, when Spaniards brought them from Africa. Nowadays, their descendants have established a new cultural identity, similar from the African roots, but adapted to the life in the new continent. These communities live in small villages in relatively pristine rain forest areas that are undergoing colonization and destruction, mainly by illegal armed groups that establish illegal crops in the area.

The colonization process in this area took place after the Simon Bolivar road began to operate in the year 1945, after 30 years of construction. This construction attracted people from Lopez de Micay, Tumaco, Guapi, Timbiquí and Buenaventura, which were the first to stay in the area (Constantino 2000). According to present information in the management plans of Community Councils, a total of 1272 people live in the area of influence of the Reservation.

3.3 The presence of illegal armed groups and their effect on the civil population

The history of the conflict armed in Colombia goes back to the forties when members of the Liberal Party responded and got armed to defend themselves from of the Conservative party attacks. This armed group later would be called the revolutionary armed forces of Colombia (FARC) and by the nineties they would strengthen mainly from illicit activities as Kidnappings, extortion and fees on the cultivation and trade of coca (Vargas 2009). In the same decade another armed group of importance appears

in answer to the presence of guerrillas, which would be called the self-defenses, which began to be distributed by the whole national territory using the drug trafficking as the main mean of obtaining financial resources and were in some regions of Colombia, discreetly supported by the military (Medina 1990).

Starting from then what you could perceive in the rural areas was so much occupation spaces of the army, the guerrilla or the self-defenses, with the communities between them. And as in other regions of the country, In particular the effect of the paramilitary ones was quite serious, because they carried out indiscriminate massacres and the communities escaped leaving their lands susceptible to the invasion. At least two of these massacres and selected killings happened in the area of the river Anchicaya.

Following the words from Pecaut (1999) “the Colombian conflict is a ‘war against society’, disconnected from class divisions and other collective forms of social identity”. As can be seen in other parts of Colombia (e.g South Bolivar) a new form of war is born in which individual interests thrive, collective action collapses and private appetites spur violence against civilians, but sometimes influencing politics in a region (Vargas 2009); the Anchicaya region is another typical example of this.

3.4 Toward the cultural and territorial empowering of the black people of Colombia: the law 70 of 1993 and the collective title of the lands.

The modification of the Political Constitution in the year 1991, gave the basis for black communities to have access to rights that were exclusive to Indian communities. But one aspect national decision makers had to solve: which may be the best choice to ensure the cultural consolidation of black communities? A topic that was critical was to consider the effect of having a private pattern of proprietorship in the very fragile conditions of this tropical rain forest. To analyze this aspect, some considerations are brought to discussion. Lloyd (1977) [1833], argued that a common-pool resource will be overused because of the higher value of present benefits of use compared to potential future costs of unrestricted use. As in other parts of the world, it can be observed that the transference of forests, and other natural resources from their previous property rights regimes to government ownership, it can generate that the affectation of the areas be increased, since the communities react to this type of policies and because of the lower capacity of the state entities to exercise control over the areas (National Research Council (2002).

This is since one of the main problems that face the fallow forest areas, given that they are of property of the state, which to the community generally means “nobody’s” and are thus susceptible to the invasion and the colonization of people coming from the interior of the country, with productive activities not appropriate to the Pacific region as the forest clearing or monocropping. This region is characterized to possess relatively thin and poor soils with the biomass accumulated in the vegetation; reason for which it is susceptible to nutrient run off once the forests is cleared given the high precipitations.

In this context, assuring the collective property of the land was visualized like a strategy of cultural and politic consolidation of the territory, which was impelled by members of black communities in the national government and it was achieved with the creation by

the Government of a law (Law number 70) in 1993 that gave the black community the possibility to access to collective property of the land, giving power to the recently created black community councils, each one possessing real territories.

It is interesting to notice that although the title includes the entirety of the Community Council (collective property), in the interior of itself productive parcels can be settled down that work under the private outline, which agrees with the analysis of Maine for villages of Germany and Russia (1871), who argued that village communities “occur everywhere and facilitate their subsistence by allocating agricultural lands as private property and forest and pastures surrounding arable lands as common property”.



Figure 7. Group discussion about “Law number 70” and conservation.

According to the Law number 70, the communities must do environmental planning of their territories, so with the support of CVC this work was made during the period 2005-2006, which looked for the zoning that includes areas for conservation and areas of use. It can be said that this collective property approach has proved to be very successful as an environmental management tool, especially in the critical context of the area (illegal crops, illegal armed groups and black communities). As said before, this land tenure pattern in black communities is unique in South America, and it can be considered as a type of institutional and policy change required for managing multi-functional commons at different scales: local and regional.

3.5 Environmental Governance

During the discussion with the communities arose a topic that it is essential in the environmental agenda in ethnic territories, this it is that of the governance; but it has been added the term environmental to restrict the scope of the term, to those aspects of the governance that have to do with the conservation of the natural resources.

Graham et al (2003) defines governance as “the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power is exercised, how decisions are taken on issues of public concern and how stakeholders have their say”. In simpler words, the governance addresses who makes the decisions and how; governance is about power, relationships, responsibility and accountability (Borrini-Feyerabend et al 2006). The following square shows the main structures of power in relation to environmental issues in the Anchicaya region (According to community perspective).

Structures of power	Work in the territory	Responsibility in the conservation topic	Perception of the community toward the actor
Community	constant permanency in the territory, some leaders support control entities, but the socioeconomic problems of character impede a bigger control	the law 70 of 1993 establish rights and clear duties in the conservation topic Community Council, advice (Directive Board and assemblies)	Leaders are not supported for other members of the community in their duties related to conservation, due mainly to socioeconomical problems
State: Autonomous Corporation (CVC)	Elaboration of management plans of community Councils, implementation of productive projects for communities. The presence in the rural area is limited.	It plays a role as environmental authority in the region	It is the actor that has more activities in the territory, however it doesn't have officials enough, reason for which cannot exercise in an efficient way their function as authority. Communities dislike their activities against mining.

State: Military Forces	Military control in the road but not the entirety of the territory	Support to some actions of environmental control (e. g. control to mining)	Their presence has brought relative security to the territory; however the communities report the presence of illicit cultivations and dislike their activities against mining.
State: Municipality	It has carried out housing projects, sanitation, health, productive systems	basic sanitation, maximum authority in territorial aspects	It has carried out actions but its presence is not constant
Illegal Armed Forces (Colombian Armed Revolutionary Forces-FARC, Paramilitary)	Illegal presence, mainly in forest areas. To obtain financing they take care of illicit cultivations and carry out selective kidnappings		The community associates these armed groups to the massacres happened in the territory.

Hardin (1968), speaks of the necessity of exercising group coercion on the common ones, and Gibson (2001) infers from that in a critical way, that this type of coercion can only be reached by the State (usually, the national government), suggesting that local governments and informal and nongovernmental institutions cannot develop effective ways to prevent or remedy situations. Contrary to this statement, and meant to be shown in this article, the management of the collective territories surrounding a common resource area, by giving power to communities to obtain agreements in conservation, can be implemented with more easiness in comparison with the agreements generated from the state.

As can be seen in the square, the relationships of power that can settle down in the social system of Anchicaya are quite complex. As it happens at world level, the communities claim their collective rights to the land, which has proven to be of benefit from the point of view of their biodiversity (Oviedo 2003).



Figure 8. Group discussion about structures of power in the territory.

This is the case of the social system of Anchicaya, where the communities possess the territoriality in a clear way through the collective title they have been granted, which in turn makes them owners of the territory. However, this characteristic doesn't make them owners of the natural resources since the political Colombian constitution establishes that the state is the "owner" of these resources.

To safeguard these resources there exist the Autonomous Corporations, which have inside their functions the control and surveillance in the areas, to emit use permits and to establish infractions of environmental type. On the other side, the military forces carry out works of political security, which has been strengthened during the last two presidential periods increasing the number of soldiers in the rural areas. Lastly illegal armed groups are using the forest areas for their refuge and are financed through the surveillance of illicit cultivations.

Now, with all these discussion elements in the table one can think about the following question: what it is required to generate environmental effective governance in the area? The answer is equally complex and in first instance one can affirm that it is necessary to strengthen the community governance. This can only be reached through the promotion of the establishment of social agreements where the parts reflect their interests.

It is necessary to offer special attention to the effect of the armed illegal groups in the management of natural resources. Although it is a fact that the presence of these groups has generated positive effects on the conservation of the forest, since its presence restricts the entrance of colonists and in general the logging (the forest in general terms recovers), it is not possible to affirm the same thing for the social cohesion of the territory. A solution line has opened up with the military reinforcement

that has arrived to the area, but, it must be considered mandatory to the state to strengthen the community mentioned governance to guarantee the conservation of the forest areas of the region. As it was visualized in the management plan, this can be done by promoting culture conservation and education, among other lines of work, using the protected area as argument (CC Aguaclara 2010).

In this sense, it is proposed that the establishment of conservation areas is a tool to generate synergies and to strengthen the environmental governance around a common purpose, which is the protected area in this case. In fact the analysis carried out in Anchicaya during the making of the management plan, allowed to generate a series of strategies guided to strengthen the governance of the different actors. One of these strategies is the creation of a "protocol of security and answer to the illicit trade and deforestation" and it is expected to facilitate the action of communities and institutions.

3.6 Natural Especial Reserve “Néstor Córdoba Camacho”

The mentioned Law 70 of 1993, more concretely in the article 25 of it, it offers the possibility to establish Natural Special Reservations in the ethnic territories of black communities. So the next step was the establishment of protected areas to the interior of the Community Council, according to the technical advice provided by SIDAP. This was the basis under which several participation processes (CC Limones 2007, CC Guaimía 2008, CC Aguaclara 2010) drove to that the Community Councils of Zabaletas, Limones, Guaimía, Llano Bajo, San Marcos y Aguaclara, declared six areas of natural special reservation, one for each community (CC Guaimía 2008). The six areas had to be determined in a separate way, because it was necessary to include normative regulations inside every council, but as was stated earlier, it was needed to unite these reserves into a single management unit. Finally in 2010, these small reserves were united to conform the Natural Special Reservation RNE “Néstor Córdoba Camacho” (CC Aguaclara 2010), covering an area of 23.998,60 hectares.

The procedure proposed here for the creation of protected areas in ethnic territories, includes: first the creation of the areas protected through some legal instrument of the community (in this case resolution of Council) and second is the recognition of the initiative of community conservation through a declaration of the protected area according to one of the effective categories in the norm, through a normative effective instrument (in the case of the reservation of Anchicaya, an Agreement of CVC). As a summary, the following square describes how the different methodologies have been implemented:

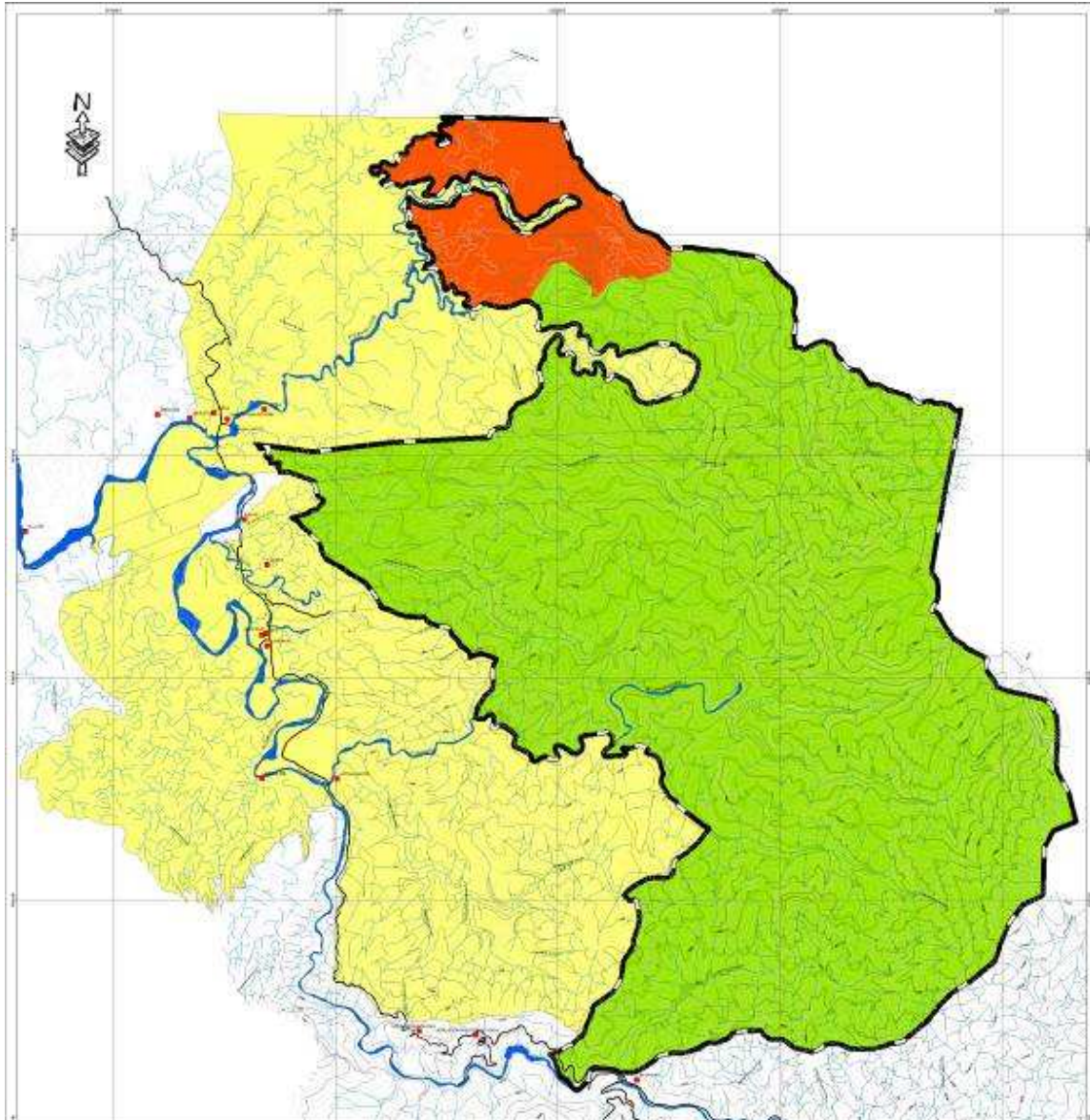


Figure 9. Map that shows the reserve in green and orange, result of having merged the sis community councils and an area of influence in yellow.

3.7 Application of methodological elements of the SIDAP

methodological elements used	Description of the support to the reserve process (CC Aguaclara 2010)
General guide for the declaration of areas	Preliminary juridical evaluation, technical and community consultation, agreement of more appropriate protected area category.

Guide for Identification and actors' characterization	Social actors were identified, characterized and the prioritized in the influence area. Action lines were defined for each actor, which was included in the projects section of the plan.
Guide for the identification of appropriate protected area category	The natural special reservation, is a category applicable to ethnic territories, reason for which was chosen
Guide for the definition of conservation priorities	The analysis of conservation criteria was made which allowed identifying key areas for the hydrological regulation, ecosystems little represented, threatened species, among other. The conservation targets were prioritized, according to TNC.
Guide for the management planning	It allowed outlining a financial strategy for the area, which is based on a environmental services payment, a strategy of agroforestry production and a ecotourism project.
Guide for the management planning	The management plan was done according to the proposed methodology

During the formulation of the management plan was possible to identify the decisive factors that determine the environmental problems in the reservation and their influence area.

The management plan gets the vision that communities have of their territory toward the future. At this moment, the same communities are in negotiation process with different institutions to achieve the financing of the contained programs in the plan. Next some characteristics are enumerated that have strengthened the process:

- The initiative of creating the natural special reservation is not a state initiative; rather it is an initiative of the communities to achieve the consolidation of its territory to the future.
- Having the character of “autonomous” protected area, since they were declared by the same communities it is an influential element on the decisions makers.

3.8 Take home lessons from the process

3.8.1 As for the management of protected areas on the part of the State

- The consolidation of the system of protected areas from the year 2002 have allowed that the decisions on protected areas be decentralized generating appropriation on the part of the communities in its respective areas.
- The system has propitiated the creation of different elements (concepts, methodologies, among other), in the local work tables, reason for which its implementation in the local processes of protected areas has been facilitated.
- The system has facilitated the interaction of institutional and community actors, so creating a favorable environmental for the resolution of conflicts related with the management of protected areas.
- The concepts and methodologies generated in the participatory process have influenced in higher levels of management like it is the national one.

3.8.2 As for the management of communal forests of ethnic character

- The collective title of the territory for the communities is an advantage, since it allows to exercise sovereignty on the use of the territory.
- For the state the collective title of the territory is also an advantage, since it impedes the uncontrolled colonization and the destruction of the forests.
- Another advantage for the state is that it facilitates the negotiation of strategies for preservation and use of the territories, because the community is represented with legitimate representatives.
- The procedure proposed here for the creation of areas protected in ethnic territories, includes, first the creation of the protected areas through some common legal instrument of the community and second, the recognition of the initiative of community conservation by the State through a declaration of the protected area according to national legislation.

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