

### **Project name:**

"My forest my future" ... the Tacana participation in the application of new sustainable business and technologies to improve their live conditions and the conservation of the forest.

### **Overview:**

*"I belong to this land and I belong to these rivers. This is **my forest, my future** and the future of my kids. I want to have the chance to decide what is the best for my community and for all the animals and plants that live here. I know that we can't do this alone but please don't come here trying to save us... come here to work with us; to save the forest together"*  
(Mariana Michigene, Tacana indigenous member, 2015)

Located in South America, the Amazonia is one of the biggest rainforest region in the world and encompasses over 5,5 millions of square kilometres distributed between nine countries<sup>1</sup> (Pereira, 2000; Cisneros, 2007). This region contains a staggering portion of the worlds bio diversity, supporting thousands of people through economical activities like agriculture and provides to the world important ecological services like the increment of rainfall, climate regulation, etc.

A study developed by The Bolivian Association for Research and Conservation of Amazonian Andean Ecosystems (ACEAA) in 2015 stressed that indigenous communities' effectiveness in conserving forests is similar to the one offered by national parks, making indigenous people a key actor in conserving the bio-diversity in the Amazon region. One of the main challenges is to increase the sense of ownership of new eco friendly business with new sustainable technologies for the production into the members of the local communities. However, the lack of methods of socialization and local participation that incentivizes the sense of ownership of the sustainable technologies has become an obstacle to achieve this goal.

### **Problem:**

The lack of active participation on the implementation of new business as well as technologies has economical, organizational and environmental consequences; reducing the possibilities to improve the productive activities and make them more sustainable and friendly with the forest. In some cases, the absence of new technologies force to the community members to maintain obsolete technologies that can cause serious damages to the people and to the ecosystem.

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<sup>1</sup> Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Surinam, Venezuela and French Guyana.

*At the same time, the lack of methods of socialization of the projects and the low local participation on the initiatives that incentivizes the sense of ownership of the eco-friendly business projects and the sustainable technologies by indigenous has become an obstacle to achieve a long-term view of most of the projects.*

*Other important aspect to note is related to the extensive local knowledge about their benefits that the resources from the forest. This provides a proper understanding of how a proper use and handling of the resources could be done if they would have the technologies available for the implementation.*

*Generating a legitimate appropriation of the business and technologies on the community members that has interest to develop new sustainable business activities with one or more fruits from the forest will be recognizing as a real opportunity to diversify the local income and invest their time in long-term plan that would also be friendly with the forest thanks to the improvement of the techniques and the technologies of production.*

### **Objective:**

Facilitate the develop of new business and implementation of sustainable technologies in the TCO Tacana II

### **Specifics objectives:**

- Create trustable knowledge about the properties and characteristics of prioritized forest resources, to facilitate the develop of new business and implementation of sustainable technologies.*
- Improve the Tacana familiar economy by developing new forms of business and the implementation of new technologies based on better use of the “fruits of the forest”.*
- Develop methodologies and the tools of implementation (manuals, process, etc.) that includes the social and the cultural view of the local actors.*
- Monitor the productive activities related to the use of resources from the forest that would be involved into the project to define the technologies and methods for the implementation.*
- Generate new management mechanisms of local knowledge regarding to the forest resources under the idea of responsible use of the fruits from the forest to strengthen their good management and use.*

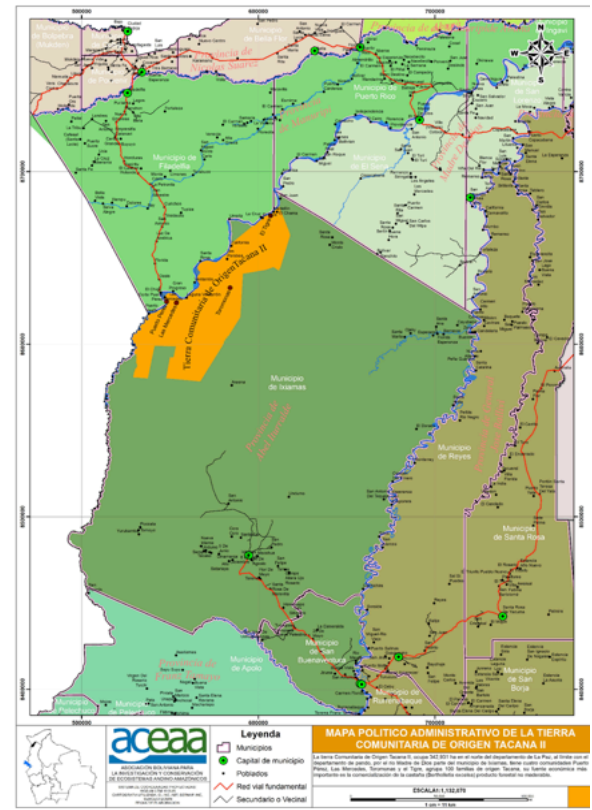
### **Working approach**

*With the active participation of the local communities in the application of the initiatives planed and described in this document the intention is to Increase the local sense of ownership and the active participation into the members of the local communities. This will be done under the **develop of the project** that would generate the strategy for new business ways and the application of technologies to improve the sustainable use of the forest resources (that we will call “fruits of the forest”).*

### Area of action

The project will begin in the region of the TCO Tacana II, in the North-West Bolivian Amazon (see Figure 1), which includes the communities of Puerto Pérez, Las Mercedes, Toromonas and El Tigre. ACEAA already have several years' experience in working with these communities, and thus they are proposed as suitable locations for this project, with existing knowledge on the area and people expected to support the development of a successful action that can later be replicated elsewhere where the aim is to generate and active participation of the local actors.

The Tacana II territory, spanning 345,000 hectares, situated along the Madre de Dios River and a population of approximately 1,000 people. The territory is uniquely located between Madidi National Park and Manuripi National Reserve, forming a contiguous conservation corridor that connects the ecosystems, allowing plants and wildlife to move freely between the areas.



The Tacana II people are represented by their indigenous organization the Central Indígena de Comunidades Tacana II del Río Madre de Dios (CITRMD). Tacana II community leaders and CITRMD representatives are currently leading efforts to pursue a formal titling process that would designate the Tacana II property as official indigenous territory belonging to the Tacana II people. They are at present in the final phase of this titling process. Once the Tacana II territory is formally designated as indigenous territory, the Tacana will be better positioned to protect it from small and large-scale deforestation activities.

The Tacana II economy is based primarily on the recollection of fruits from the forest and harvest of wild Brazil nuts. While sustainable forest use such as Brazil nut harvesting can significantly increase household income, comprehensive territory planning and effective local governance are also needed to ensure forest conservation.

**Business criteria's for the commercialization of the fruits from the forest and the implementation of new technologies for a sustainable use of the resources.**

*To achieve the objectives aimed for this project its necessary to implement specific actions and activities for the implementation. In this sense the goals on the fist period of implementation (around one year depending on the funds) would be:*

- Identify potential species, at least three, and their productive potential.
- Install sample plots in the communities, where the population structure, phenology and the productive capacity can be established. With these data the potential production could be estimate for the entire area of use of the potential recourses.

- Defining, according with the business necessities, the process that would need technological innovation (i.e harvesting, production of oils, draying, packing, among others).
- Developing the business criteria's to be apply in the local communities for the elaboration, with the participation of local actors, of the methodology of implementation of the business actions.
- Stablishing plans for commercialization and organizational structures on the productive chain.

### **Key aspects for the implementation:**

The use of sustainable technologies can transform the state of natural resource management within the region and make great strides toward improving livelihoods and supporting the economic independence for the local communities. While also ensuring long-term conservation activities in one of the most bio-diverse places on Earth. Actions to

develop the continues participation of the indigenous people in the process of implementation of these technologies are needed to have a success. It is also important that these possibilities are affordable in economical and management

The need to develop and implement new business strategies combined with technologies and innovation processes for the forest products is key factor to ensure the sustainability and the consolidation of the local sense of ownership of the economical and sustainable productive activity.

To achieve a real participation of the Tacana in the develop of strategies for the sustainable management this project, the efforts needs to focus also in the transfer of skills and in replicated process that can shows a legitimate commitment and interest. To achieve these

results our aim is to transfer and replication of knowledge into the women's and young groups. This can facilitate communication, internal organization and coordination that can facilitate the activities of the processes.

In 2014 a project developed by ACEAA in the Tacana region introduced manual press machines to obtain pure oil from the Brazil Nut (*Bertholletia excelsa*) for gastronomic and cosmetic purposes to be commercialized in international markets. The local participation during the entire process (improving the nut harvesting process- add value with the new technology- local organization and commercialization) increased the sense of ownership in the participants. Today the aim is that the women would carry the project controlling the quality of the production, the correct use of the machines and ensuring the fair distribution of the earnings. The implementation of this simple technology can increase the income of each family 35% and ensured the conservation of the forest.

*The aspects mentioned above will help to increase the participation of local people in the entire business and in the use of technologies to improve the productive process to ensure a long-term view of the activity. These aspects can be drivers to diversify the productive activities of forest resources, that will supplement incomes and reduce the risk from sole dependence and exploring other forest-friendly products. But nothing of this would be useful if the technologies doesn't integrate the active participation of local actors make them be part of the process not just as a beneficiary because at the end they are the ones who would use and be responsible of the good management of these technologies and the business activity.*

## **Outcomes**

- At least three fruits from the forest have potential for new markets.
- New technologies are implemented for at least three products or processes with potential markets.
- A minimum number of two groups (15 persons per group) in the communities have gained the capabilities to develop new business and implement sustainable technologies in the production processes.
- The income of the families that participate in the business initiatives will increase in at least 20%.
- At least 3 members peer community have developed the skills to create, fix or give some technical criteria to resolve technological issues.

## **Budget**

The idea is to run the pilot project for two years in the four communities in the Tacana II with more that 150 direct beneficiaries and 200 indirect. The total cost of the project would be 130.000 UDS (65.000 peer year)

## **References:**

- **ACEAA**. 2015. Tacana Brazil Nut Program for Blue-moon Foundation, Bolivia.
- **Cisneros, P.** 2007. *Gobernanza ambiental, conservación y conflicto en el Parque Nacional de Yasuni*. Observatorio socioambiental. Working paper 003. Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Perú.
- **Pereira de Lima, R.** 2000. *La selva amazónica como problema geográfico*. Universidad de Barcelona. Departamento de Geografía. Spain.