BEST PRACTICE
IN LATIN AMERICA AND
THE CARIBBEAN

Indigenous Management of Protected Areas in the Peruvian Amazon Project

A successful model for participatory conservation

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THE WORLD BANK
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGION
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Natural Protected Areas under PIMA Project
Indigenous peoples' participation

Ten different indigenous peoples inhabit the five NPAs in the project. Most people still live in a subsistence economy based on hunting, fishing, gathering wild plants, and slash-and-burn agriculture. Fishing provides most of protein consumed (approximately 70 percent) but hunting is highly valued and is still the most prestigious social activity. Slash-and-burn agriculture is practiced with various techniques; the objectives are to sustain production and to protect the delicate soils of the Amazon. Careful soil-use planning takes into account the height of terraces, soil type and color, and biological indicators such as various bird species that prefer certain Amazonian subsystems and whose presence or absence indicates the quality of a specific soil. Only a small proportion of land (a quarter or half hectare) is used at a time, thereby ensuring natural soil recovery.

The communal system makes it possible to carry out all duties in an organized manner: hunting and fishing areas are distributed fairly, and gathering is mutually decided in order to avoid overuse. Some areas are used only to gather medicinal and hallucinogenic plants under the guidance of the local shaman. Prohibited areas usually have religious value and are related to myths and rituals; these areas often coincide with rich habitats. The ethic governing consumption and production ensures that nothing is wasted and that animal species are not overhunted. The gathering of birds' eggs or nestlings is not encouraged.

Although this system has been altered through exposure to aspects of Western civilization, particularly mining and logging, most of the population still maintains traditional production patterns that are closely linked to natural resources. In this situation, any threat to protected areas is also a threat to indigenous peoples’ livelihoods.

Indigenous peoples consulted during project preparation agreed to maintain their forests and participate in the conservation of NPAs. However, the mechanisms to achieve this goal were to be decided during the categorization process.

Indigenous organizations

The project's participatory approach made it necessary to deal with the complex network of indigenous organizations that operates in the five NPAs, including local, regional, and national organizations. The two national federations—AIDESEP and CONAM—promoted the project and actively participated in its preparation. Both were incorporated as members of the Steering Committee that was established to oversee project implementation. Regional organizations played an important role in the establishment of communal reserves and were very helpful in the design and implementation of bioinvestment projects. Local organizations played a key role in the integration of surveillance groups and the principal beneficiaries and executors of bioinvestment projects.

Relations with indigenous organizations during implementation were not always smooth. In fact, the project had to overcome several crises mainly related to the categorization and control of resource flows to the communities.
## Indigenous Peoples in NPAs under PIMA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPA</th>
<th>Indigenous Peoples</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Communities</th>
<th>No. of Org.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve Pacaya-Samiria</td>
<td>Kukama-Kukamiria</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>80 Indigenous 20 Mestiza</td>
<td>207 206 03</td>
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<tr>
<td>El Sira Communal Reserve</td>
<td>Asháninca Ashéninka Llaneza Shipibo-Conibo</td>
<td>8,200</td>
<td>80 Indigenous 20 Mestiza</td>
<td>209 120 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alto Purús National Park and Purús Communal Reserve</td>
<td>Cashinahua Sharanahua Culina Mastanahua Amahuaca Asháninca Chaninahua Yine</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>90 Indigenous 10 Mestiza</td>
<td>45 23 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago Comaina Reserved Zone</td>
<td>Awajún Wampis</td>
<td>15,600</td>
<td>92 Indigenous 8 Mestiza</td>
<td>137 83 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gueppí Reserved Zone</td>
<td>Kichuas Huitoto Secoya or Airo Pai</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>60 Indigenous 40 Mestiza</td>
<td>25 23 3</td>
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## Indigenous Peoples Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPAs</th>
<th>ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Güeppí Reserve Zone</td>
<td>1. ORAI Organización Regional AIDESEP en Iquitos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. FECONAFROPU Federación de Comunidades Nativas Fronterizas del Putumayo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. OISPE Organización Indígena Secoya del Perú</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santiago Comaima Reserve Zone</td>
<td>1. CAH* Consejo Aguaruna Huambisa</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. FECOHRSA Federación de Comunidades Huambisas del Río Santiago</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. FAD Federación Aguaruna de Domingusa</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. ODECOFROC Organización de Desarrollo de las Comunidades Fronterizas del Cenepa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alto Purús Reserve Zone</td>
<td>5. ODECINAC Organización de Desarrollo de Comunidades Indígenas Numpatkaim Alto Cenepa</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. CHAPI SIWAG Iñambahu Chapi Shiwa</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. OSHDEM Organización Shuar del Morona</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve</td>
<td>1. FECONAPU Federación de Comunidades Nativas del Purús</td>
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<td>2. FENAMAD*** Federación Nativa de Madre de Dios</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. AIDECOS asociación indígena de desarrollo y conservación del Samiria</td>
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<td>3. ACODECOSPAT Asociación Cocama de Desarrollo y Conservación San Pablo de Tipishca</td>
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<tr>
<td>El Sira Communal Reserve</td>
<td>1. ARPI Asociación Regional de Pueblos Indígenas</td>
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<td>2. CECONSEC Central de Comunidades Nativas de Selva Central</td>
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<td>3. ANAP Apatayawaka Nampitsi Asháninca Pichis</td>
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<td>4. UNAY Unión de Nacionalidades Asháninca/Yanesha</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. OIRA Organización Indígena Regional de Atalaya</td>
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<td>6. ORAU Organización Regional Alto Ucayali</td>
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<td>7. OAGP Organización Asháninca del Gran Pajonal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8. ORDIM Organización de Desarrollo Indígena de Masisea</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9. FECONAPIA Federación de Comunidades Nativas de la Provincia de Puerto Inca</td>
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<td>10. FECONADIP Federación de Comunidades Nativas del Distrito de Paria</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. ORDECONADIT Organización de Desarrollo de Comunidades Nativas del Distrito de Tahuaniá</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. ECOSIRA** Ejecutor de Contrato de la Reserva Comunal El Sira</td>
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* Basins: Chiriaco, Marañón, Cenepa, Nieva y Santiago
** Contract Executor
*** Outside of area
The Project

The PIMA Project was designed to address crucial factors affecting conservation of the Peruvian Amazon Region. It proposed a participatory conservation model to respond to indigenous organizations' demands for participation in the management of protected areas and the protection of their forests.

The project met all requirements to receive GEF funding. Peru ranks among a handful of mega-diversity countries. The Peruvian Amazon Region in particular is one of the most important repositories of biological diversity on the planet. The GEF Project contributed to the establishment of a long-term protection strategy for globally important ecosystems consistent with the GEF's overall Operational Strategy; specifically, it supported Operational Programs 3 (Forest Ecosystems) and 2 (Freshwater Ecosystems). The five target protected areas extend over pristine forests housing many species of global importance and some that are threatened. The project’s conservation activities also target the biodiversity of the Ucayali, Pachitea, Angusilla, Purús, Curanja, Comaina, Cenepa, Santiago, and Marañón Rivers. The project was also consistent with GEF Strategic Priority 1: catalyzing the sustainability of protected area systems by supporting the financing of INRENA and strengthening the capacity of indigenous peoples to participate in the management of protected areas.

The participation of indigenous peoples was also protected by the ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, which Peru ratified in 1994. Furthermore, during consultations conducted in 2001 to approve the bylaw of the Natural Protected Areas Law, the Government of Peru (GoP) agreed to: (i) respect community rights, including lands titled and rights acquired prior to the establishment of NPAs; (ii) allow tenure regularization of community lands within protected areas and buffer zones once an agreement on categorization was reached; (iii) acknowledge their values and protect their cultural heritage and traditional productive systems; and (iv) encourage indigenous organizations and community leaders to become members of the NPA Management Committees. More importantly, the new regulations established a mandatory consultation process to define categories in the Master Plan and allowed indigenous organizations to manage communal reserves.

The PDF Block B grant financed a broad consultative and participatory process that included representatives from INRENA and the Ministry of Women and Human Development. The two major Amazonian indigenous federations (the Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest—AIDESEP and the Confederation of Amazonian Nationalities of Peru—CONAP) participated actively. Regional and local indigenous organizations, as well as national and local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), also contributed to project design. The process helped to gain more precision concerning protected area coverage, timing, local actors, and interested parties with regard to final categorization, resulting in the selection of target areas for project implementation. The project comprised the following components:

Component 1. Participatory Biodiversity Conservation (US$4.308 million, corresponding to 43.1% of GEF donation).

The objective of this component was to promote the participation of indigenous people in the establishment, categorization, and management of the five protected areas identified by the project in order to ensure long-term conservation. This component comprises the following subcomponents:
a. Creation and Categorization of Protected Areas
b. Strengthening of Participatory Mechanisms
c. Training of Indigenous Peoples in Participatory Mechanisms and Methods for Protected Areas Management
d. Provision of Infrastructure and Equipment for Protected Areas
e. Strengthening of Field Teams and Zone Coordination Committees

**Component 2. Sustainable Uses of Biodiversity** (US$3.112 million, corresponding to 31.1% of GEF donation).

The aim of this component was to carry out economically and ecologically sound activities in the buffer zone of protected areas to relieve pressure and generate income for poor communities. This component included the following subcomponents:

a. Management Plans for Titled Indigenous Land
b. Communal Natural Resource Use Contract
c. Demand and Market Studies
d. Biodiversity Investments Subgrants

**Component 3. Monitoring and Evaluation System** (US$1.283 million, corresponding to 12.8% of GEF donation).

The objective of this component was to design and implement a participatory monitoring and evaluation system for the project areas as the basis for the entire National Natural Protected Areas System (SINANPE). This component contains the following subcomponents:

a. Biological and Socioeconomic Baselines and Databases
b. Biological and Socioeconomic Monitoring
c. Area Management Monitoring
d. Training, Technical Assistance, and Operational Support

**Component 4. Project Implementation** (US$1.297 million, corresponding to 12.9% of GEF donation).

This component was aimed at strengthening INRENA’s institutional and technical capacity to include indigenous peoples in the sustainable management of protected areas and their natural resources. The subcomponents include:

a. Project National Coordination Mechanisms
b. Project Special Implementation Unit
c. Technical Assistance
d. Project Monitoring

**The Participatory Model**

Since its preparation, the project incorporated a participatory approach involving indigenous communities and organizations as well as other stakeholders in the design of the project. The initial goal was to ensure indigenous peoples’ participation in the Management Committees,
established as the high-level decision-making body in each NPA. This initial proposal evolved during implementation and incorporated the demands of indigenous peoples and the experience gained toward the establishment of a comanagement system. The comanagement system comprises all critical areas of protected areas conservation from the initial definition of categories to conservation planning and monitoring and evaluation. The main features of the participatory model based on comanagement are:

- **Categorization of NPAs with an indigenous peoples’ perspective**: The project built a participatory and intercultural design of legal instruments, protocols, and institutional arrangements that allow indigenous peoples to participate in the categorization of NPAs and in the preparation of conservation plans and natural resource management plans;

- **The establishment of communal reserves**: This category acknowledges indigenous peoples’ rights over their lands and their management, taking into account the culture and traditions of indigenous organizations;

- **Participatory planning**: Preparation of Master Plans and Management Plans from the perspective of indigenous peoples, taking into account their priorities for conservation and natural resources management;

- **Bioinvestment projects for the sustainable use of natural resources**: These community-based productive subprojects are identified, prioritized, designed, and directly executed by the communities according to their skills and experience, with the support of PIMA;

- **Strengthening the capacity of indigenous organizations**: The project facilitated indigenous peoples’ participation and strengthened the capacity of their organizations and local leaders to participate in NPA management through training, technical assistance, sharing of experiences, and scholarships for selected indigenous leaders;

- **Social network for conservation**: The project promoted and developed a social network to facilitate the involvement of indigenous populations in comanagement, including: community promoters for training and evaluation, and local surveillance groups;

- **Participatory M&E system**: The project’s Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System was designed and implemented with the direct involvement of indigenous communities. It incorporated social and cultural factors affecting conservation and hired indigenous promoters to collect and register data for monitoring purposes.

**Categorization with indigenous peoples’ perspective: the basis for conservation**

The project initiated the process of formalizing the El Sira Communal Reserve and categorizing the three Reserved Zones: Santiago Comaina, Purús, and Güéppi. Categorization was the turning point for the establishment of a truly participatory conservation model. The process, which was designed to be executed in a participatory manner through a consultant, led to disputes about the process not being participatory enough and not taking into account indigenous peoples’ perspectives. In fact, it turned into a confrontation between a traditional vision favoring national parks to ensure conservation, and other categories such as communal reserves in which indigenous organizations have direct management capacity. To resolve these disputes, which nearly paralyzed the project, INRENA and the Bank took into account indigenous organizations’ concerns and agreed: (i) to review and complement as necessary the consultation process, taking
into account indigenous peoples’ priorities; (ii) to incorporate the local NPA Directorate to lead the process with the support of the Project Implementation (PIU) team; (iii) not to force categorization, meaning that the areas under dispute would remain as “reserve zones” until an agreement is reached. As a result of this process, which required intensive negotiations at local and national levels and the involvement of the People’s Ombudsman (Defensoría del Pueblo), the categorization process concluded as follows:

**El Sira Communal Reserve:** This communal reserve was formalized, in accordance with agreements reached under the project, by a Supreme Decree on June 22, 2001, followed by the creation of ECOSIRA, which would serve as executor of a contract with INRENA and be responsible for the reserve’s conservation management. The project’s social team supported the formalization of ECOSIRA; this required reaching agreement with each community within the reserve and preparing the Management Plan, using an innovative participatory approach that allowed ECOSIRA’s management and consultants to work together.

**Purús Reserve Zone:** The PIMA Project worked jointly with FECONAPU (Federación de Comunidades Nativas de Purús) and local communities to reach an agreement for the establishment of the Purús National Park, comprising areas that are considered sacred for indigenous peoples, and of the Purús Communal Reserve. This arrangement allows indigenous communities to use natural resources, protect an area for indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation, and support the conservation of the national park comprising areas of natural value that are considered sacred. The project also supported the establishment of ECOPURUS, which would serve as executor of a contract with INRENA and be responsible for the reserve’s conservation management.

**Santiago Comaina Reserve Zone:** The categorization process in this area was particularly difficult because (i) it involved the final categorization of two communal reserves and a national park, and (ii) indigenous organizations are particularly strong in this area. Furthermore, INRENA was very much in favor of creating a national sanctuary to protect endangered species. This limited the area of one of the proposed communal reserves. A compromise was reached to create the Ichigkat Muja Cordillera del Cóndor National Park and the Tuntanait Communal Reserve. The proposed Kampankis Communal Reserve, comprising the sanctuary in the hills, remained a “reserved zone” until further agreements were reached. Instead of opposition to the sanctuary, where indigenous sacred sites are located, disagreement arose over the control of lands that indigenous peoples consider to be their ancestral territories.

**Güeppí Reserved Zone:** From the beginning, a categorization based only on biological values and conservation priorities, was rejected. In fact, the local communities have also opposed a previous proposal (1999) that categorized Güeppí as a National Reserve. The Huitoto, Kichuas, and Secoyas peoples instead proposed the establishment of communal reserves in the areas that they regard as ancestral territories. During the project, after lengthy negotiations an agreement was reached for the establishment of two communal reserves: Tunta Nain and Kampankis. However, this proposal, which was approved by INRENA, is still pending approval by the Council of Ministers.

**Pacaya-Samiria National Park:** Because this NPA was already categorized, efforts were therefore focused on conservation management planning, including the preparation of strategic natural resources plans, research plans, and monitoring and evaluation.
The categorization process provides legal security to protected areas by defining clear conservation responsibilities. Moreover, by delineating boundaries in formerly reserved zones, it facilitates land titling, which is a priority for indigenous peoples.

**Communal reserves: an alternative to participatory conservation**

As demonstrated during categorization, the establishment of communal reserves is an alternative that helped to resolve the dispute over land rights in the Peruvian Amazon. Indigenous peoples prefer the communal reserves category because it gives them direct management capacity over lands that they consider to be their ancestral territories. The PIMA team played a critical role in facilitating negotiations: on the one hand, by showing indigenous peoples the advantages of other category alternatives, such as national parks, that can be managed by indigenous peoples; on the other hand, by convincing various technical personnel in INRENA that communal reserves are part of the National Protected Areas System and are therefore subject to supervision and compliance with conservation management plans.

Although legislation already established communal reserves as a valid category, regulations to actually operate them were still lacking. The preparation and validation of these regulations was also a contribution of PIMA. The PIMA team conducted an extensive consultation process, involving indigenous communities and local, regional, and national indigenous organizations, that made it possible to reach consensus on the Communal Reserves Special Regime. This “regime” comprises the bylaws to regulate the operation of communal reserves. It took nearly two years of consultations and deliberations, community by community, to reach this agreement which was finally endorsed unanimously by all indigenous organizations, including the national federations AIDESEP and CONAP.

PIMA also helped to establish two contract executors (Ejecutores de Contrato–ECOs): ECOSIRA and ECOPURUS. Both received support to establish themselves as ECOs and prepare and validate their management plans. The challenge remains to make these organizations technically and financially operational. A similar process must be completed for the Tuntanait Communal Reserve (CR). It is also important that the two communal reserves proposed in Güeppi (Huimeneki and Airo Pai) receive final approval. Negotiations should continue in Santiago Comaina for the Kampankis CR.

The administration contract for the El Sira CR has already been signed; its management plan has been prepared and validated and is currently under execution. This CR comprises 616,413.41 hectares and around 18,000 indigenous people. ECOPURUS, which was established to manage the Purús CR, has also prepared its master plan, signed the administration contract, and completed its management plan. The Purús CR comprises 210,033 ha and 1,000 indigenous peoples who are the direct beneficiaries.
Communal Reserves Model:

**Participatory planning: the basis of effective conservation**

Conservation planning is as important as categorization because it establishes the rules to access and use natural resources and ensures their conservation. Through participatory planning, PIMA engaged communities in the identification of each NPA's physical, biological, and socioeconomic characteristics. Mapping exercises were very useful for this purpose and facilitated agreements on the use of natural resources. Plans emerging from these exercises included the views and priorities of indigenous peoples and protected their livelihoods. In some cases, master plans for the specific use of valued natural resources were prepared. Ownership of the process is demonstrated by the fact that the communities themselves established mechanisms and penalties to enforce compliance with these plans.

Participatory planning: an instrument to negotiate natural resources management with an indigenous peoples' perspective:
Bioinvestment projects: contributing to poverty alleviation and sustainability

The concept of bioinvestment projects, which was developed under PIMA, refers to investment grants for poor communities to carry out income-generating alternatives that also contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources. These investments were focused on NPA buffer zones, with the aim of protecting biodiversity-rich areas, in accordance with the conservation strategy of management plans for each NPA. The selection of activities took into account technical and economic feasibility and compatibility with communities' capacity, cultural perspective, and priorities, in order to optimize environmental and social sustainability. The participatory methodology comprises:

- A process of learning by doing in which communities, with the support of the project’s technical team, identify options that better respond to their needs and incorporate an economic perspective that helps to introduce innovations in traditional activities that are already yielding better conditions and in some cases better incomes;

- Steering Committees, which were formed and trained to directly execute subprojects including resource management and reporting. These committees enhanced leadership and local capacity and contributed to the creation of social capital;
• Agreements to prepare resource management plans with the aim of ensuring the orderly extraction and use of natural resources, in accordance with the potential of each area (reforestation, medicinal plants, fishing, etc.);

• Technical assistance and training, which were provided by special technical teams located in the NPAs, instead of the centralized model initially proposed for this purpose. Indigenous peoples' promoters were included in this effort, which represented a true cultural dialogue in which both sides learned better ways to use natural resources.

The operational manual was developed jointly with the communities and the Steering Committees received training on its use to enable them to manage their projects. Communities especially valued the opportunity to directly execute the project, including the management of financial resources, as recognition of their capacity and responsibility. There was strict social control over subproject execution.

The project did not specifically aim to reduce poverty. However, through the execution of sustainable biodiversity projects involving 200 communities, the project generated jobs and incomes that would not have been created without the project, directly benefiting 1,757 families and 8,258 people in the five target areas. These projects also helped to improve family nutrition, food security, and the integration of communities in existing market chains, such as those for organic coffee, fish, medicinal plants, and timber. According to the efficiency assessment, the expected income to be generated from these activities in the first year after project implementation is US$550,000. The project also provided the opportunity for new activities such as ecotourism in several areas with potential for this activity, mainly in the Pacaya-Samiria NPA.

Sustainable use of natural resources and poverty reduction
Strengthening capacity for effective participation

To respond to a strong demand by indigenous organizations and to ensure effective indigenous participation, the project incorporated an ongoing training program that covered subjects such as participatory planning, execution of bioinvestment projects, and management capacity. The project tested several methods, the most effective of which were the "learning-by-doing" approach and the sharing of experiences among peers. Training involved community promoters who knew the culture and spoke the language. Training was always presented as an intercultural dialogue and a two-way process in which both parties learned from each other. This approach facilitated learning and enhanced self-esteem.

The training program that was put in place to strengthen indigenous participatory capacity included: 107 internships for communal leaders to travel and evaluate indigenous peoples’ experiences with protected areas (El Manu National Park and Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve), and 5 public awareness campaigns to increase support for environmental issues. Moreover, the project provided seven students with scholarships to complete their university studies.

The two national federations of indigenous organizations of the Amazon participated in the Steering Committee in charge of overseeing project management. In addition, each of these federations appointed an indigenous professional to act as their liaison and as advisor to the director of PUMA in the PIU. Indigenous promoters who spoke the local languages worked in the field. Three NPA directors and some of their technical staff were also indigenous, thus facilitating the building of mutual trust.

Strengthening community organizations: Capacity building and intercultural dialogue
**Social network for conservation: covering all the basis**

The project developed a participation strategy whose principles are to: (i) ensure the legitimacy of representation; (ii) build a common vision for conservation of NPAs; (iii) promote social control and accountability; (iv) promote intercultural dialogue and respect for diversity; (v) promote intercultural dialogue and two-way learning; (vi) strengthen indigenous peoples' culture and self-esteem; and (vii) ensure equity in the distribution of benefits. Participation comprised community organizations that were recognized and respected as legitimate authorities, local and regional organizations as potential project partners, and other partners and NGOs. The key participation mechanisms developed under the project are:

- **Zone Coordination Committees**, established in the NPA Directorate to manage the project, with representatives of local communities;

- **Protected Areas Management Committees** (PAMC): the consultative groups established in each of the five target areas to provide advice on the management of protected areas. In all cases, these groups include representatives of all indigenous organizations under their jurisdiction;

- **Contract Executors** (Ejecutores de Contrato de Administración—ECAs), created to manage communal reserves through administration contracts with INRENA to prepare and execute conservation management plans;

- **Natural Resources Management Contracts**: Through these contracts indigenous communities can sign formal agreements with INRENA to use natural resources in a small-scale, sustainable manner and receive technical assistance. By the time the project ended, 50 local groups had signed these contracts and were operating in the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve (PSNR);

- **Community Surveillance Systems**: Five community surveillance systems have been established, one in each of the project’s NPAs. These systems give indigenous peoples the capacity to oversee illegal activities in these areas. INRENA has officially recognized the authority of these groups and has provided them with an official ID.

Participation in these mechanisms is entirely voluntary and without remuneration but is highly valued as a form of social recognition within the communities. The project provided training and support for the proper functioning of these mechanisms.

**Participatory M&E System: a two-way learning experience**

Indigenous populations were actively involved in the design of the Participatory M&E System to measure biodiversity conservation. This system was developed in the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve. Their involvement helped to build into the system their priorities and demands for the management of these protected areas. The process comprised: (i) workshops with the local population to identify and select social and biological indicators; (ii) the establishment of monitoring patrols carried out with the assistance of local people, which created positive interaction between the project’s field staff and local indigenous groups; and (iii) consultations to validate the system.
Participation instruments: an effort to support sustainability

The building of the project’s participation model included the design, testing, and application of participation tools that did not exist in INRENA and helped to create new awareness in the institution about the important role that communities play in conservation. The preparation of a new legal framework, a manual, contracts, and training materials will facilitate the consolidation, expansion, and replication of the model. The most important participatory tools created under PIMA are:

✧ **Special Regime for Communal Reserves:** The Government of Peru has approved the Special Regime for Communal Reserves, comprising institutional arrangements, regulations, and protocols for indigenous communities to manage communal reserves. This is an alternative to promote conservation, acceptable to both the indigenous organizations and INRENA;

✧ **Contract Executors and Contracts:** The creation of ECOSIRA and ECOPURUS established the process for the establishment of ECAs as the mechanism for indigenous communities to directly manage communal reserves as part of the National System of Protected Areas;

✧ **Natural Resources Management Plans:** These plans allow communities to access and use natural resources in a sustainable manner following agreed conservation protocols;

✧ **Bioinvestment Operational Manual:** This manual defines the process to identify and define priorities in a participatory manner; establishes the rules for communities to obtain the grants; defines the scope and quality of communities’ counterpart contributions; creates Steering Committees to be responsible and accountable for subproject execution; and establishes the mechanisms for registering resource management and for reporting;

✧ **Participatory Training Methods and Materials:** The project tested several training methods and identified “learning by doing” as the most effective. It developed training methods and materials for participatory planning, conservation, sustainable use of natural resources, improving community organizations, etc. Traditional knowledge and community promoters were incorporated in the process as the best vehicles to convey learning;

✧ **Community Surveillance Groups:** These groups include volunteers who willingly participate in surveillance to prevent environmental damage in NPAs. They play an important role in their communities and have been legally recognized by INRENA, which has issued an ID to endorse their work.

**Project Execution**

The scope and complexity of the project proved to be a real challenge for INRENA, which was experimenting with a new conservation paradigm based on participation. Institutional adjustments were needed in order to adopt a participatory approach and address institutional weaknesses. Project implementation also suffered due to various external factors and other influences that could not have been fully anticipated or that lacked adequate mitigation measures in the design phase, as described below.
Issues affecting project execution

a. Disagreements with national indigenous organizations: During project implementation, it was necessary to address indigenous organizations' claims about the following matters: (i) categorization of protected areas; (ii) land rights; and (iii) involvement in project management.

- **Categorization**: The categorization of reserve zones was strongly influenced by demands for land rights and control of natural resources. An ongoing negotiations process headed by the director of the PIU and a proactive role by the Bank as mediator helped to successfully finalize categorization in the project's three reserve zones. Where it was not possible to reach an agreement, the area remained as a "reserve zone," as in the case of the proposed communal reserve of Santiago Comaina (Cordillera Kamankis).

- **Land rights.** AIDESEP also led the claims for indigenous territory, a concept not recognized under Peruvian legislation. The Peruvian ombudsman (*Defensoría del Pueblo*) was invited to facilitate negotiations between AIDESEP and the Intendancy for Natural Protected Areas (IANP) on these issues. The Bank team also participated and offered several solutions. An agreement was reached on a roadmap for negotiation; although it was not fully applied, it kept the conflict from escalating.

- **Participation in project management.** AIDESEP stopped participating in the Steering Committee and asked that: (i) the project be stopped and transferred to INDEPA, and (ii) project management mechanisms not foreseen in the agreement with the Government of Peru be introduced. Because these demands could not be met, the Bank team offered instead to: (i) reinitiate community consultations to reach agreements on the categorization process; (ii) increase the decision-making power of indigenous organizations by establishing an Indigenous Unit separate from the Steering Committee; and (iii) carry out actions to speed up the titling of communal lands. Although an agreement was reached on these issues, it was put on hold due to changes in AIDESEP's leadership. This position was not embraced by other regional and local organizations that continued to support the project. CONAP, the other national indigenous federation, also maintained its support and contributed its own evaluation of the project. The Bank and the PIU maintained informal dialogue with AIDESEP and respected its leadership.

b. Institutional instability. PIMA's design and implementation phases underwent four national administrations. This is an unusual turnover rate for projects of this type. During project preparation, the project faced the sudden end of the Fujimori administration and had to begin dialogue with President Paniagua's transition government. Implementation was mostly carried out under President Toledo and was completed under President Alan Garcia's administration. By the time the project ended, INRENA had undergone four changes of General Chiefs and Protected Areas Managers. Moreover, two of the protected areas are on the country's borders: one with Ecuador and the other with Colombia. Therefore, the Ministry of External Affairs is involved in the clearance process for categorization and in the endorsement of the grant agreement. This instability complicated the negotiation scenario, in particular for the categorization of the three "reserve zones."  

1. **Zona Reservada** is a term in Peruvian legislation that means lack of definition of conservation categories.

c. Difficulties in institutional coordination. The involvement of PROFONANPE as project administrator sped up grant processing but also brought new challenges in defining working
procedures with the PIU and IANP. It took some time to reach a mutual understanding in order to make the system flow. PROFONANPE proved to be a responsible administrator that followed Bank procedures and helped to maintain quality standards. However, this arrangement was not enough to overcome long-established, cumbersome public administration procedures: for instance, in contracting auditors, a process that—despite many efforts—always experienced delays.

d. Violence in target sites. Organized bands dealing with illegal mahogany logging affected the execution of activities in some areas of Pacaya-Samiria, Purús, and Güeipi. Unarmed park rangers were outnumbered by armed gangs. This threat brought a certain degree of insecurity among local project personnel and community surveillance groups. It took a while for the local teams and IANP to regain the communities' trust and for law enforcement to restore order and reinitiate project activities.

**Critical decisions made**

The Midterm Review mission (MTR), carried out between November 29 and December 10, 2004, emerged as a key landmark in project implementation. The mission included Bank specialists in various fields and international experts in participatory conservation who were in charge of similar projects in Mexico and Colombia. This team helped to perform a thorough assessment of project implementation. Three major problems were identified:

- **Institutional**: An institutional assessment during the MTR identified three major issues affecting project implementation: (i) the lack of capacity and cohesion in PIU staff; (ii) deficient coordination between field staff and the PIU, and between the PIU and IANP; and (iii) communication problems that created conflicts among staff;

- **Operational**: Administrative regulations common to the public sector in Peru delayed project execution. It was also necessary to reduce operational costs in order to address an overall reduction in resources available to the project;

- **Weak relationships with indigenous organizations**: As previously explained, relationships with indigenous organizations suffered because of disputes over categorization and an inadequate negotiation approach.

On the basis of the MTR's findings, its experts' recommendations, and intensive discussions with the PIU, the Bank carried out several actions that helped to enhance planned activities, including improving institutional arrangements, decentralization of operational arrangements and direct negotiations with indigenous organizations as explained next.

**Improved institutional arrangements**

**Institutional**: The restructuring of the PIU included the replacement of key staff and the incorporation of specialists to carry out critical tasks. The new Executive Director was granted decision-making powers. The Bank contributed to improve coordination and communication among the PIU, IANP, and PROFONANPE, with the assistance of an institutional specialist who carried out an institutional assessment and workshops to reach agreements about functions, responsibilities, and processing in order to strengthen organizational capacity and speed project execution.
Reporting: A quarterly reporting system was established to inform the Bank about progress in project implementation; the submission of annual operating plans for the Bank’s no-objection was standardized to speed up the process. A Bank specialist in operations assisted the PIU and PROFONANPE in resolving procurement and contracting assessments and in reporting on administrative and financial matters.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation: A specialist to operate the M&E System was included to track progress in project implementation. The system began to produce quarterly reports that were the basis for monitoring progress in implementation, aimed at the achievement of the project’s development objective.

Operational effectiveness

Decentralization: The original plan to hire a single firm in Lima that would be in charge of executing Component 2 (Sustainable Uses of Biodiversity) was rejected because the participants did not meet the required capacity or proposals were far more costly than expected. Therefore, the decision was to decentralize technical assistance to each protected area. This alternative reduced overhead and traveling costs, and made it possible to use local services and consultants, thus facilitating consultation and technical assistance to community organizations for the execution of bioinvestment projects.

External Administration: With the purpose of circumventing bureaucratic processing and supplementing experience, INRENA signed an agreement with PROFONANPE to act as its administrative partner in charge of handling the project’s funds, contracts, and procurement. This partnership allowed the central project team to focus on major project activities and thus delegate more functions to local project teams. This agreement contributed to a more efficient use of funds.

Local partnerships: Construction in remote areas of the Amazon proved difficult and expensive to execute through national commercial firms. The alternative to build planned infrastructure in partnership with local communities resulted in significant savings, enhanced ownership, and contributed to improve relationships with local communities that benefited from these works.

Contractual issues: The contracts to carry out two of the most important tasks —categorization and design of the Biodiversity M&E System—had to be restructured in order to address implementation issues, mainly those linked to communities’ participation. The Bank supported negotiations and cleared the process to speed up completion. An agreement to simplify the contracting of infrastructure construction was also put in place with the help of PROFONANPE.

Counterpart funds: The MTR mission participated in meetings with officials in the MEF and Ministry of Agriculture to ensure the availability of counterpart funds. The Bank’s participation facilitated the decision to allocate resources from the Peru-Canada Fund to the project and the reimbursement of the IGV (value-added tax) to be used in the project as counterpart.

Attention to indigenous demands

Improved relationships with indigenous organizations: Field trips during the MTR helped the Bank to address communication issues and concerns, which in turn helped to improve relationships with local and regional organizations. The mission also discussed with the national indigenous organizations (AIDESEP and CONAM) innovative means to enhance their
participation. The Bank met systematically with indigenous organizations and mediated with IANP to facilitate solutions to controversial issues. Even when AIDESEP decided to withdraw from the Steering Committee, the dialogue with the Bank continued.

*Increased indigenous participation:* The MTR was an opportunity to meet with local, regional, and national organizations and respond to their claims to improve indigenous peoples' participation, including: (i) further consultation about categorization; (ii) arrangements for greater decision making in project management; (iii) a more active role for the two indigenous liaisons; (iv) improved training and support for indigenous students to complete their studies and share experiences; and (v) full support to carry out consultation on the bylaw (*Regimen Especial*) to make communal reserves operational. Later, several similar agreements were added to continue improving indigenous participation; although full agreement was not always reached, the project gained indigenous peoples' respect and support. In the end, most indigenous organizations were supportive of the project and requested its continuation.

*Adaptation of bioinvestment projects:* After a closer assessment carried out by local project teams, the MTR decided that it was necessary to adapt subprojects and make them more responsive to the socioeconomic situation and organizational capability of indigenous communities. Accordingly, (i) contributions were reduced from 50 percent to 10–25 percent; (ii) technical assistance services to these projects were decentralized and feasibility and market studies involved intensive consultations with communities; and (iii) indigenous promoters who speak the local languages were incorporated to ease project processing and training, and to facilitate replication later on.

*Intensified supervision*

Since the MTR, Bank supervision intensified to ensure compliance with all agreements reached. All missions included field visits, meetings with indigenous organizations, and participation in Steering Committee meetings. The project team incorporated institutional, social, and environmental specialists as needed to support project implementation.

The Bank also provided advice on technical, financial, and procurement matters through specialists in Lima. An independent external evaluation of procurement matters provided useful guidance for addressing identified issues. The project's operational specialists, the PIU and PROFONANPE, jointly established clear processing procedures to ease the flow of resources from the Bank to the project. This support continued until closing when a financial specialist, who participated in the closing mission, prepared a guide for the submission of all documentation required for project closing.

As a result of these efforts and a clear commitment by IANP, project execution accelerated and the disbursement rate improved dramatically. By the end of the project the grant was fully disbursed. These actions also helped to overcome the shortcomings posed by the reduction in anticipated funds, and contributed to build local capacity and empower local communities which played a more active role in project execution.
Main Outcomes Achieved

The project’s main contributions were to: (a) demonstrate the feasibility of a Comanagement Model with Indigenous Participation; (b) aid in the conservation of the Peruvian Amazon; (c) identify tools for the sustainable use of natural resources that also contributed to poverty reduction; and (d) promote the institutional strengthening of conservation institutions.

Comanagement Model

The project established the comanagement model in the project’s five protected areas, including 455 indigenous communities, 120,000 indigenous people, local populations, and other stakeholders through:

- **Protected Areas Management Committees (PAMC):** Consultative groups established in each of the five target areas to provide advice on the management of protected areas.

- **Communal Reserves:** Indigenous communities organized as Contract Executors (ECAs) manage the three established communal reserves through administration contracts: (i) El Sira Communal Reserve (CR), comprising 616,413.41 hectares and some 18,000 indigenous peoples; (ii) ECOPURUS, comprising 210,033 hectares and 1,000 indigenous peoples who are the direct beneficiaries; and (iii) Tutanait Communal Reserve.

- **Natural Resources Management Contracts:** Through these contracts indigenous communities can use natural resources in a small-scale, sustainable manner and receive technical assistance. By the time the project ended, 50 local groups had signed these contracts and were operating in the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve (PSNR).

- **Community Surveillance Systems:** Five community surveillance systems, one in each of the project’s NPAs, have been established, giving indigenous peoples the capacity to oversee illegal activities in these areas. INRENA has recognized the authority of these groups and has provided them with an official ID.

Skills and experience for participation developed

To construct a positive negotiation environment and respond to indigenous organizations’ demands, the project put in place mechanisms to strengthen indigenous participatory capacity, including: (i) 107 internships for communal leaders to travel and evaluate the experience of indigenous peoples with other protected areas (Manu National Park and Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve); and (ii) 5 public awareness campaigns to increase support for environmental issues. Indigenous populations were actively involved in the design of the Participatory M&E System to measure biodiversity conservation that was developed in the Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve.

The two national federations of indigenous organizations of the Amazon participated in the Steering Committee. Two indigenous professionals appointed by these federations acted as their liaisons and as advisors to the director of PIMA in the PIU. Indigenous promoters who spoke the local languages worked in the field. Three NPA directors and some of their technical staff were also indigenous, which facilitated the building of mutual trust.
Enhanced conservation:

The project completed the categorization of three protected areas, resulting in the establishment of three communal reserves and two national parks and increasing the areas under conservation by 3.5 million hectares. In Gueppi, one national park and two communal reserves have been proposed and are awaiting final approval by the GoP. This will expand SINANPE by an additional 0.6 million hectares: 34 percent under IUCN Category II and the rest under IUCN Category VI.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural Protected Area</th>
<th>Categorization</th>
<th>Under Protection IUCN Category II (hectares)</th>
<th>Under Protection IUCN Category VI (hectares)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Purús Communal Reserve</td>
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<td>Ichigkat Muja National Park (Cordillera del Cóndor Mountain Chain [Cordillera])</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tuntanait Communal Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,599,171.00</td>
<td>921,414.09</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Sustainable use of natural resources

The sustainable use of natural resources has had a positive impact on conservation, as demonstrated by preliminary results from the 43 investment interventions in 200 communities comprising 8,258 direct beneficiaries. The 22 projects for reforestation and forest management are having a positive effect on reducing soil erosion and on carbon capture. According to project estimates, an annual reduction in soil erosion of 34,465 tons and an increase in carbon capture of 2,969 tons will be achieved as a result of these projects; 1,273 hectares were reforested and the deforestation of 18,664 hectares was prevented. In addition, the 20 hydrobiological resource projects have prevented unsustainable extraction from 775 hectares of surface waters and contributed over 100 percent to the repopulation of species; beneficiaries in the 200 indigenous communities involved have learned and implemented different conservation practices such as forest management, expansion of hydrobiological resources, and ecofriendly agriculture. Some of these practices are very likely to be replicated due to their positive economic benefits, and would prevent the local population from overexploiting other natural resources.

Improved institutional capacity

In addition to the abovementioned outcomes, INRENA has increased its capacity to comply with its mandate of conducting the sustainable conservation of natural resources. INRENA now has
legal tools and operational mechanisms to promote the comanagement of protected areas with the participation of the indigenous population, such as the PAMC established in the five protected areas and the Special Regime for the Administration of Communal Reserves which can be considered an intercultural product because it allows indigenous organizations to manage communal reserves located on traditional indigenous lands under SINANPE. Moreover, IANP has gained experience by directly engaging in discussions about conservation with indigenous organizations at various levels and adopting the participatory conservation model.

Lessons Learned

Constructing a model for participatory conservation of protected areas was a new experience for INRENA and the Government of Peru. The project helped to incorporate the importance of participation into the prevailing conservation paradigm based mainly on the establishment of national parks and sanctuaries with little or no human intervention. The inclusion of indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge in conservation efforts provided important lessons that enriched INRENA’s capacity to interact with indigenous peoples in the management of protected areas. For the Bank, which had to close an indigenous peoples project without achieving its development objective, leading PIMA to a successful conclusion was a real challenge. Some of the lessons learned may appear to be straightforward, common-sense recommendations, but they are still worth mentioning among other lessons specific to this operation.

Design affects implementation

The project design built on technical studies and a consultation process funded by the GEF Project Preparation and Development Facility (PDF) Block B grant. These studies contributed to ratify the choice of protected areas in terms of their biodiversity conservation and social feasibility. However, the project’s scope and complexity proved to be a real challenge for INRENA, which was experimenting with a new conservation paradigm based on participation and was new to managing a Bank project. Although a PIU was created to address this issue, it was difficult to reconcile long-established practices in INRENA with the proposed PIU’s assigned functions. Institutional assessment at preparation and adequate arrangements are critical to achieve success during implementation.

Comanagement: the Social Approach to Conservation

The project demonstrated that communities’ participation is positive for biodiversity conservation, which was its basic principle. Communities were a driving force during project execution through a participation process that encouraged co-responsibility and intercultural dialogue. This bottom-up approach built on local capacity, promoted community empowerment and established a social network that supervised and controlled results. Indigenous peoples’ response to this approach was very positive because, in their own words, they felt they were treated as equals. The project demonstrated the feasibility of combining conventional conservation with an indigenous conception of protected areas as their living environment. As shown in beneficiaries’ surveys, this approach promoted project ownership and contributed to the success of the activities and their sustainability. Participation also functioned as a social control mechanism that helped to ensure the proper use of project resources and the distribution of their benefits.
Bioinvestment projects contributing to poverty reduction and sustainability

As may be expected, conservation is a concept that is difficult to grasp for indigenous communities who live in direct contact with the environment and for whom access to natural resources is critical for their survival. Traditional use of natural resources is not necessarily synonymous with sustainability, particularly when external forces influence the communities (the trafficking of lumber rights, for instance). Communities in the rainforest have few alternatives; therefore, the provision of sustainable alternatives to reduce poverty and improve living conditions should be a regular factor that is incorporated in conservation projects.

The concept of bioinvestment, developed under the project, demonstrated that combining the sustainable use of natural resources with the enhancement of community livelihood generated positive synergy for conservation that results in positive environmental impacts. The use of the consultation process helped to select options that incorporated local knowledge and ensured adaptation to community needs. The project provided in situ technical assistance and training to enable indigenous organizations to directly implement the project; this in itself was an invigorating exercise that helped to build local capacity and social control mechanisms aimed at ensuring the proper use of resources and the distribution of benefits.

Communal reserves integrating indigenous peoples’ rights and conservation

The recognition of indigenous peoples’ rights to lands and natural resources should be at the core of all projects dealing with indigenous peoples. Conservation should not be perceived as being opposed to indigenous peoples’ rights to their ancestral lands and natural resources. In PIMA, this struggle found communal reserves to be an alternative acceptable to indigenous peoples and to the Government of Peru, which finally approved the Regimen Special, the bylaw for the operation of communal reserves agreed by consensus of all indigenous organizations through a consultation process organized under the project. Communal reserves, recognized in Peruvian law, proved to be a positive alternative to reconcile indigenous peoples’ rights and conservation concerns.

Training and capacity building as empowerment tools

The project showed that comanagement requires the enabling of indigenous communities by building their capacity to directly execute activities that affect their livelihoods. Indigenous peoples’ organizations have been seeking to play an active role in managing land and resources in protected areas. Training under the project responded to this demand and has been a key element in the development of the comanagement model because it is an instrument that has helped to strengthen and empower people to achieve social change, promoted intercultural dialogue, and contributed to the creation of indigenous social capital.
**Intercultural dialogue**

The project showed that intercultural dialogue was a positive approach to build mutual understanding between indigenous peoples and the project team. Experience showed that the rules of engagement and the way in which this dialogue takes place were as important as the subjects of discussion. The cultural dialogue as tested and executed under the project had the following basic conditions: (i) mutual respect between the parties, (ii) willingness to reach mutual understanding, (iii) equity in information sharing, (iv) abandonment of all forms of imposition or violence, and (v) transparency.

**Institutional capacity is critical to project success**

The difficulties experienced in the first years of project implementation demonstrated the need to address institutional constraints and prepare upfront an institutional strengthening program. Although the establishment of the PIU and the incorporation of PROFONANPE helped to overcome INRENA’s lack of expertise in certain areas, it also created various coordination problems. The adjustment took time and distracted the project’s attention from other important tasks. The main lesson here is that the plan for appropriate institutional arrangements merits major attention during the design phase of the project.

**Building operational effectiveness**

The decentralization of activities to the field under Component 2 (Sustainable Uses of Biodiversity) also required some adaptation. However, it helped the PIU to build an operational platform capable of operating with indigenous groups in remote places. It is important to highlight that the central project team and the zone teams undertook a facilitation role in the intercultural dialogue among IANP, indigenous peoples, and the environmental sector. The experience and capacity of field teams were critical to the successful completion of this component.

IANP and the central project team in the PIU responded with professionalism to implement a challenging project. The experience of their field staff in previous participatory processes in other protected areas was critical to achieve a positive outcome. Project execution was a true learning experience that strengthened IANP’s capacity to interact with indigenous peoples and build a model suitable for replication in other NPAs.

**Intensive supervision: essential in complex projects**

As demonstrated by the PIMA project, intensive supervision is essential to ensure the success of a complex project. This matter should be addressed upfront to obtain the resources that such supervision requires.
Sustainability

IANP prepared a sustainability program comprising three steps: (a) arrangements to ensure that the project continues to operate after completion and maintains its achieved goals; (b) a program to consolidate the participatory conservation model, extending it to other protected areas in the Amazon; and (c) preparation of a second operation focused on communal reserves.

a. **Continuation**: The aim of this phase was to ensure that all project goals are supported so that their intended outcomes can be achieved. It comprised: (i) budget provision to complement actions carried out under the project such as equipping facilities, and support to communal reserves by obtaining their management contracts; (ii) budget to ensure the continuity of NPA staff and resources for their operations; (iii) agreements with international NGOs and environmental organizations for the continuation and expansion of community-based subprojects; and (iv) provision of technical assistance to local staff and communities so that they can have access to grants from donors and to regional and municipal financing.

b. **Consolidation Program**: This program is expected to be carried out over a period of one and a half years from project closing, at an estimated cost of US$1.5 million, with the following objectives:

- Dissemination of lessons learned and project results among grassroots organizations, NGOs, and governmental levels (national, regional, and local) involved in the management of protected areas;
- Reinforcement of IANP’s capacity to implement the participatory model for comanaging protected areas, and institutionalization of this approach in SINANPE; and
- Consolidation of public-private partnerships that can enhance the application of the participatory conservation model to attract financial resources for supporting indigenous comanagement of these protected areas.

c. **Follow-up operation**: INRENA intends to prepare a follow-up operation building on the positive outcomes of PIMA, including the consolidation and expansion of communal reserves as a conservation alternative that has been embraced by indigenous organizations. This new operation would focus on the comanagement model developed under PIMA and could be funded by a GEF grant or another source of financing.

d. **Institutional Development Framework (IDF)**: INRENA has also requested the Bank’s assistance to access IDF funding in support of its efforts to institutionalize the comanagement model. Proposed activities include: (i) dissemination of lessons learned on participatory conservation and rural development; (ii) training and sharing of experiences of INRENA staff and other public officials, community leaders, and social and environmental experts; and (iii) preparation of a participation program to support SINANPE.