

### TCD Field Research Grant Report

Previous title	The road to development: Indigenous autonomies, natural resource governance and extractivisms in the <i>Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro Sécore</i> (TIPNIS) – Bolivia
New title	Indigenous autonomies and natural resource governance in the <i>Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro Sécore</i> (TIPNIS) – Bolivia

#### 1) Timetable and activities

The following timetable presents the main activities that I conducted between March 30<sup>th</sup> and August 21<sup>st</sup> 2016 in the framework of my preliminary doctoral research supported by the TCD Preliminary Field Work grant (Vivian G. Nolan Graduate Fellowship in Latin American Studies).

When	Where	What
June 1-7	La Paz	Secondary information exploration/ revision. Contacts for interviews.
June 8-12	Cochabamba	Meeting with Luz María Calvo (ISA Bolivia) and preparation of field trip to Raqaypampa (Cochabamba) and Mojocoya (Chuquisaca). Both territories are in the process of establishing their Indigenous Autonomy (IA).
June 13-15	Raqaypampa	Travel to Raqaypampa with ISA and UNDP staff. Workshop at the Center for Alternative Education ( <i>Centro de Formación Alternativa</i> CEFOA) for local leaders on trajectory of Indigenous rights in Bolivia and Raqaypampa, legislative framework of IA, climate change and climatic prediction. Discussion with ISA members on feasibility of research project.
June 16-19	Mojocoya	Two days of internal workshops with leaders and technicians from the <i>Subcentralía</i> (agrarian union) to define a working plan for the <i>Plan de Gestión Territorial Comunitaria</i> (PGTC) construction process. Two days of workshop with community leaders from all over the territory and representatives of the Planning Ministry and Autonomy Ministry (discussions of legislative framework of IA and necessity to articulate the PGTC with national planning and the “patriotic agenda 2020-2025”
June 20-24	Cochabamba	Fieldtrip notes systematization for me and ISA. Contacts for interviews.
June 27- July 5	La Paz	Work on research questions taking new information into consideration. Interview with José Nuñez del Prado (CIDES-UMSA). Preparation of fieldtrip to Trinidad. Contacts for interviews.
July 6-10	Trinidad	I traveled with Katari Nina from ISA-Bolivia. Meetings with Indigenous leaders and community members from the <i>Sécore Subcentral</i> and the <i>TIPNIS Subcentral</i> (including Presidents of both organizations and <i>dirigentas</i> - women leaders). Internal discussions to do a commission to verify the advancement of the highway in the northern part of the park. I supported them with funds and joined the commission.
July 11-13	San Ignacio de Moxos	Verification commission (bus/motorcycle) to San Ignacio de Moxos and Montegrande. Debriefing at the <i>Sécore Subcentral</i> in Trinidad after we got back.
July 14-23	La Paz	Fieldtrip notes systematization for me and ISA. Contacts for interviews. Work on research questions and secondary information revision. Interviews with Oscar Bazoberry (IPDRS), Jorge Viaña (used to work at Ministry of Autonomy) and Elizabeth Jimenez (CIDES-UMSA).
July 25-30	Cochabamba	Interviews with Cesar Escobar (AGRUCO – UMSS), Lorenzo Soliz (former director CIPCA), Sarela Paz Patiño (scholar, expert on the TIPNIS) and Fernando Machicao (aka “Boxer”, activist). Work sessions with Luz María Calvo (ISA) and Katari Nina. Attendance to conference on Cochabamba’s departmental autonomy (07/26) <sup>1</sup> . Attendance to seminar organized by CEDIB on “Agrarian reconfiguration and the <i>indígena-campesino</i> movement” <sup>2</sup> (07/28). Exploration of the CEDIB library (several interesting books/data bases).
August 1-21	La Paz	Interviews with Wilfredo Plata (Fundación Tierra), Gonzalo Vargas (Vice-Minister of Indigenous Autonomies), Youcy Fabricano (TIPNIS community member) and Claudia Peña (former Minister of Autonomies). Work on new framework and research questions. Secondary information revision. Visit to the <i>Servicio Estatal de Autonomías</i> (SEA) for documentation.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.lostiempos.com/actualidad/nacional/20160724/conversatorio-autonomia-cochabamba>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cedib.org/seminario-reconfiguracion-agraria-y-el-movimiento-indigenacampesino/>

All of the initially proposed activities were carried out except for the initial visit to communities inside the TIPNIS. This was due to the severe drought that Bolivia is currently going through. River levels are low and thus mobility is difficult and transportation costs very high. Most local leaders were in Trinidad so it didn't seem necessary to me risking not being able to get out of the park.

**2) Initial site visit objectives**

The aforementioned activities allowed me to attain the set objectives for the preliminary stage of doctoral research. The following table presents the initial site visit objectives and the main advances that were achieved during the summer.

Objectives	Comments
Validate pertinence of research questions	<p>Research questions have been adjusted taken into account the broader context of Indigenous autonomies in Bolivia and the particular context of the TIPNIS. Preliminary research has been extremely valuable to formulating more pertinent and answerable questions. Feasibility and usefulness for local populations and institutional partners were important criteria taken into account in adjusting the research questions.</p> <p><b>New questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do the Indigenous peoples of the TIPNIS conceive and envision their own autonomy in terms of their use and management of natural resources?</li> <li>• How do the current context and legal framework allow/prevent the expression of those visions of autonomy in an <i>Autonomía Indígena Originario Campesina (AIOC)</i>?</li> <li>• How and to what extent do these visions (pro)pose a different territorial configuration?</li> </ul>
Collect input for instrument design (variables/questions)	Interviews with scholars who have worked in the TIPNIS/ Indigenous communities in the lowlands were valuable for advancing in inputs for instrument design (particularly Oscar Bazoberry, Luz María Calvo and Sarela Paz). I have gained insights on key livelihood activities, ethnic differences and relationships between the 3 different indigenous groups that live inside the park, and the specifics of the juridical framework of IA.
Understand legal procedures for IA recognition	ISA's expertise on IA is considerable, as is the expertise of some other interviewees (Lorenzo Soliz, Wilfredo Plata, Gonzalo Vargas and Claudia Peña). Visiting other territories that are advanced in the process of the recognition of their autonomies (Raqaypampa and Mojocoya) was very enlightening. I have also found several documents that describe, analyze and critique the legal procedures for IA recognition.
Strengthen links with ISA-Bolivia	A formal collaboration agreement was signed with ISA Bolivia. I helped them fund some staff activities in the TIPNIS and the verification commission of the highway. I plan on communicating with them regularly and I am currently devoting my TCD practicum to systematize documents for them (and for the Indigenous organizations of the TIPNIS).
Establish preliminary list of communities (ideally)	Although a first visit to the TIPNIS communities was not possible, interviews and the fieldtrip to Trinidad allowed me to establish a preliminary list of communities: Nueva Lacea, Puerto San Lorenzo, Nueva Vida, Gundonovia, Asunta, Oromomo and San Ramoncito. Most of these communities are in the Sécure river.
Gain access to relevant documents	I have found materials related to IA in general, the TIPNIS (including all the reports from the GIZ's project MAPZA), IA experiences in other territories, high quality maps, etc. I have also established contact with people who can provide me with more documentation and information in the future.

**3) Final considerations**

The feasibility of the research project, which was a concern given the complex political context, was verified during this preliminary research trip. Although the subject remains contentious, research questions have been adjusted taking safety and feasibility into account. Local partners are confident in the pertinence and feasibility of the subject and the "climate" on the ground is favorable. Links with local partners have been strengthened and a direct relation with Indigenous leaders in the TIPNIS has been established thus diversifying and multiplying gatekeepers.

Moreover, the importance of having insights on meanings, perceptions, conceptions and visions of autonomy from the Indigenous perspective appears even more clearly to me now. Autonomy is a "foreign" and external concept to indigenous peoples even if they were the ones who originated the struggles for the recognition of more inclusive rights by the State. It is essential therefore to make sure that the vindications of those struggles do not get lost and diluted in a restrictive and coercive juridical expression of autonomy. There is little to no work that analyses peoples' own conceptions of autonomy, particularly in the lowlands.