

Date: August 2019
Name: Angelica Garcia

Report: TCD Field Research Grant

Project title: “Factors Affecting Spatial Distribution, Cultural Perceptions and Sustainability of Palm Management in Madre de Dios, Perú”

Location: Madre de Dios, Perú

Dates of funded research: From June 6th to July 30th of 2019

Summary of activities:

Last summer 2019 my field work took place during the months of June and July of 2019. The purpose of this study is to better understand the ecological and socioeconomic factors that influence the sustainability of palm management in the Peruvian Amazon, specifically in Madre de Dios. During that time I collected several information about palms such as *Mauritia flexuosa* (known as aguaje in Peru, buriti in Brazil) and palma real in Bolivia), *Euterpe precatoria* (known as huasai or Palmito in Peru, açai in Brazil and asai in Bolivia) and *Oenocarpus bataua* (known as ungurau in Peru, patauá in Brazil and majo in Bolivia).

The first part of my travel consisted in a preliminary field work that helped identify my field sites, stablished connections with potential partners and stakeholders that have worked or work with palm management in the region. This potential partners and stakeholders included indigenous and rural communities, NGOs and government institutions.

After establishing connections and developing a network I was able to carry on semi structure interviews with different stakeholders. These interviews were carried out in the field (private lands and forest concessions) and in the city, depending of the feasibility of the interviewee. I was able to interview 57 individuals in person and 3 individuals via video.

I visited four indigenous communities, three private lands in the forest and several offices and businesses within the city of Puerto Maldonado. The offices were mostly NGOs and government institutions, and the business were restaurants or private industries. The interviews were from 30 min to 1 hour and half long. And I was able to collect several information and different perspectives about palm management in the region.

While I was in Puerto Maldonado, I was able to participate in a workshop organized by my advisor Dr. Stephen Perz and other colleagues about the Impacts of the Interoceanic Highway. This workshop gave me a big perspective of how to carry out a workshop with different stakeholders.

Future recommendations or how you will use your research moving forward:

After my field work, I started organizing the data I collected. I am transcribing my interviews and after this, I will code and analyze the data. After analyzing my data, I will start writing my dissertation. Furthermore, I would like to share and present this information with the TCD community (for example in Tropilunch). The different chapters of my dissertation will be published in scientific journals. Then, I will write the results of my research in a technical format to present to the different stakeholders (NGOs, government institutions, local and indigenous communities). The data gathered from this research will be very valuable and informative for various stakeholders who are working or seeking to work with palms.



1. Artesanias made of *Euterpe precatoria* (huasai) seeds, 2. *Mauritia flexuosa* (aguaje) fruit, 3. Plantation of *Mauritia flexuosa*, 4. Interviewing in Palma Real Indigenous Community. (Pictures 1 and 2 from left to right above, and pictures 3 and 4 from left to right below)

