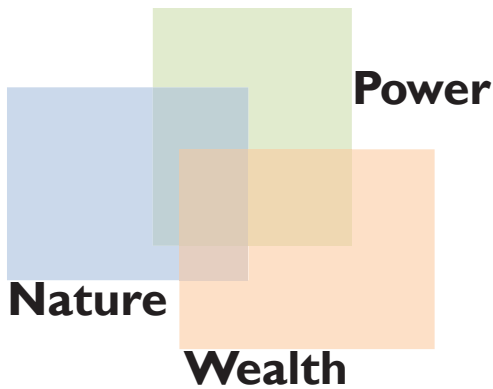




**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# TRANSLINKS

*Promoting Transformations  
by Linking Nature, Wealth and Power*

For more information on TransLinks,  
please visit our website:  
<http://www.translinks.org>



## All Things Alpaca

*All Things Alpaca Ecuador produces exclusive garments from select alpaca fibers while protecting endangered Andean (spectacled) bear and other wildlife that share the land.*

### **Certified Wildlife Friendly™ Products**

The for-profit company, All Things Alpaca, produces an exclusive collection of alpaca sweaters, scarves, hats and king-sized blankets, plus woolly chaps and saddle blankets. The products come from a herd of 600 wild Alpacas in SE Ecuador, not far from the city of Cuenca. The current market is national, mainly for foreign tourists, with some limited sales in the USA.

### **Conservation Challenge**

Three red-listed mammals (Andean bear, dwarf red brocket deer, and margay) are confirmed present on the All things Alpaca (ATA) property. A frog thought extinct was rediscovered on ATA property. The threats to the landscape include deforestation from clearing

for pasture for cattle. Hunting and retaliatory killing of bear and puma when cattle are attacked are key threats to wildlife in the area.

### **Context and Business Model**

All Things Alpaca Ecuador (ATA) produces garments from alpaca fiber, without harming the endangered Andean (spectacled) bear or other wildlife that share the land. ATA was the first business in Ecuador to revive the tradition of alpaca husbandry. It is now the best-known supplier of stud alpacas and also sells alpaca fiber products. Finished apparel and accessories are made in collaboration with a local women's knitting cooperative.



**Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network:  
All Things Alpaca**

Alpacas are a hardy and handsome species of the Andes adapted to high-altitude pastures and páramo grassland. Herds are, however, subject to losses from predators. ATA owners use non-lethal methods to reduce alpaca losses by pumas, bears and Andean foxes. They actively conserve the extensive cloud forests and páramos on their property, and are engaged in ecological restoration of former pastures and degraded woodlands. The native habitats of their ranch in southeastern Ecuador form part of Sangay National Park.

ATA serves as a demonstration farm and the owners hope that their approach to conservation and wildlife-friendly production will be adopted by other residents in the region. Husbandry practices include free-range pasturing, periodic health checks and parasite controls, and selective breeding for improved fiber fineness. The result is a high-quality yarn produced in an environmentally sustainable way, incorporating traditional Andean textile practices and involving local designers and knitters.

ATA is located in the Nudo del Azuay region in southern Ecuador. This region of 96,000 hectares covers six contiguous watersheds, and is located within the Sangay National Park. Indigenous cooperatives and private landowners hold title to 47% of the territory within the Nudo del Azuay and thus are important participants in the long-term conservation of the region. The three major indigenous communities, Mes-tivo, Quichua-Canari, Quichua-Puruhua, depend primarily on livestock for milk and meat production for their livelihoods.

### ***Impact and Monitoring***

The Andean bear is thriving on the ATA property. ATA's land is managed to the highest standards of environmental protection (low grazing intensity, eradication of non-native species, no extraction of native species). ATA promotes the protection of puma, bear and other key wildlife on their property as well as across the wider landscape. ATA is helping recruit the 30 land owning families of the adjacent community communal lands to apply for Wildlife Friendly™ certification for their Alpaca fiber. This has the potential to ensure wildlife conservation over a large area.

ATA also helps improve agricultural productivity and supports the local communities through micro-enterprises which produce spun fiber. Local communities receive individual Alpacas from the ATA herds and are learning to produce for the market with the help of ATA. ATA works with a women's cooperative to knit the finished products from Alpaca fiber. In addition to the spinning of fiber this provides new and valued income opportunities for local communities. ATA also holds training sessions and discussions about veterinary medicine, habitat and pasture management, protection of forests, and wildlife conservation, with neighboring communities.

A team from the Land Tenure Center of the Nelson Institute for Environmental studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Fundacion Cordillera Tropical have conducted surveys for Andean bears on the property and surroundings. They are beginning to train community para-biologists as park guards who will be trained in wildlife monitoring with a focus particularly on the Andean bear. ATA also invites a student group onto their land every year to do biodiversity surveys.



This publication is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), under the terms of the TransLinks Cooperative Agreement No.EPP-A-00-06-00014-00 to The Wildlife Conservation Society. TransLinks is a partnership of WCS, The Earth Institute, Enterprise Works/VITA, Forest Trends and The Land Tenure Center. The contents are the responsibility of the partnership and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States government.

