



**InfoAndina**  
and the  
**Mountain Forum**  
**Latin American Node**



**Progress Report 1999-2000**

**Prepared by CONDESAN - InfoAndina**  
**For Presentation to the III Mountain Forum Board Meeting**  
**May 2000**

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## ***I. Introduction***

InfoAndina, the information arm of CONDESAN, created since 1994 to facilitate the communication needs of its partners within the andean region. Since 1995, InfoAndina facilitated interaction using electronic communication services (E-newsletters and E-Conferences). Since 1996, InfoAndina became also the operator of the regional node for Latin America in close coordination with the other regional nodes and the GISN.

## ***II. InfoAndina activities in 1999-2000:***

### **E-Conferences organized by InfoAndina**

InfoAndina has organized successfully several E-Conferences in coordination with our partners in the region. These E-conferences opened a space of interaction among regional and local issues at the request of our partners.

Between 1999 and April 2000, InfoAndina organized the following E-Conferences:

<b>E-Conference Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Host Country</b>	<b>Part.</b>
Challenges of the Rural Agroindustries in the Andes	May-99	Peru	400
Improving Higher Level education on Natural Resource Management in the Andes	Aug-99	Colombia	250
InSitu'99: In Situ Conservation of Plant Germplasm	Nov-99	Peru	100
"Integral Management of Water resources in Cochabamba"	Feb-00	Bolivia	188

**Table 1: E-Conferences organized by InfoAndina between May and Feb,2000**

The proceedings of all the E-Conferences organized by the Latin American node are available in the WEB site: [www.condesan.org](http://www.condesan.org). In addition to this, the following E-Conferences were edited in printed format and available for distribution upon request:

- Local Governments and Sustainable Development (200 copies)
- The Challenges of Rural Agroindustries in the Andes (400 copies)

We are in discussions with other donors for some additional conferences in the near future, on the following themes:

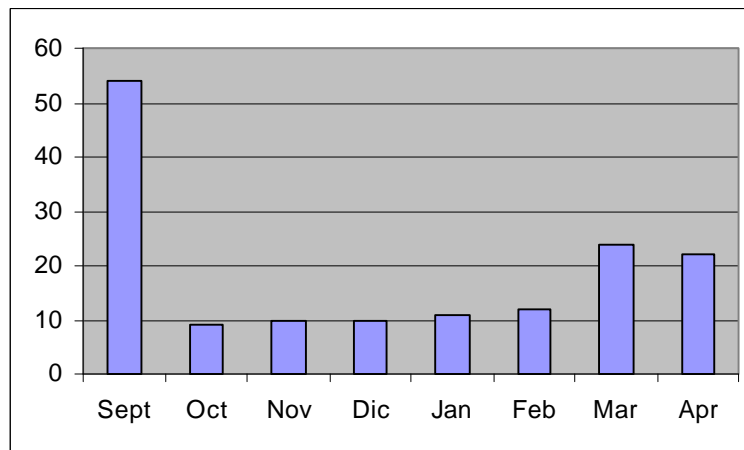
- ♦ "Paramos II: Sustainable use and conservation of Paramo Ecosystems in the Andes"

- ♦ "Eco-Negocios: Potencial in the Andes"
- ♦ "Gender and Equity: Operationalizing important concepts"
- ♦ "Re-Designing CONDESAN: A Town Meeting"

#### Electronic Discussion Lists:

InfoAndina moderates two electronic discussion lists since 1997: Infoandina-fm and the Foros list (MF-LAC). As result of these E-Conferences, the membership on the lists has increased dramatically during the past months.

Chart No. 2 below shows the increasing tendency of the list subscribers between September 1999 and March, 2000. The total number of subscribers to the Foros list is 660 in April, 2000.



**Chart 2: New subscribers to MF-LAC (Foros) since September 99,  
(The total number of subscribers in April, 2000 is N=660)**

#### Training within the Region "Talleres Itinerantes"



**March 2000)**

InfoAndina has organized two barnstorming trips, one in Peru (Arequipa, Puno, Cuzco) and one in Ecuador (Cuenca, Riobamba, Quito, Carchi) to increase membership of organizations based in secondary cities.

Our analysis of our 800 name INFOANDINA data base indicated that only 63 members were not from either Europe, the USA or major cities in the Andes. (Picture 3: InfoAndina Workshop in Santa Catalina, Quito,

As result of the workshops, The membership was increased by 37 members from secondary cities during the trips in Ecuador and Perú. The next trip will be to Bolivia in May, 2000.

The trip report is available in CONDESAN WEB page:  
[www.condesan.org/infoandina/itinerantes.htm](http://www.condesan.org/infoandina/itinerantes.htm)

PERU	Before	After [1]	MF [2]
Arequipa	5	8	6
Cusco	8	17	12
Puno	4	11	10
Sub-Total	17	36	28
ECUADOR	Before	After [1]	MF [2]
Quito	18	23	18
Carchi	1	7	6
Riobamba	2	7	9
Cuenca	5	7	5
Loja	2	2	1
Sub-Total	28	46	39

[1] Total InfoAndina list members after the workshops in Peru & Ecuador

[2] Formally registered members in the Mountain Forum

## Preparations for International Year of the Mountains (IYM) within the region

### a. National Preparations in Peru

Since the end of 1999, CIP and InfoAndina are working with the National Committee for IYM preparations in Peru, convened by the Environmental Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The following events were outlined as part of the national agenda:

#### National Planning Workshop (November, 2000)

This first planning workshop will facilitate interaction among key national actors working in the Mountain Agenda, and the National Committee.

This workshop will be a one-day planning meeting, the expected outcomes are to design a national strategy for the preparations of IYM in Peru.

The strategy will include topics covering priority issues for mountain development in Peru, such as: Biodiversity conservation issues, mountain tourism and conservation of national biosphere reserves. The meeting will be led by professional moderators, and convened by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

CONDESAN will facilitate the participation in this meeting of 3-4 partners from Cajamarca and Puno. The Mountain Institute will cover the participation of some partners from Huaraz.

## **b. Regional Plans**

At the regional level, InfoAndina and the Mountain Forum will organize in mid-2000 a planning workshop inviting our partner information networks in Latin America.

These partners are key actors in the dissemination of information and raising public awareness on issues related to environmental conservation and development of mountain regions.

Regional information networks who are being contacted to participate in this workshop are:

- REDINFOR (Red de Informacion Forestal), hosted in Universidad Agraria La Molina, Peru.
- REDCAPA (Red de Instituciones vinculadas a la Capacitacion en Economia y Politicas Agricolas en America Latina y el Caribe) in Brasil.
- RIMISP (Red Interamericana sobre Metodologias de Sistemas de Produccion, hosted in Chile.
- CIAT-REDECO (Red Red Ecorregional de America Latina Tropical), hosted in CIAT, Colombia.
- AMA (Asociacion de Montañas Andinas), hosted in the Univ. of Georgia.
- HIMALANDES (Iniciativa HimalAndes), hosted in Peru.
- UNEP-Mexico (United Nations Environmental Program), in Mexico
- REDEPAPA (Red Electronica de la Papa), based in Colombia.

The expected outcome from this meeting is to coordinate a common strategy to approach dissemination of events related to IYM preparations at national and regional level in Latin America.

A budget of \$15,000 was reserved for this activity from the SDC support to Phase II of the Mountain Forum - Latin America.

### ***III. InfoAndina and Latin American Mountain Forum Plans for 2001-2002***

#### **I. Staffing**

The annual budgetary level for our staff is estimated in \$40,000 for the project leader and assistant.

#### **II. E-Conferences in 2001 and 2002**

During 2001 and 2002, InfoAndina expect to organize at least 3 e-conferences per year. The conferences are planned in close coordination with specialized partners within the region.

An estimated budget of \$10,000 will be required for each e-conference, including moderation costs, edition and publication of the proceedings in WEB and printed format.

We would appreciate input from the SDC officers in Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador in setting this agenda.

#### **III. Support national and regional preparations for IYM**

##### **PERU: International meeting (Early 2001)**

The National Committee is planning an international workshop in the first quarter of 2001. Cusco will host this meeting, because it was declared the official site for events organized at national level for the IYM preparations.

CIP and CONDESAN agreed to support the logistics of this event, given its expertise with the Urubamba Mountain Forum Meeting.

The government of Austria offered funds to support the organization of this workshop. An estimated budget of \$10,000 in additional funds will be required from the regional node.

##### **ECUADOR and BOLIVIA (2001-2002)**

InfoAndina will like to support partners in Ecuador and Bolivia who recently start their organization for national preparations towards the International Year of the Mountains.

In Ecuador, the Paramos project partners and the Mesa de Concertacion El Carchi are taking the leadership for the preparations. During the InfoAndina workshops in Carchi, these activities were discussed with local partners.

## **IV. NEW SERVICES**

### **1) Translating from Mountain Forum into Spanish**

InfoAndina is editing a periodic digest of selected from the Global Mountain Forum list translating them into Spanish, and circulating it among our subscribers in Latin America.

### **2) Selling Foros**

The foros (E-conferences) had been one of the most successful activities of InfoAndina. We are considering to sell the expertise gained selling our methodology as a "package", to institutions working in areas related to CONDESAN work lines. The costs involved are the moderator's time (there are two moderators: the technical and the subject moderators), and communication costs.

We also consider the publication costs for the conference proceedings edited and circulated both in WEB and printed format.

### **3) Virtual Bookstore**

Although an attractive idea, an IDRC consultant has warned us away from trying to develop a book selling service for our membership (i.e.. ANDES.COM). However, we had some revenues (\$100) derived from this service during the first quarter of 2000.

### **4) Developing expertise in distance education**

Currently we are looking into the possibilities of developing expertise in the area of distance education. Surprisingly, InfoAndina has found a lot of interest in this subject among partner Andean universities. Most of them have sophisticated equipment for video-conferencing, but they do not support adequate connectivity to Internet.

We believe that given the professional quality of experts in CONDESAN team, InfoAndina could develop a pilot project for distance education.

We are considering the concept of creating virtual classrooms where students will interact with a range of CONDESAN specialists who will, themselves be based in various locations. We are trying to develop a portfolio of inexpensive communications aids like electronic forums, CD-ROMS, interactive meetings via internet and video conferencing as well as the use of radio.

We have found that in Andes the Internet is still a very expensive option, and there are less expensive and more efficient mechanisms to deliver information among partners in rural

zones. There is a need to complement the challenges of the Internet with low-cost dissemination of training modules via e-mail, multi-media CD-ROMs, or radio.

In addition to creating these tools, we need to work with our partners in rural zones, training them in the use of these inexpensive technologies, helping to foster a "cultura informatica" within the region.