



Notes on CONDESAN as a model for expanding CG-Centers participation in regional research and development ¹

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What is CONDESAN:

- CONDESAN (Consortium for the Sustainable Development of the Andean Ecoregion) is a Consortium that was established in 1993 as part of the CG-Ecoregional Research Initiative. The International Potato Center has hosted the Consortium since its inception.
- The goals of the Consortium are to promote equitable rural development based on sustainable natural resource management in the Andean Ecoregion. Its primary focus is on the zones above 2000 masl in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.
- The Consortium is governed by 8 Trustees, managed by a small coordination unit and supported by a 20 person technical council. The electronic communications/ information unit is called InfoAndina and currently has 800 subscribers in the region.

Who makes up CONDESAN:

- Today the Consortium consists of approximately 30 active Andean NGOs, 10 Andean Universities, NARS of the 5 focus-countries, 10 Advanced Research Institutes, and 5 CG centers.
- The NGO partners include international organizations like CARE in Peru and Ecuador, national NGOs usually located in the capital city, and many local NGOs located in smaller Andean towns.
- Advanced Research Institutes with scientists in Latin América collaborating in CONDESAN activities include:
 - Institute de Recherche pour le Development
 - The University of Copenhagen
 - The University of Amsterdam

¹ Nota enviada por la Coordinación de CONDESAN, a sugerencia del Dr. Emil Javier, Chairman del TAC, al grupo de trabajo que está preparando la reunión de marzo 9 sobre la reformulación de la estructura del CGIAR.

- The University of Wisconsin
- Wageningen Agricultural University
- Cooperative Research Support Programs (Soil Science CRSP)
- CG Centers with scientists in Latin America collaborating in CONDESAN activities include:
 - The International Potato Center
 - The International Livestock Research Institute
 - The International Fertilizer Development Center
 - Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical
 - International Center for Research in Dry Areas
 - International Water Management Institute (project under development)

What are the research strengths of CONDESAN's membership?

- Natural Resource Assessment tools (remote sensing, GIS-derived intervention maps, watershed models, biodiversity assessment)
- Participatory Methodologies (development round tables, conflict resolution, land use planning, in situ biodiversity conservation)
- Production, storage and transformation technologies, as well as marketing strategies (quinoa, livestock, potato, Andean roots and tubers)
- Policy interventions (environmental/production trade-off models, incentives for private sector involvement in Andean rural development)

A sampler of current research/development projects in the CONDESAN portfolio

- Intensive Potato Production in the High Andes of Merida, Venezuela: A motor and menace to development. Lead Institution, University of Los Andes
- Anticipating Peace in the Central Cordillera of Colombia: Managing a watershed for hydroelectric power, cloud forest preservation and equity. Lead Institutions, University of Caldas and Hidromiel Inc.
- Process and Products: Using GIS tools to develop a commitment to watershed commonwealth and to design income generating projects in three Peruvian watersheds. Lead Institutions: CEPEPAS, ASPERDARUC, and CIRNMA, three local NGOs.
- Fondo empresarial CONDESAN: A Venture Capital Fund focusing on poverty alleviation, conservation and productive investments. Lead Institution, CONDESAN.

- Electronic forums (3x/yr) on key regional themes (see [www. condesan.org](http://www.condesan.org)). Average participation is between 150-300 people. Recent examples include:
 - Local governments and natural resource management
 - Rural Agroindustries and development in the Andes
 - Improving post graduate education in natural resource management
- Integrity and Integration: Linking the Paramos to the physical and political landscape of the High Andes (pending). Lead Institutions: EcoCiencias, The Mountain Institute, University of Amsterdam

Who funds CONDESAN's ecoregional program?

- The budget for the Coordination unit, annual Trustee and occasional General Assembly meetings (1993, 1997, 2000) are funded with Canadian, Swiss, and Dutch funds located at the International Potato Center. Approx. \$200,000/yr
- CG partner's salary and research funds come from the various Center's core funding, bilateral grants and competitive grants. Approx. \$2,500,000/yr
- Non-CG partners research funds come from a wide range of sources (e.g. Embassy funds, PL-480, Foundations, competitive grants, Global Environmental Facility (pending). Approx. \$500,000/yr.
- Development loans with technical assistance funds attached are currently being negotiated with the InterAmerican Development Bank, Multilateral Investment fund, and Corporacion Andino de Fomento. Estimated total of \$1,000,000/yr

Particular interest to the CG-system

- The participating CG centers serve as both research partners and as facilitators for regional reflections on key issues;
- The Consortium has the potential to have important impact on national policies as the consortium, in each country, is made up of important local research and development actors, as well as government agencies.
- Although a double-edged sword, the informality of the Consortium makes it fairly simple to include new collaborators and move in new directions

What are our limitations?

- It is difficult to keep the Coordination funded. With the increased decentralization of funding, few donors are interested in supporting regional initiatives.
- The Consortium is not a legal entity. This means that all funding must be managed by the membership. This reduces the costs of the Coordination, but makes it more difficult to explain the unique role, and "value added" of the Consortium.