



## Functional Agrobiodiversity & Agroecology

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[TEAM](#) DR. CAROLINA OCAMPO ARIZA

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I am currently participating in the DIFFCacao Project with Prof. Dr. Teja Tschardt, in partnership with Bioversity International and the University of Würzburg. Our project aims to improve the productivity of native Fine and Flavor Cacao plantations in Peru, by understanding how it relates to landscape variables, biodiversity and local management strategies. My PhD studies focus on the role of birds, bats and arthropods as pest control agents in native Peruvian cacao plantations in two contrasting ecosystems: The dry forests of Piura in the north of Peru and tropical rain forests located in an inter-Andean valley of the Cusco region. I will be assessing the diversity of pests and pest control agents that can be found inside and around cacao plantations, as well as the effect of their presence and absence on crop productivity and cacao quality.

I am interested in understanding the effects of land-use changes and agricultural activities on the composition and functionality of tropical faunal communities. I have a background in biology (Universidad Nacional de Colombia) and nature conservation (University of Göttingen in Germany and Lincoln University in New Zealand), with a focus on ecological interactions between native and invasive species and bird community ecology in agroecosystems.

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