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ADDRESSING BIODIVERSITY-SOCIAL CONFLICT IN LATIN AMERICA (ABC-LA)

FINAL REPORT, VOLUME I OF II

MARCH 2016

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by DAI.

Cover photo: An indigenous co-researcher throws a net to collect aquatic samples as part of an environmental baseline assessment on the Abujao River in the Amazon in Ucayali, Peru.

ADDRESSING BIODIVERSITY-SOCIAL CONFLICT IN LATIN AMERICA (ABC-LA)

FINAL REPORT, VOLUME I OF II

Program Title: Addressing Biodiversity-Social Conflict in Latin America
Sponsoring USAID Office: USAID/Washington
Contract Number: AID-OAA-TO-13-00034
Contractor: DAI
Date of Publication: March 2016
Author: DAI

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXHIBITS

ACRONYMS

AAA	Administrative Authority of Water
ABC-LA	Addressing Biodiversity-Social Conflict in Latin America
ANA	Peruvian National Water Authority
ASGM	Artisanal Small-scale Gold Mining
BGI	Better Gold Initiative
BSA	Biologically Significant Area
CEW	Conflict Early Warning
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DREM	Regional Department of Mining (Peru)
FCDS	Fundación para la Conservación y el Desarrollo Sostenible
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IPA	Initial Program Assessments
LTPR	Land Tenure Property Rights
MADS	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Colombia)
MINAM	Ministry of Environment (Peru)
NRM	Natural Resource Management
ONDS	National Office on Dialogue (Peru)
ORAU	Organización Regional AIDESEP Ucayali
SINCHI	Amazon Institute for Scientific Research (Colombia)
SNIP	National Public Investment System (Peru)
TOC	Theory of Change
UNU	National University of Ucayali
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

This final report provides a summary and analysis of key aspects of the United States Agency for International Development's Addressing Biodiversity-Social Conflict in Latin America (ABC-LA) project and discusses project implementation, results, and lessons learned over the course of the contract's base period, from September 2013 through December 2015. The report is divided into two parts: the main report (Volume I) and associated annexes (Volume II). It is organized in the following manner:

Main Report

Executive Summary provides a high-level overview and synthesis of this final report.

1. Strategic Planning and Approach presents the development challenge and conceptual considerations and the strategic-level planning and approach developed and applied by the project team to address the challenge.

2. Implementation provides an overview of the process used for site selection and definition of project focal areas, followed by a summary of programmatic interventions and project activities and the project's strategic and implementing partners.

3. Results and Programmatic Highlights presents a review of outcomes and results at the national and subnational levels in Peru and Colombia as well as at the overall programmatic level.

4. Future Programming, Best Practices, and Lessons Learned discusses considerations for possible future programming for addressing negative impacts associated with extractive activities, including those involving social conflict and threats to biodiversity.

Annexes

The annexes provide additional and more detailed information on key programmatic, thematic, and operational aspects of the project:

I. ABC-LA Situational Model and Theory of Change.
II. Summary Initial Program Assessments and Site Selection.
III. Thematic Briefs on ABC-LA Programming: biodiversity, extractive activities, land-use planning and property rights, and socio-environmental conflict prevention and management.
IV. Summary Project Activity Sheets with additional detail about each project activity including local implementing partners and focal groups, key processes, and corresponding outcomes and results.
V. Program Management and Monitoring and Evaluation.
VI. Closing Events Agendas and Presentations.

Our hope and intent is that you find this report both informative and helpful.

Researchers from the Colombia Institute for Scientific Research in the Amazon (SINCHI) and local student co-researchers collect aquatic samples as part of an environmental baseline study in the Amazonian department of Caquetá

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Addressing Biodiversity-Social Conflict in Latin America (ABC-LA) project was to address the adverse environmental and social impacts in the region associated with extractive activities, including direct and indirect threats to biodiversity and negative impacts on vulnerable groups.

Overview: Threats from both legal and illegal exploitation of natural resources have been exacerbated by the lack of state presence, will, or capacity to protect biologically significant areas (BSAs) and vulnerable communities. Unclear, conflicting policies and corrupt practices have hindered transparency and accountability and add perceived insult to pre-existing injury. When coupled with historical grievances, this situation fosters a powerful mix of resentment and serves as a fundamental driver of conflict and the conditions for social and other forms of conflict. Mistrust among key stakeholders—including the state, the private sector, and communities—undermines the basis for developing a shared vision and collaborative action to advance and optimize common aims, including the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the well-being of vulnerable communities.

Goals and Objectives: The goal of ABC-LA was to improve enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation through enhanced natural resource governance and reduced socio-environmental conflict associated with extractive activities, contributing to the long-term impact of reducing degradation and contamination of biophysical conditions in the selected biologically BSAs of Peru and Colombia.

Strategic Planning and Approach: ABC-LA sought to achieve critical aims and end results in Peru and Colombia in a manner responsive to USAID and the project's scope of work and corresponding theory of change.

Initial program assessments: Following mobilization, during the project's initial outreach and engagement with field-based stakeholders, the team designed, developed, and conducted a series of scoping studies—initial program assessments (IPAs)—in selected areas of Peru and Colombia. The purposes of the IPAs were to better inform the definition and approach of critical tasks through a threats-based analysis of biodiversity conditions, including the impacts of extractive activities on BSAs, and to assess local dynamics such as power relations and the nature of social conflict in prospective focal areas. The IPA findings helped inform the project's approach and key decisions made in consultation with USAID: site selection of ABC-LA's focal areas, further development and refinement of ABC-LA's situational analysis and theory of change, work-planning, early partnering efforts, and the design of programmatic interventions and activities.

Site selection of focal areas: ABC-LA, in consultation with USAID, selected the focal areas of the Puno and Ucayali regions of Peru and the departments of Caquetá and Santander in Colombia. Within these focal areas, programmatic priority during the base period centered on the area of influence of the Sierra del Divisor National Park and the Lower Amazon Basin in Ucayali and the Bahuaja Sonene National Park and surrounding areas of influence in the Upper Amazon Basin in Puno. Within the focal areas of Colombia, the project prioritized efforts in three key municipalities in the Amazon Piedmont and Lower Amazon Basin of Caquetá, and in the municipalities that border the ecologically important Santurban Paramo in the department of Santander.

ABC-LA incorporated the following thematic areas in accordance with the project's design:

- Biodiversity – Interventions to support the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity were informed by an analysis of direct and indirect threats to BSAs, especially pressures associated with extractive activities.

- Social conflict – The project developed a conceptual and methodological framework for improving local capacities to better prevent and manage socio-environmental conflict in the selected focal areas. Programming focused on skills and tools development to enable local actors to better identify, analyze, and address sources and symptoms of current and emerging conflicts.
- Extractive activities – ABC-LA's point of entry was at the local or provincial government levels in the focal areas of Peru and Colombia, where increasing levels of legal and illegal extractive activities pose challenges to the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity and community well-being.
- Vulnerable groups – Project interventions prioritized assessment, engagement, and empowerment of vulnerable or historically marginalized populations, including indigenous communities, at risk or negatively affected by extractive activities and their associated impacts.
- Land use and property rights – ABC-LA identified alternative land-use planning mechanisms and tools to help local governments improve inclusive planning processes, with the aim of improving the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity.

In addition to considerations of these core and complementary areas of programmatic focus within this final report, more detailed treatment is provided in the thematic issues papers included as Annex III.

Implementation: The project consisted of four distinct phases: start-up and mobilization; outreach, planning, and design; project activity implementation, management, and monitoring; and the final phase, including project close-down. ABC-LA designed, developed, and awarded or initiated 14 activities during the base period upon USAID's November 2014 approval of the project's updated work plan and theory of change.

Working with local stakeholders, ABC-LA and local partners provided technical assistance and implemented a range of activities in 17 municipalities and 58 indigenous communities in the focal areas to improve capacities and skills of institutions and people and provide access to tools and methods necessary to better address environmental and social challenges posed by extractive activities.

Results and Programmatic Highlights: ABC-LA generated a series of results over the base period as measured by performance indicators developed through its Situational Model and Theory of Change. A summary of results is presented on the following page.

Participants take notes in a social-environmental conflict identification training in the Amazonian region of Ucayali, Peru.

GLOBAL PROJECT RESULTS

Project scope and impact 2013-2015: ABC-LA worked with a range of key actors in 17 municipalities and 58 indigenous communities in 4 focal areas of Peru and Colombia to improve local skills and capacities of institutions and people and provide the tools and methodologies necessary to better address growing threats to biodiversity and of social conflict associated with extractive activities.

BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS

789,684 **hectares** of biological significance under improved natural resource management as a result of project support. (Target: 100,000 hectares).

NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

8 **local governments** have produced governance plans that include improved protection of biodiversity and natural resource governance with inputs from local communities.

18 **government institutions** have demonstrated commitment to improving natural resource management of fragile ecosystems and sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity; 13 have increased their capacity for natural resource management.

IMPROVED LOCAL CAPACITY TO PREVENT AND MANAGE CONFLICT

16 **new groups or initiatives** dedicated to resolving socio-environmental conflict or the drivers of conflict in high-biodiversity areas. Key stakeholders in 10 municipalities have demonstrated capacity to contribute to local socio-environmental conflict early warning mechanisms.

VULNERABLE GROUPS ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED

19 project-supported **mechanisms** for improving natural resource governance and conflict early warning include participation of vulnerable groups that, with improved skill sets and greater access to data, have increased authority and decision-making roles in regional multi-stakeholder mechanisms and platforms.

INCREASED CAPACITY TO GENERATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DATA

3 **applied research institutions** produced environmental monitoring reports of biologically significant areas, filling existing data gaps through participatory research processes.

5 **targeted analytical studies** on vulnerable groups and artisanal small-scale gold mining informed stakeholders and improved policies and practices.

SKILL-BASED TRAINING

2,006 **participants** received training in natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and socio-environmental conflict identification, prevention, and response—a total of 25,655 person-hours of training.

Considerations for Future Programming and Lessons Learned: Addressing a complex array of development challenges requires time to reliably test hypotheses, pilot innovative approaches to improve policies and practices, and discern the impacts. Despite the brief duration of ABC-LA, the project identified three key lessons and best practices for future programming—the value of fostering trust-based relationships, responding to local demands and context, and matching technical expertise with local knowledge.

- Construction of a shared vision among diverse local constituencies is both possible and advantageous for such efforts. Representatives from local government, vulnerable groups, and civil society, including academia and the private sector, realize that strong and resilient partnerships are fundamental to advancing common or complementary interests. Meaningful engagement of local actors promotes locally led solutions, especially when stakeholders are directly engaged in identifying priorities, defining emerging challenges, and developing a shared understanding of effective means for addressing them.
- Technical and evidenced-based analysis, provided by capable (and, ideally, locally based) institutions, contributes to building confidence and a shared understanding of challenges. Inclusive processes for designing, implementing, and validating evidenced-based analysis also help improve planning efforts and the prospects of collaboration among diverse constituencies for devising solutions.
- Promotion of information- and knowledge-sharing among stakeholders, especially at the local level, proved helpful in transforming plans into purposeful action. Incorporating and valuing local and "traditional" knowledge helps strengthen the basis for trust-based relationships among constituencies and supports engagement and empowerment of historically marginalized or vulnerable groups.

A student co-researcher poses with an avian species as part of an environmental baseline study in the Peruvian Amazon in the region of Ucayali.

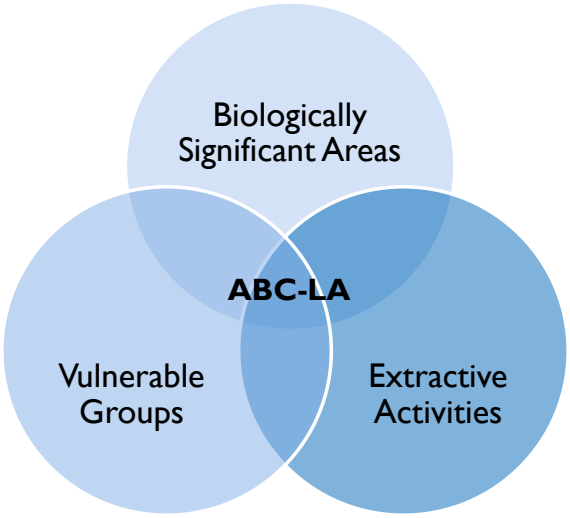
Conclusions: Despite the constraints and challenges associated with ABC-LA's ambitious scope, the project was able to engender important processes and results within its limited duration. Ultimately, consideration of the value or success of ABC-LA beyond project-specific outcomes and results in the focal areas rests on the degree to which lessons learned, assumptions tested, and approaches piloted can prove helpful to informing future efforts. USAID has the opportunity to assume a leading role in helping to align and harmonize efforts to reduce the adverse environmental and social impacts associated with extractive activities through alliances and partnerships with other donors and public and private sector partners—including governments at the national and local levels and stakeholders from civil society and the extractive industry.

1. STRATEGIC PLANNING AND APPROACH

A key challenge for Peru, Colombia, and other countries in Latin America is finding the right balance between advancing economic growth goals and the obligation to protect remarkably rich and diverse environmental and cultural patrimonies. Impressive economic gains, in large part due to increased extractive activities, have allowed nations in the region to reduce poverty levels over the past decade. However, this positive trend has been accompanied by significant increases in environmental degradation and growing pressures to BSAs and nearby vulnerable groups, including indigenous and minority communities. The expansion of legal and illegal extractive activities in increasingly fragile ecosystems is generating or contributing to threats to biodiversity in protected areas and surrounding buffer zones, and threats to the well-being of vulnerable communities. These threats include habitat loss and degradation, loss of primary forests, changes and/or alterations in water courses, and water contaminated by chemical substances and toxic effluents.

The increase in oil and gas exploration and development, as well as mining, logging and agricultural practices (both legal and illegal), in Latin America has led to environmental degradation in key biodiversity-rich areas. Chronic low-grade socio-environmental conflict punctuated by periodic violence in communities in or adjacent to these activities constitutes one of the main drivers for biodiversity loss. Conflict typically hinders opportunities to develop consensus and advance more effective natural resource management and governance, both of which are vital to protecting fragile ecosystems and habitats and ultimately improve the enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation.

To address the negative impacts associated with extractive activities, specifically threats to biodiversity, increased social conflict, and on vulnerable groups, the project developed an inter-disciplinary and multi-dimensional approach. This approach focused on improving local skill sets, methods, and approaches for improved conflict prevention and natural resource management and governance. Together, these skills would reduce pressures and threats on ecosystems and habits, while improving conditions for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources in strategically significant focal areas.



The project's initial program assessments (IPAs) and resulting development of an updated situational analysis and theory of change, informed its work plan and activity design, corresponding programmatic results framework, and consequently ABC-LA's targets and the definition of indicators to measure and discern programmatic performance.

ABC-LA designed and implemented IPAs, or scoping studies, in nine potential focal areas of Peru and Colombia to discern key dynamics and appropriateness of sites according to established criteria and to share findings with USAID in Washington and at the mission levels in both countries to select up to four focal areas where the project would prioritize efforts during the base period. The process and products provided a number of key benefits by helping garner USAID input and decisions ratifying proposed project interventions in the four regions where ABC-LA focused its efforts: Ucayali and Puno in Peru; Caquetá and Santander in Colombia.

The results and analysis from the scoping studies helped the ABC-LA team engage and map key local stakeholders and dynamics as well as better define and refine an updated situational analysis and theory of change, which in turn helped further inform, clarify and convey ABC-LA's programmatic approach and activities.

EXHIBIT 1: ABC-LA SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

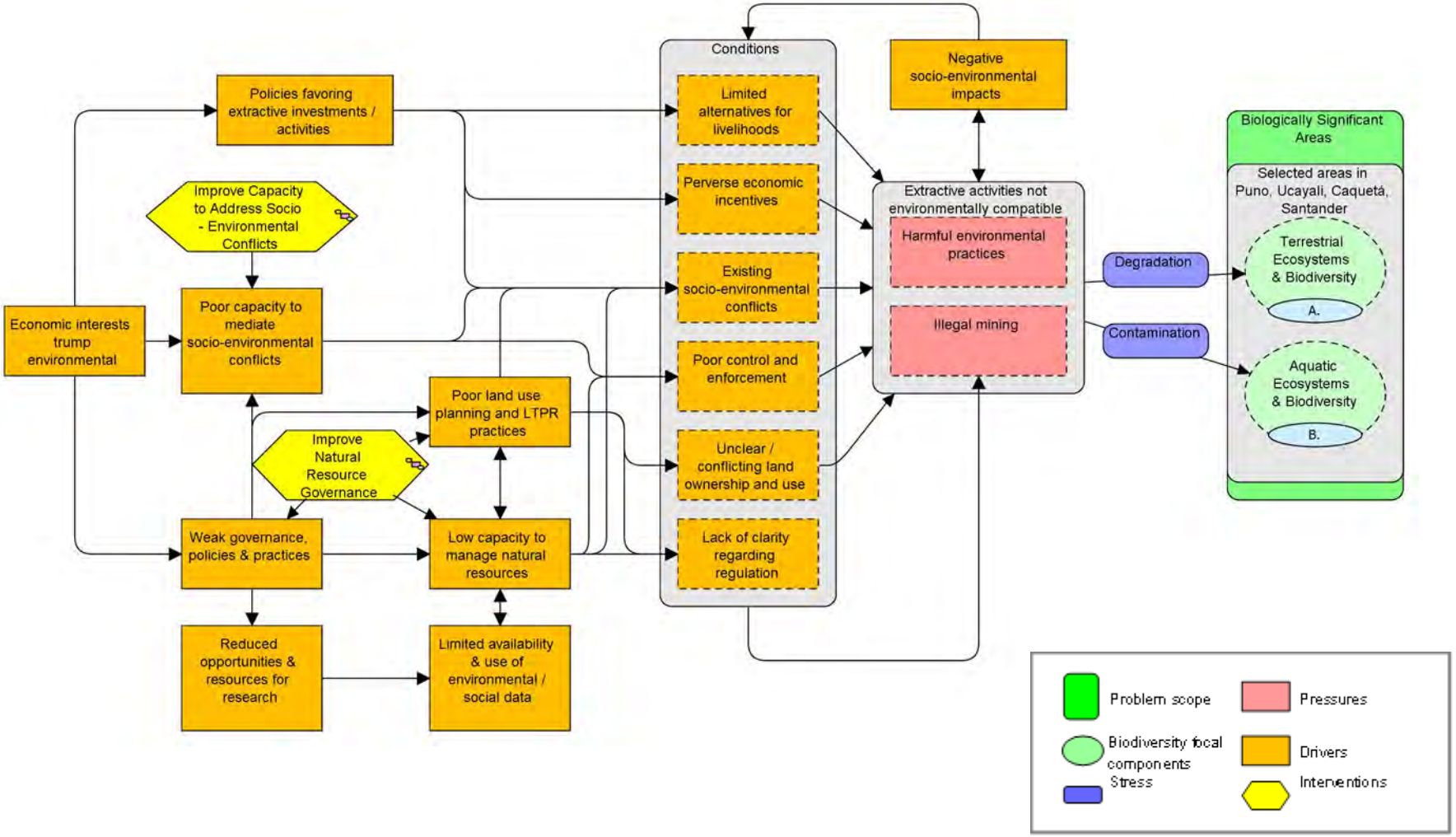
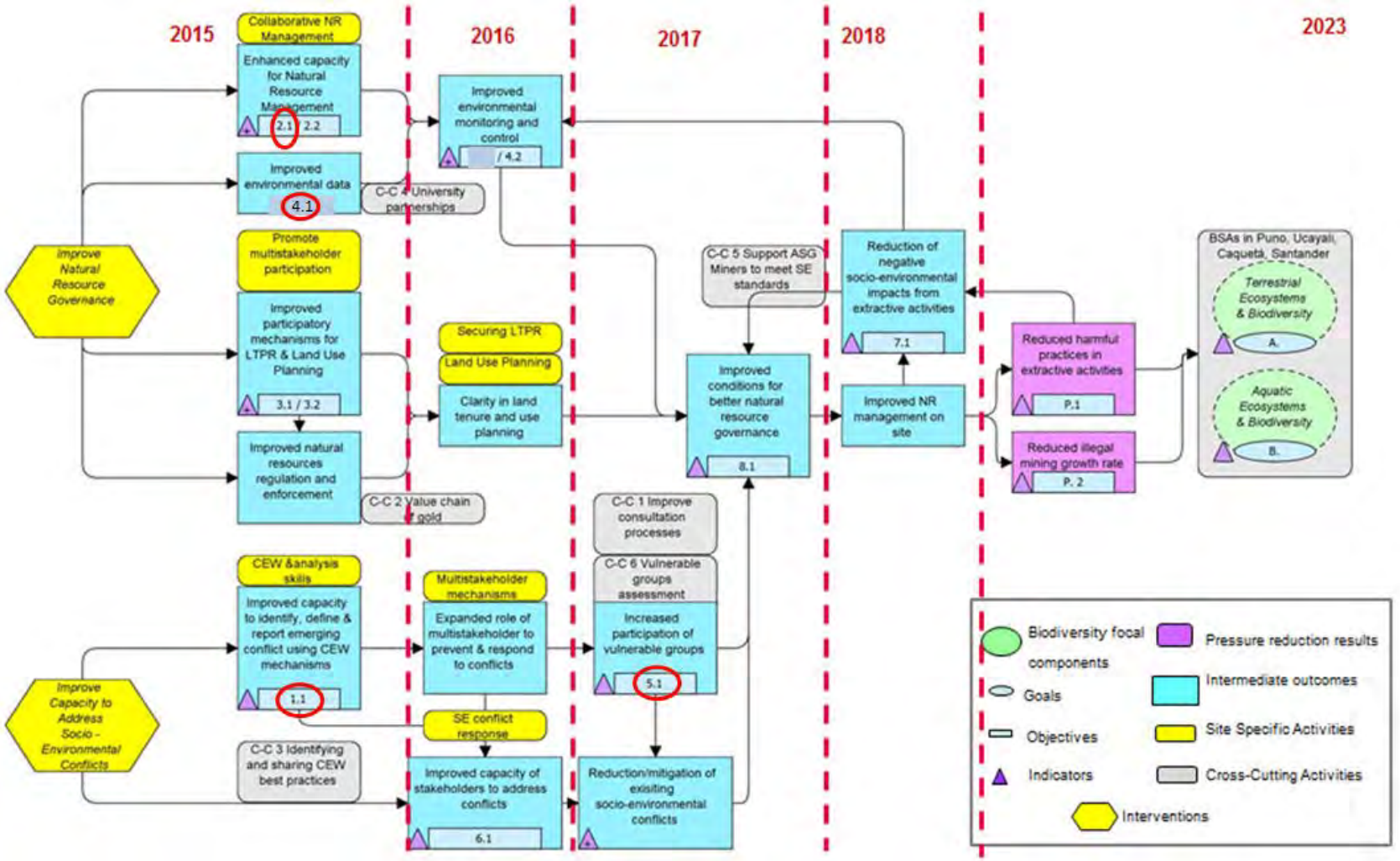


EXHIBIT 2: ABC-LA THEORY OF CHANGE

The project's TOC describes how ABC-LA intended to address the identified drivers and threats to biodiversity. The base period activities, whose performance was measured by outcome-level indicators, set the foundation for the project's two intermediate results: improving local capacity for natural resource management and for addressing socio-environmental conflicts. This increased capacity would improve enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation through better natural resource governance and reduction of socio-environmental conflict, with a long-term impact of reducing negative socio-environmental impact from extractive activities on biodiversity.

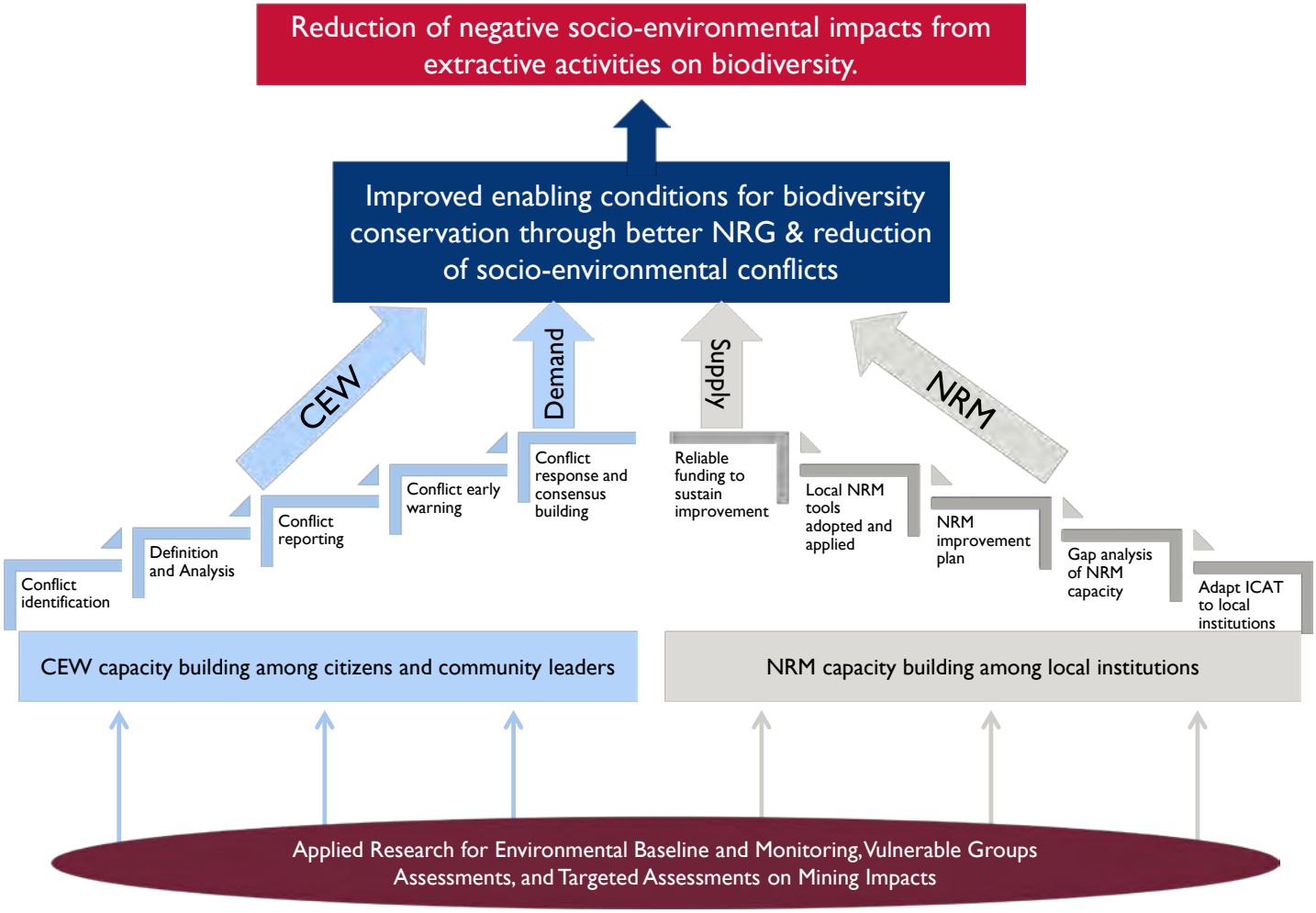


APPROACH

ABC-LA employed a multidisciplinary approach to identify and address the drivers and threats to biodiversity through two programmatic interventions. First, strengthen community and local/ regional government capacities to improve natural resource management (NRM); second, strengthen capacities to address socio-environmental conflict. Through improved natural resource governance and reduced socio-environmental conflicts, ABC-LA aimed to improve enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation.

To inform these two lines of intervention, and address the identified gaps in scientific and technical data, the project developed a strong applied research component, which included generation of: 1) environmental data and subsequent monitoring of biological and biophysical conditions; 2) social data through vulnerable groups assessments of socio-environmental pressures on marginalized populations; and 3) targeted assessments on the socio-environmental impacts of gold mining. This overall approach strengthened local systems by working through existing local organizations and government institutions, avoiding redundancies in programming and strategically supporting initiatives favoring locally-led solutions.

EXHIBIT 3: ABC-LA PROJECT APPROACH



BIODIVERSITY IN ABC-LA

As is well known, the Andean Amazonian region is one of the world's wealthiest in terms of genetic resources, species, ecosystems and ecological relationships; supplying the planet with basic resources such as water and oxygen. The countries within this area are late developing countries that have been using natural resources as an engine for growth and policy development.

There is widespread concern over the loss of biodiversity the world over, which has been accelerating due to industrial growth in high-income countries that need natural resources from resource-rich countries such as Peru or Colombia. There are a number of economic, demographic, sociopolitical, scientific and technological factors that feed into this resource-led growth model.

> Improved National Resource Governance and Biodiversity Outcomes: Strengthening natural resource governance is a critical step for fostering dialogue, improving understanding and fostering trust-based relationships between actors, including those involved in extractive activity and communities affected by it. From this platform, it will be possible to improve the planning, monitoring and concerted management of territorial development, and if applicable make more efficient use of funds, including from royalties and public revenues, in support of habitat protection and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources.

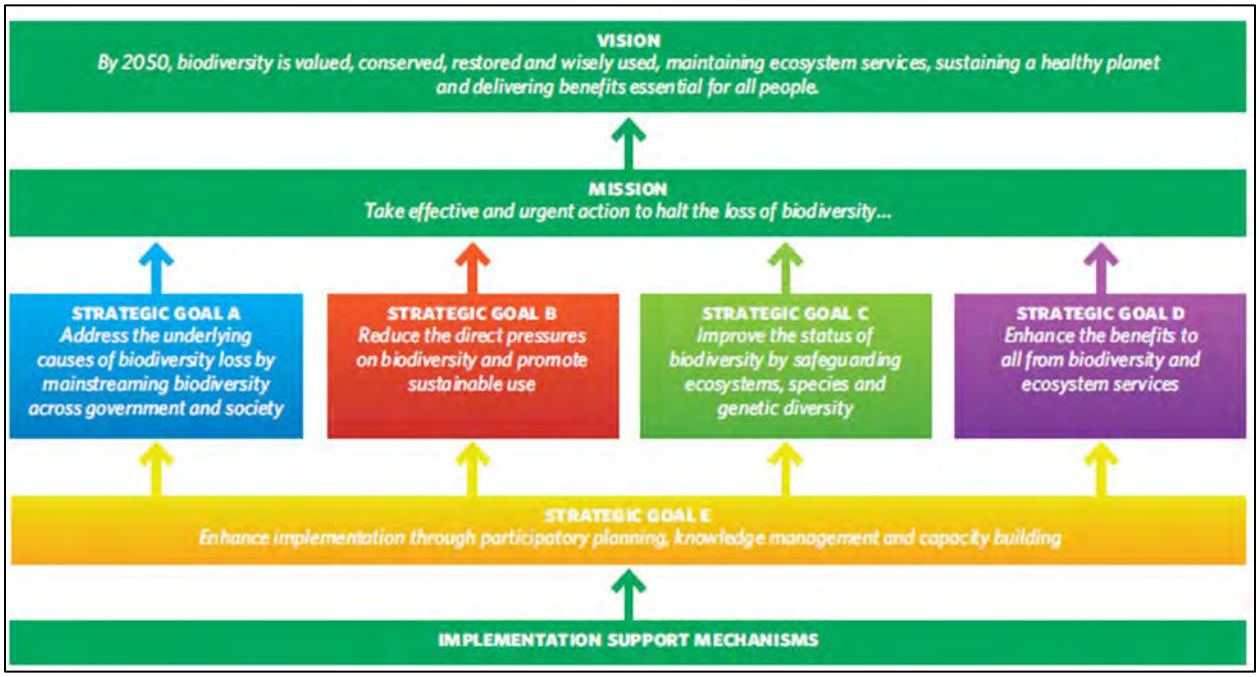
As a result, a number of expert organizations on the relationship between environmental services and natural resources' limited capacity to recover have proposed biodiversity conservation policies, such as the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, Aichi Targets, or Millennium Goals. However, these high-level agendas have not included changes at the behavioral level, where humans adjust their day-to-day actions for biodiversity conservation, and where local or community contexts are factored in. The gap between policy-making and individual changes stems from the gap between understanding biodiversity as a technical-scientific field, and understanding biodiversity conservation as a priority for human survival and development.

In this space, ABC-LA's point of entry was socio-environmental conflicts linked primarily to extractives. Most people are not aware of the vital importance of biodiversity until they are directly affected by its loss, whether it's through water pollution or scarcity, restricted access to land, or food insecurity. By including representatives from the regional, local and community levels, as well as relevant institutions, the project was able to highlight the local demand for capacity building and targeted actions that respond to local concerns and needs around biodiversity conservation.

ABC-LA first assessed the context and pressures on biodiversity conservation, in order to later build and strengthen linkages and activities around sustainable resource-based economic development. This was done by developing technical-scientific methodologies, as well as building capacity among local and regional peoples, institutions and governments. In addition, based on all of the above and the Convention on Biological Diversity's definition of biodiversity (article 2), the project formulated a concept of biodiversity based on a technical-cultural framework, developed through a reflexive and participatory process during the project's events and workshops.

ABC-LA worked towards the Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Goals B: reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable land use and E: enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building. By improving capacity for NRM and conflict management, the project worked towards Goals A: address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society; C: improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity; and D: enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services.

EXHIBIT 4: STRUCTURE OF CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020



In addition to working toward the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity's goals, ABC-LA's approach and activities were directly aligned with USAID's Biodiversity Policy, which represents a recommitment to conserve biodiversity through strategic actions to reduce threats and drivers, as well as a new focus on integrating biodiversity conservation with other development sectors.

ABC-LA and USAID Biodiversity Policy

Support Enabling Conditions for Biodiversity Conservation: The project strengthened accountable and capable institutions that can effectively manage biodiversity resources, and built constituencies for conservation through multi-stakeholder platforms that incorporate vulnerable groups in decision making.

Reduce Priority Drivers and Threats to Biodiversity: ABC-LA worked to prevent future habitat loss due to impending threats through mechanisms such as conservation and sustainable use plans and consensus building agreements for community-based conservation of BSAs.

Integrate Conservation and Development for Improved Biodiversity and Development Outcomes: ABC-LA followed USAID guidance by using site-specific and thematic analyses to develop and apply a TOC to activity design.

Build Partnerships to Mobilize Resources in Support of Biodiversity Conservation: ABC-LA built partnerships with a wide range of local stakeholders that jointly and separately contribute to improved biodiversity conservation, including: research institutions to provide better data and analysis of biodiversity conditions and threats; university partners to implement innovative approaches such as citizen-science initiatives to improve environmental monitoring; NGOs, communities and indigenous-peoples' organizations to lead on capacity building and applied research efforts; and local government institutions to strengthen the institutional and technical capacity to protect biodiversity and habitats and promote more constructive interaction and effective local partnerships between authorities and communities to advance the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Apply Science, Technology, and Learning to Enhance Biodiversity Conservation Practice: ABC-LA is working with applied research institutions like SINCHI in Caquetá, UNU in Ucayali, and the University of los Andes in Santander to strengthen local capacity to generate data, and measure and document impacts from extractives activities on BSAs, including through a citizen science initiative for watershed monitoring that uses innovative and affordable data sensors and cell phone technology for monitoring and reporting.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

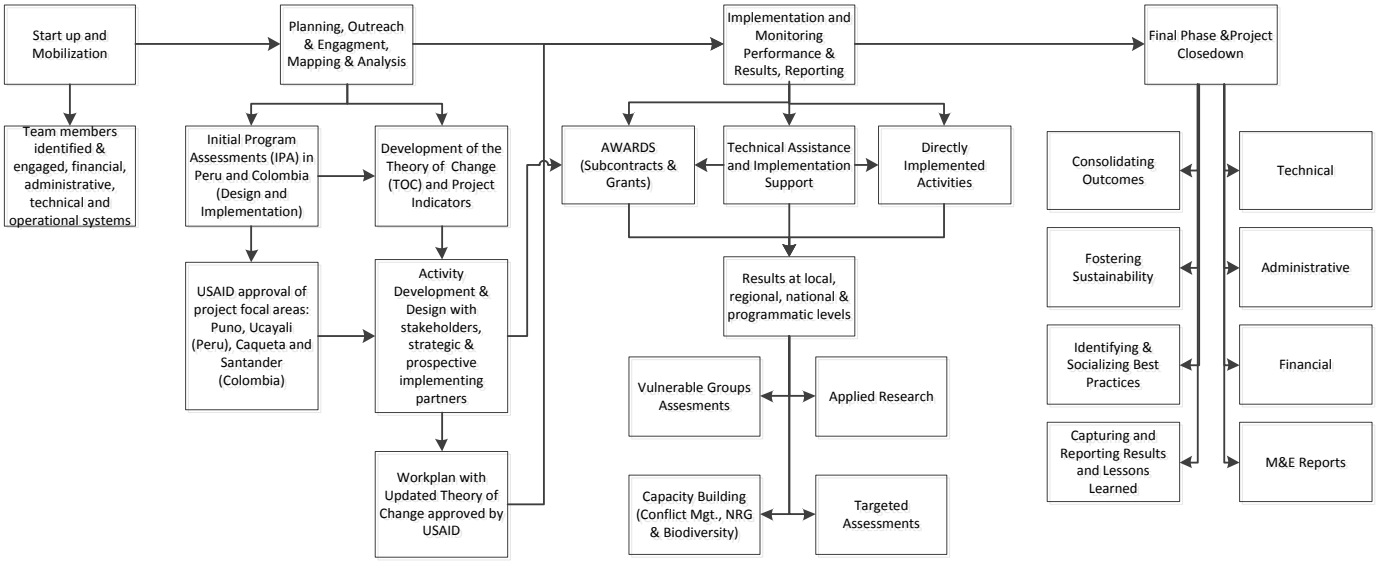
OVERVIEW

The goal of ABC-LA was to improve enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation through enhanced natural resource governance and reduced socio-environmental conflict associated with extractive activities with the aim of contributing to a long-term impact of reducing degradation and contamination of biophysical conditions in the selected biologically significant focal areas of Peru and Colombia.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASES

Overall implementation of the ABC-LA project consisted of what can be considered as four distinct phases, namely: Start-up and mobilization; Planning; Implementation, management and monitoring of project activities; and Close-down.

EXHIBIT 5: ABC-LA PROJECT PHASES: FROM START-UP TO CLOSE-DOWN



Operationalizing and applying concepts: The start-up and mobilization phase consisted of identifying and engaging team members and key consultants, securing and equipping the Lima-based office and establishing the basic financial, administrative and operational systems necessary for effective project management. The second phase focused on strategic planning to operationalize programmatic concepts and initiated outreach, engagement and consultations with USAID missions, and government counterparts and other stakeholders in Peru and Colombia. During this planning phase, the project designed, developed and implemented initial program assessments (IPAs) to help provide evidenced-based analysis to help inform operational considerations and decisions, in consultation with USAID, on where the project should work, how and with whom, and toward what end. (See Annex II for a summary of IPA analysis).

The third phase of ABC-LA focused on the final design, development and implementation of programmatic activities and awards with local implementing partners and of directly-implemented activities. Additionally, this phase included providing programmatic and technical assistance and monitoring and reporting efforts.

ABC-LA worked at the local level in the four focal areas of Peru and Colombia to strengthen community and government capacities to improve natural resource management and address socio-environmental conflict. The project's capacity building approach provided skills-based training and technical assistance to institutions and community leaders, helped foster multi-stakeholder groups and develop skills, tools and models with key local actors to better address threats to biodiversity and community well-being. ABC-LA worked closely with local partners to apply this enhanced local capacity to: conduct applied research to generate reliable data and monitor environmental conditions; improve conflict prevention and management capabilities and mechanisms; assess socio-environmental dynamics of vulnerable groups; and implement targeted assessments on impacts associated with extractive activities including small-scale gold mining.

During the project's final phase, ABC-LA's programmatic focus was on building upon the progress achieved in implementing the project approach and finalizing implementation of activities, with a view toward:

- Maximizing the positive impacts of project activities;
- Adding value and advancing positive programmatic outcomes and results; and,
- Consolidating advances and conditions to foster sustainability.

ABC-LA FOCAL AREAS

During the project's base period, ABC-LA worked in four focal areas where BSAs and the well-being of vulnerable groups are at risk from identified drivers and threats to biodiversity posed by extractive activities. Specifically, project efforts were focused on Puno and Ucayali in Peru, and Caquetá and Santander in Colombia. In Peru, the focal areas were in the area of influence of the Sierra del Divisor National Park, part of the Lower Amazon Basin in the region of Ucayali, and the Bahuaja Sonene National Park in the Upper Amazon Basin in the region of Puno. Ucayali and Puno border the Madre de Dios region from the north and the south respectively. In Colombia, the project worked in the Lower Amazon Basin and Amazon Piedmont in the department of Caquetá and in municipalities in the department of Santander that border the ecologically important Santurban Paramo. The graphic on the next page summarizes the biodiversity conditions, extractive activities and pressures on biodiversity, and vulnerable populations located in each of the project's four focal areas.

Perú is among the world's top ten most biologically diverse countries, with 84 out the 117 existing biomes. It is also among the most diverse culturally with over 60 different ethnic groups. Around 60% of the country's economic activity depends on its biodiversity wealth including agriculture, fishing, livestock, logging and industrial activity. The country has benefited from an extended period of sustained economic growth – largely fuelled by the development of Peru's rich natural resources (copper, silver, lead, zing, natural gas and gold) and high global demand for commodities that resulted in average annual growth rates in gross domestic product (GDP) of over 5% in the past decade.

Much of the country's natural resources and mineral wealth is found in or near BSAs, including the Andean mountain range and the Amazonian rainforest. In the regions of Ucayali and Puno, increased extraction of non-renewable resources has contributed to environmental degradation and contamination, fostered tensions over land ownership and use, and has exacerbated social-environmental conflicts. In November 2015, the Peruvian Ombudsman's Office registered 215 current social conflicts in Peru: 69% were socio-environmental in nature, 9% around local governance issues, and 7% attributed to land issues. Of the 139 socio-environmental conflicts, 63% were related to mining and 15% to hydrocarbons. These impacts have also disproportionately affected historically marginalized and other vulnerable populations, such as indigenous peoples in Ucayali and *campesino* communities in Puno.

EXHIBIT 6: ABC-LA FOCAL AREAS

Ucayali: ABC-LA worked in the area of influence of the recently established Sierra del Divisor National Park. The area is under increased direct and indirect threats posed by growing levels of illegal logging, coca growing and alluvial gold mining. Ucayali's entire land mass is in the Amazon Basin, and during 2013 deforestation in this region accounted for nearly 25% of Peru's total loss of tropical forest.

Puno: The project's main area of intervention in Puno was the Bahuaja Sonene National Park's area of influence in the Amazonian part of the region. This is an important area for Peru as it is the core of the Vilcabamba-Amboro Conservation Corridor, one of the most important conversation corridors in the world due to its location within a region of high biological and cultural diversity.

In addition to sharing international borders with Brazil (Ucayali) and with Bolivia (Puno), both focal regions in Peru share internal borders with Madre de Dios, the region widely considered a dystopian model of environmental degradation resulting from widespread unregulated extractive activities, weak natural resource governance and unchecked environmental devastation.

Colombia is considered one of the world's "mega-diverse" countries, hosting close to 10% of the planet's biodiversity. Like Peru, it is also rich in natural resources, notably gold, nickel, coal, emeralds, oil and gas, and has benefitted from strong economic growth associated with extractives-based activities and the commodity boom over the past decade. Colombia's GDP has grown at a rate of nearly 5% over the past three years and attracted significant foreign direct investment. The Government of Colombia has considered the extractive sector, including mining and hydrocarbon development, as integral to its strategic plan for sustaining economic growth, supporting the transformation from conflict and consolidating peace.

The significant growth of the extractives sector, coupled with widespread illegal mining activities, is creating new threats and pressures on biodiversity in Colombia, including habitat loss and degradation of fragile ecosystems and BSAs. The sustained growth in extractive activities, both legal and illegal, is also contributing to an increase in socio-environmental conflicts which exacerbate tensions in a country where parties are working to end five decades of armed conflict.

According to Colombia's Controlaría General de la Republica, impacts from conflicts linked to mining are amplified by the lack of coherent and consistent mining and environmental policies and legislation. Communities in the project's focal areas also complain that existing and emerging concessions for gas, oil and mining exacerbate already complex problems associated with land rights and use, the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, and adverse environmental impacts on fragile ecosystems and environmental services.

The recent Havana Accords' commitment to reaching a peace agreement by March 2016 will strongly affect the natural resource landscape of Colombia, particularly some of the focal areas of the project, where the post-conflict scenario will likely include intensification of extractive activities and increased challenges for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Environmental services to populations and economic activities will become a key part of land use planning in these regions, as they still boast high levels of ecological integrity.

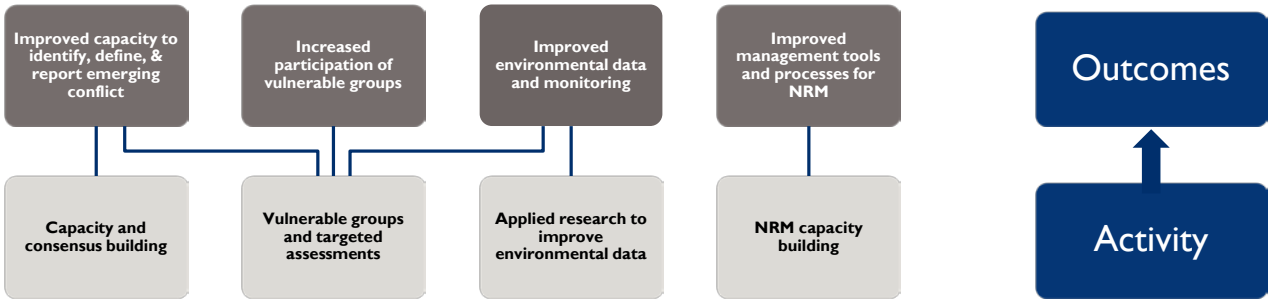
Caquetá: the department of Caquetá's protected areas are among the most biologically and culturally diverse in the region and form part of the larger Andean-Amazonian biological corridor. There is also a long history of violent conflict in Caquetá, where the FARC still maintain a strong presence in the region. A likely increase in extractive activities post-March 2016 will probably contribute to an increase in socio-environmental conflicts, as this department is the gateway to the Amazon and ground zero of post peace accord reconciliation and development areas.

Santander: ABC-LA worked in the Santurban Paramo, which is a unique and highly vulnerable mountain ecosystem, home to a hydraulic complex of 26 highland lakes which provide water for over 2

million people, and is important for the storage of atmospheric carbon, which mitigates climate change. The Paramo also has significant mineral deposits, including gold, and is thus highly susceptible to pressures from both large and small scale mining, as well as for competing demands for land and water. However, civil society has expressed interest in the conservation and protection of the Santurbán complex and in March 2014, the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS) designated at least some of the páramo as warranting increased environmental protection, putting the status of mining in question. The resolution of the case of competing demands and interests concerning the future status and use of natural resources in the Páramo of Santurban is likely to serve as a model more broadly in Colombia and beyond. Currently, 40% of páramos in Colombia lack protected status.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND PARTNERS

ABC-LA's emphasis during the base period focused on achievement of four outcomes: improved capacity to identify, define, and report emerging conflict; increased participation of vulnerable groups; improved environmental data and monitoring, and improved management tools and processes for NRM.



Project Activities: In order to achieve these outcome-level results, ABC-LA designed, developed and initiated 14 activities during the project base period with USAID's November 2014 approval of the revised work plan and updated theory of change. Activities fell under 4 categories: capacity and consensus building, vulnerable groups and targeted assessments, applied research to improve environmental data, and NRM capacity building. Working with dozens of local stakeholders, ABC-LA and implementing partners worked in 17 municipalities and 58 indigenous communities within the project's four focal areas. Program funding of activities in Peru and Colombia, totaling just over $860,000, were evenly distributed between Peru and Colombia, with activities financed through a combination of grants or sub-contracts, direct project implementation, with technical assistance and programmatic support by ABC-LA's core staff and key consultants.

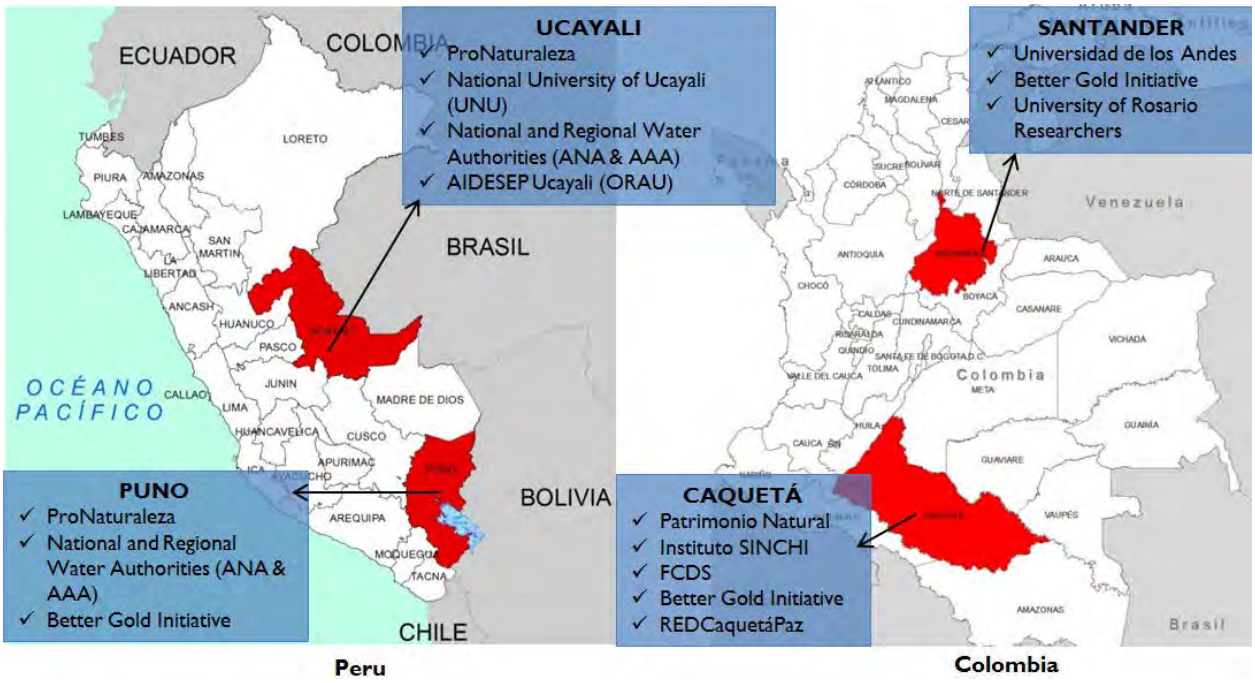
Project Partners: ABC-LA collaboratively developed and designed activities in ways intended to produce near term impact and strengthen local platforms required for leading longer term processes and practices that will continue generating positive impacts beyond project support. The project identified key local actors, civil society organizations, universities, government agencies, communities and private sector partners which jointly and separately demonstrated prospects for sustaining positive results. The table and graphic on the following page provides a summary of ABC-LA activities and local implementing partners. More detailed information on these activities, including activity-level goals and objectives, outputs, outcomes and results are included as Annex IV and can be found online **here**.

EXHIBIT 7: ABC-LA: SUMMARY OF PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES AND PARTNERS

Award Type	Partner	Activity
Direct Activity	ANA (Peruvian National Water Authority)	Building socio-environmental conflict awareness in Ucayali and Puno

Award Type	Partner	Activity
Direct Activity	Better Golden Initiative (BGI), Project staff and consultants	Promoting responsible gold mining: Identifying obstacles / opportunities to improve regulation and control and reduce harmful Artisanal Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) practices contributing to negative environmental and social impacts in Puno
Direct Activity	Project staff and consultants	Strengthening of local environmental institutions in Ucayali
Direct Activity	Project staff and consultants	Development of conservation and sustainable land use plan in Ucayali
Direct Activity	Better Golden Initiative (BGI), project staff and consultants	Study of artisanal and small-scale gold mining in Colombia
Sub-contract	Fundación para la Conservación del Desarrollo Sostenible (FCDS)	Vulnerable Groups Assessment - Colombia
Sub-contract	Universidad los Andes (UniAndes)	Consensus building and citizen monitoring in Santander
Sub-contract	Fundación Peruana para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (Pronaturaleza)	Vulnerable Groups Assessment - Peru
Grant	Fundación Peruana para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (Pronaturaleza)	Capacity building to identify, define and report socio-environmental conflicts and processes to improve land use and natural resources management in Puno
Grant	Patrimonio Natural Fondo para Biodiversidad y Áreas Protegidas (Patrimonio Natural)	Capacity building to identify, define and report socio-environmental conflicts and processes to improve land use and natural resources management in Caquetá
Grant	Universidad Nacional de Ucayali (UNU)	Environmental baseline assessment and monitoring protocol in Ucayali
Grant	Organización Regional de AIDESEP – Ucayali (ORAU)	Capacity building to identify, define and report socio-environmental conflicts and processes to improve land use and natural resources management in Ucayali
Grant	Instituto Amazónico de Investigaciones Científicas SINCHI	Environmental baseline assessment and monitoring protocol - Caquetá
Grant	Fundación Red Desarrollo y Paz del Caquetá (REDCaquetáPaz)	Youth, Communication, and Environment in Caquetá

EXHIBIT 8: ABC-LA IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS IN FOCAL AREAS



3. RESULTS AND PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

GLOBAL PROJECT RESULTS

Project scope and impact 2013-2015: ABC-LA worked with a range of key actors in 17 municipalities and 58 indigenous communities in 4 focal areas of Peru and Colombia to improve local skills and capacities of institutions and people and provide the tools and methodologies necessary to better address growing threats to biodiversity and of social conflict associated with extractive activities.

BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS

789,684 **hectares** of biological significance under improved natural resource management as a result of project support. (Target: 100,000 hectares).

NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

8 **local governments** have produced governance plans that include improved protection of biodiversity and natural resource governance with inputs from local communities.

18 **government institutions** have demonstrated commitment to improving natural resource management of fragile ecosystems and sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity; 13 have increased their capacity for natural resource management.

IMPROVED LOCAL CAPACITY TO PREVENT AND MANAGE CONFLICT

16 **new groups or initiatives** dedicated to resolving socio-environmental conflict or the drivers of conflict in high-biodiversity areas. Key stakeholders in 10 municipalities have demonstrated capacity to contribute to local socio-environmental conflict early warning mechanisms.

VULNERABLE GROUPS ENGAGED AND EMPOWERED

19 project-supported **mechanisms** for improving natural resource governance and conflict early warning include participation of vulnerable groups that, with improved skill sets and greater access to data, have increased authority and decision-making roles in regional multi-stakeholder mechanisms and platforms.

INCREASED CAPACITY TO GENERATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DATA

3 **applied research institutions** produced environmental monitoring reports of biologically significant areas, filling existing data gaps through participatory research processes.

5 **targeted analytical studies** on vulnerable groups and artisanal small-scale gold mining informed stakeholders and improved policies and practices.

SKILL-BASED TRAINING

2,006 **participants** received training in natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and socio-environmental conflict identification, prevention, and response—a total of 25,655 person-hours of training.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS: SIGNIFICANCE OF ABC-LA RESULTS

The ABC-LA approach, which worked from a community level to build capacities for both civil society and institutions, successfully resulted in increased local capacity to manage natural resources for biodiversity conservation and socio-environmental conflicts that arise from extractive activities.

Three of the four focal areas now have local government plans for natural resource management and biodiversity conservation and sustainable use that include early identification and reporting of conflicts, with an engaged civil society with the awareness and skill sets to both support institutions in the implementation of these plans and to hold them accountable. A total of 789,684 hectares are under improved management through these government plans: 658,480 hectares in the Sierra del Divisor's National Park's area of influence will be managed under a conservation and sustainable use plan overseen by Ucayali's regional environmental authority; in Puno 62,304 hectares in the Bahuaja Sonene National Park's area of influence will be under biodiversity action plans in 3 municipal governments; and in Santander 68,900 hectares of the Surata River watershed will be regularly monitored through a water quality monitoring system led by civil society, public institutions, and local universities.

Additionally, three environmental monitoring tools developed under scientific rigor, aligned with state-approved methodologies, and implemented through a participatory method were implemented to fill the gap in scientific data accessible to local populations and to inform natural resource management planning. All three of these applied research methods are locally owned by research institutions that will continue to apply them and make data-based decisions for natural resource management as a result of ABC-LA assistance. In Ucayali, Peru, the environmental baseline assessment implemented by the National University of Ucayali has documented biological components along the Abujao River in the Sierra del Divisor National Park's area of influence, and the university has committed to finding resources to fund subsequent assessments. In Santander, Colombia the citizen science water quality monitoring system has been adopted by municipal environmental committees and local universities for continuous monitoring and future enhancements to the system. In Caquetá, the Amazon Institute for Scientific Research (SINCHI) conducted its first environmental baseline in Colombia related to extractive activities, expanding its institutional knowledge and geographic coverage of environmental data. They have written the second phase of the baseline assessment into their 2016 operational plan and are working to share the generated information with indigenous communities that participated in the study as co-researchers.

Ten municipalities in Peru and Colombia have demonstrated ability to contribute to conflict early warning mechanisms to bring attention to latent and escalating socio-environmental conflicts in biologically significant areas. These reports start at the community level, but require municipal and regional response to address the issues presented. Through project assistance, 16 new groups or initiatives dedicated to resolving conflict or the drivers of conflict have been created at local, regional, and national levels.

Vulnerable groups in focal areas have been engaged and empowered through participation in 19 project-supported mechanisms for natural resource governance and conflict early warning. Through participation in capacity building workshops, environmental baselines studies, and technical review committees, representatives of vulnerable groups have improved skill sets and greater access to data, increasing their authority and role in decision-making on topics that directly affect their livelihoods.

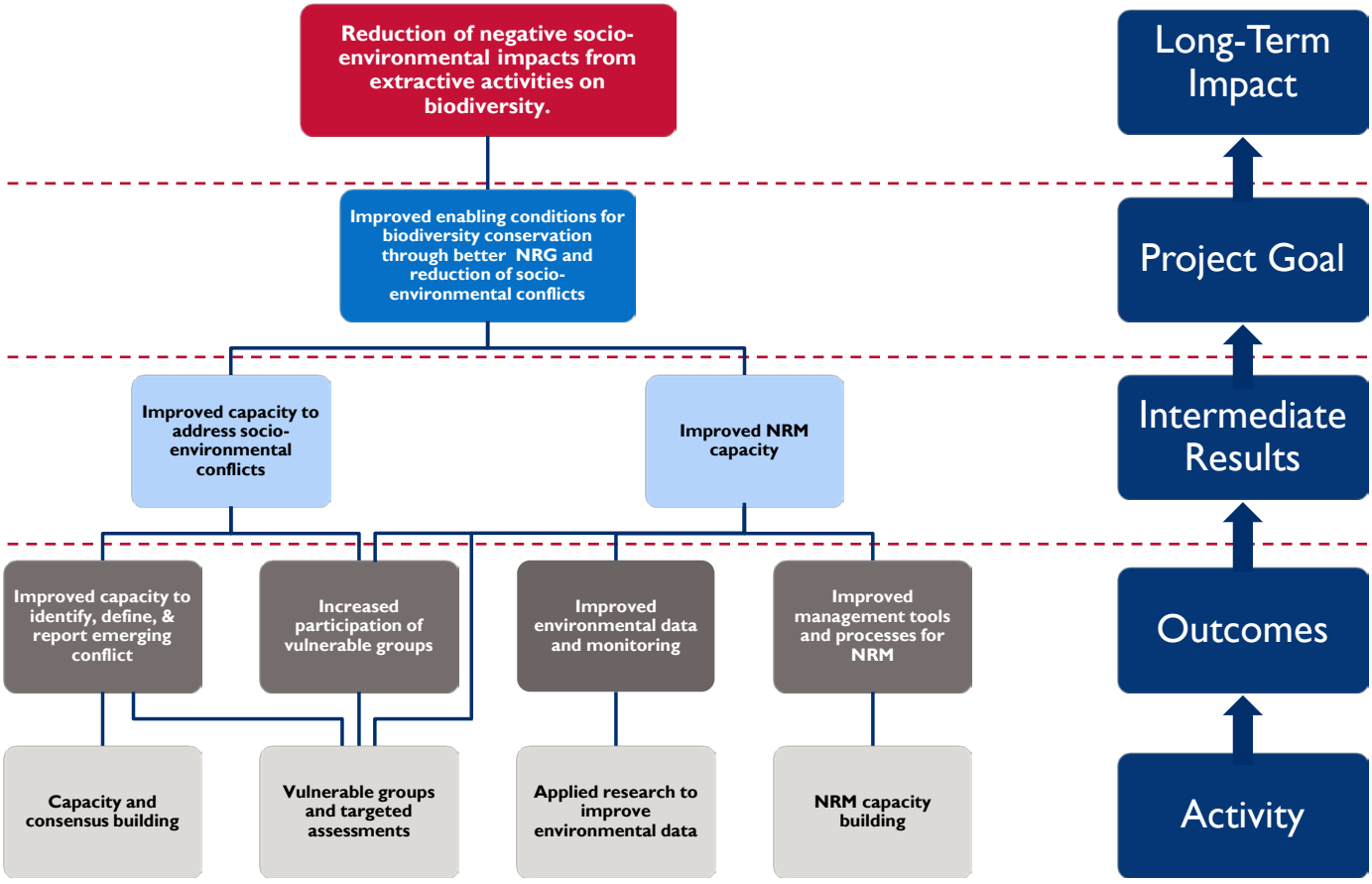
These skills and tools implemented and adopted through project assistance will become more necessary as populations in these regions face increasing threats to biodiversity and their livelihoods related to extractive activities.

PROJECT PERFORMANCE

ABC-LA's key indicators to evaluate base period performance were at the outcome level of the project's results, measuring the achievement of: improved capacity to identify, define, and report emerging conflict, increased participation of vulnerable groups, improved environmental data and monitoring, and improved management tools and processes for NRM. These outcomes address drivers to biodiversity loss identified in the Initial Program Assessments and further developed in the project's Situational Model and TOC.

The project met or exceeded its targets for all 4 of these outcomes, which set the foundation for the achievement of Intermediate Results originally anticipated to be achieved and impact deepened in 2016: improved capacity to address socio-environmental conflicts and improved NRM capacity. These two improved skill sets of institutions and communities create both the supply (institutions) and demand (community leaders) necessary for ABC-LA's goal: creating the enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation through enhanced natural resource governance and reduction of socio-environmental conflicts. Furthermore, the project exceeded its base period target at the Long-Term Impact level, with 789,000 hectares of biological significance under improved natural resource management as a result of ABC-LA interventions (target: 100,000). The following section provides greater detail on results achieved at the national and regional levels.

EXHIBIT 9: ABC-LA RESULTS FRAMEWORK



Peru

In order to improve the enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation through better natural resource governance and reduction of socio-environmental conflict in Peru, ABC-LA applied its core approach in its focal areas of Puno and Ucayali, as well as to national processes. Specifically, ABC-LA worked to build and strengthen vertical linkages among national, regional and local governments, and horizontal ones among governments and civil society, vulnerable groups and academia.

Through its work with ABC-LA, the National Water Authority (ANA) built linkages with rural communities in Puno and Ucayali. Collaboration with ANA helped ABC-LA identify good practices and tools to implement the project's activities around capacity building with local community leaders and socio-environmental conflict identification, analysis and reporting.

The project also worked with an intergovernmental working group comprised of: the National Office for Dialogue and Sustainability (ONDS), the Conflict Prevention and Management Unit for water-related conflicts within the National Water Authority (ANA), Office of Environmental Affairs (OAAS) and Office of Evaluation and Control (OEFA), both in the Ministry of the Environment (MINAM). The working group's goal was to build a unified approach to socio-environmental conflict; ABC-LA's contribution was to propose the use of environmental complaint forms already in use by OEFA as a socio-environmental conflict early warning mechanism, complemented by an informative pamphlet on who to approach if an environmental crime/offence takes place, which allows for more effective conflict early warning reporting. The indigenous federation AIDESEP's regional branch in Ucayali, Organización Regional de AIDESEP – Ucayali (ORAU), has already begun working with this tool.

ABC-LA also collaborated with MINAM and USAID Peru around their project with the Office for Natural Heritage Assessment. The collaboration validated tools and provided technical assistance to the National University of Ucayali, particularly around the implementation of flora and fauna inventories, and an economic valuation tool for environmental resources and services. Both these tools were part of the environmental baseline that was carried out in Ucayali, which was the first time this methodology was validated at a regional level by MINAM.

In close collaboration with AIDESEP through ORAU, and MINAM's National Forests and Climate Change project, ABC-LA was able to convene a working group that advocated the incorporation of biodiversity guidelines at a national level through the Ministry of Culture. The Vice-Ministry is currently working on country-wide guidance to incorporate these guidelines into community-level local governance plans, *planes de vida*, which include specific biodiversity conservation goals and have been piloted through ABC-LA in Ucayali.

There are a number of national and regional-level roll out opportunities for ABC-LA's approach:

The Regional Environmental Council of Ancash has shown interest in replicating ABC-LA's direct area of influence approach in the Huascaran National Park as a biodiversity conservation mechanism and socio-environmental conflict management tool.

The Regional Government of Ucayali has on-going efforts to roll out and institutionalize ABC-LA's sustainable land use and conservation plan within the Regional Environmental Authority. The goal is to use this as a land use planning tool and as a biodiversity conservation and monitoring mechanism.

ORAU's new technical office has been tasked with rolling out sustainable use and conservation plans with specific biodiversity goals and conflict management tools, based on geographic data thanks to the donation of ABC-LA's IT equipment.

ONDS and the Regional Government of Puno will be piloting a capacity building initiative for social conflict, using ABC-LA's vulnerable groups assessment and conflict mapping matrices.

Puno

ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Natural Resource Governance Capacity Building – Pronaturaleza
- Conflict Prevention Capacity Building – Pronaturaleza
- Conflict Prevention Capacity Building – National and Local Water Authority
- Vulnerable groups assessment – Pronaturaleza
- Analysis of informal gold mining – with the Better Gold Initiative

STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN PUNO

- National Offices for Dialogue – Puno (PCM-ONDS)
- Regional Department of Mining (DREM)
- Puno Office for Dialogue
- Mancomunidad of the Amazonian Puno (MMAP)
- Regional and Local Water Authorities (AAA)
- Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
- Peruvian National Parks System (SERNANP)
- Regional Government of Puno (GORE PUNO)
- Environmental Evaluation and Audit Agency (OEFA)
- Provincial Governments of Sandia and Carabaya
- District level governments
- Coffee cooperative (CECOVASA)
- Minining cooperative (CECOMSAP)

REGIONAL PROGRAMMING IN PUNO

ABC-LA laid the foundation for socio-environmental conflict prevention and natural resource governance for biodiversity conservation through participatory action planning and capacity building of local community leaders and governments.

PUNO ——— FOCUS DISTRICTS

PUNO, PERU

RESULTS

- **62,304 hectares** of biological significance in the Bahuaja Sonene National Park's area of influence under improved natural resource management
- **3 Municipal Biodiversity Action Plans** that support Puno's regional biodiversity goals
- **7 government units** (district, provincial, and regional) with institutions committing to improving natural resource management for biodiversity conservation
- **3 new initiatives** dedicated to resolving conflict in the Bahuaja Sonene National Park's area of influence and 5 districts with capacity to contribute to conflict early warning mechanisms
- **4** natural resource governance and conflict early warning **mechanisms** that include participation of vulnerable groups
- **1 targeted assessment** identifying the social and environmental impacts of informal mining and analyzing obstacles to formalization for better regulation
- **725 participants** trained in natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and conflict prevention for a total of 7,918 person-hours of training

ABC-LA Achievements and Results in Puno

In Puno, ABC-LA built the foundation for socio-environmental conflict prevention and natural resource governance for biodiversity conservation, through participatory action planning and capacity building of governments and local community leaders bordering the Bahuaja Sonene National Park.

Biodiversity conservation plans: ABC-LA convened a working group to develop municipal action plans to support Puno's Regional Biological Biodiversity Conservation plan**.** This working group was comprised of municipalities in the focal areas, Amazonian *mancomunidades* in Puno, regional government institutions, park authorities, and representatives of the Administrative Authority of Water (AAA), OEFA, ONDS and the Ombudsman Office. The working group was supported by ABC-LA and its partners in the development and updating of management tools for municipalities, in order to build and strengthen their capacity for natural resource governance. This technical assistance was completed with a proposal for a municipal ordinance that formalizes any new and improved management tools.

Through technical meetings and participatory workshops, the project produced a municipal-level action plan for biodiversity conservation in four districts by linking each action plan to the Regional Biological Biodiversity Conservation plan and the Concerted Development Plan for Puno. In doing so, ABC-LA built capacity in local government units for biodiversity conservation and social environmental conflict management. Furthermore, by developing these action plans through an inclusive multi-stakeholder approach, the project built and strengthened linkages among different levels of government, strengthening institutional capacity along the governance chain, and opening knowledge sharing routes.

The plans identified seven strategic objectives and 20 goals, actions steps, verification tools, and supporting institutions. Additionally, the working group put together a proposal for terms of reference for a Public Investment Project (PIP), part of the national network for public investment (SNIP, in Spanish). These proposals aim to secure the necessary funds to continue and sustain the implementation of these action plans. The actual implementation of PIPs falls under regional government jurisdiction.

Assessment of small-scale mining: In partnership with Better Gold Initiative (BGI), ABC-LA conducted an assessment to understand the barriers to formalization of informal mining activities in Puno, contributing to public private partnerships promoting regulation and better practices. This analysis aimed to promote more responsible gold mining in the Bahuaja Sonene National Park area of influence. The project presented the diagnostic's findings to over 300 participants in a regional event organized by the Regional Bureau of Energy and Mines (DREM-Puno) to promote clean mining technology.

Both the public-private partnership implementing the assessment and the event organized to socialize the findings are examples of how capacities for natural resource governance and addressing socio-environmental conflict can be strengthened through knowledge sharing and by bringing together a range of institutions and stakeholders. The assessment included a diagnostic of the current state of the formalization process in Puno, but also analyzed the effectiveness of the current licensing strategy and highlighted areas for improvement. The regional event validated the findings and turned the assessment into a management tool for DREM-Puno and for local artisanal and small-scale miners.

Capacity building in vulnerable communities: The project also focused on capacity building of community leaders and local government officials in coffee-producing rural communities (*comunidades campesinas)*. ABC-LA's vulnerable groups assessment in Puno identified coffee-producing communities as the most vulnerable in the region, mainly due to a radical reduction of coffee output in the last three years, forcing many farmers into informal and illegal mining and coca cultivation. Through training sessions and workshops building conflict early warning skills, the project improved these communities' capacity for socio-environmental conflict management. Additionally, ABC-LA developed capacity strengthening plans for four district governments bordering the Bahuaja Sonene National Park.

ABC-LA achieved the integration of socio-environmental conflict analysis into decision-making and management processes of rural communities. This was achieved in partnership with Pronaturaleza through participatory conflict mapping and integrating the results into conservation and sustainable use plans. ABC-LA and Pronaturaleza developed conflict mapping and capacity building methods to identify, analyze, report and mitigate socio-environmental conflicts, while simultaneously strengthening Pronaturaleza's capacity to apply this methodology elsewhere in the region. These methods gave local and regional governments access to social and environmental data with which to develop conflict management tools, which would then could be implemented through local stakeholders' increased skills and capacity and integrated into conservation and sustainable use plans.

Demarcation of areas of influence: ABC-LA expanded the biodiversity management area from the strict limits of the protected area (plus buffer zone) to an 'area of influence' approach. The Bahuaja Sonene National Park, in the north of the region, straddles the border between Puno and Madre de Dios, which means that by expanding the impact area to the area of influence, the protection of biodiversity and vulnerable groups is significantly increased.

Participants in a conflict identification workshop participate in a trust building and network awareness exercise in Puno, Peru.

Ucayali

ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Environmental baseline study and monitoring protocol – National University of Ucayali
- Natural Resource Governance Capacity Building – ABC-LA and ORAU
- Conflict Prevention Capacity Building – Regional Organization for AIDESEP Ucayali (ORAU)
- Conflict Prevention Capacity Building – National and Local Water Authority
- Vulnerable groups assessment – Pronaturaleza

STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN UCAYALI

- Peruvian Ministry of Environment (MINAM)
- Peruvian National Parks System (SERNANP)
- Environmental Evaluation and Audit Agency (OEFA)
- National and Local Water Authorities (ANA/AAA)
- Regional Government of Ucayali (GOREU)
- Provincial Government of Coronel Portillo
- Indigenous Communities in the Sierra del Divisor area of influence
- District level governments

REGIONAL PROGRAMMING IN UCAYALI

ABC-LA generated social and scientific data, management tools, and strengthened capacity to support decision-making and management of sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity in Ucayali, especially in and around the Sierra del Divisor National Park.

UCAYALI, PERU

RESULTS

- **658,480 hectares** of biological significance under improved natural resource management with the development of a conservation and sustainable use plan for the Sierra del Divisor National Park's area of influence
- **4 government units** (district, provincial, and regional) with institutions committing to improving natural resource management for biodiversity conservation
- **1 environmental monitoring** report produced by the National University of Ucayali
- **5 new initiatives** dedicated to resolving conflict in the Sierra del Divisor National Park's area of influence and 3 districts with capacity to contribute to conflict early warning mechanisms
- **7** natural resource governance and conflict early warning **mechanisms** that include participation of vulnerable groups
- **662 participants** trained in natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and conflict prevention for a total of 12,903 person-hours of training

ABC-LA Achievements and Results in Ucayali

ABC-LA generated social and technical-scientific data, created management tools, and strengthened capacity for decision-making and management of sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity in Ucayali, especially in and around the Sierra del Divisor National Park.

Environmental baseline and monitoring: ABC-LA partnered with the National University of Ucayali (UNU) to produce a record of environmental data in the area of influence of the recently established Sierra del Divisor National Park. The baseline's methodology followed a participatory approach that focused on building technical capacities among UNU faculty and students and strengthening local actors' capacity to participate in and influence natural resource governance. This methodology was developed by MINAM, but had not been implemented before ABC-LA's work in Ucayali.

The environment baseline and monitoring protocol had a number of interdependent outcomes: scientifically rigorously collected environmental data now serves as a benchmark for monitoring environmental impacts of human activities going forward and a supporting tool for socio-environmental conflict early warning systems; the partnership with UNU improved their scientific technical capacities and management skills which can be applied to on-going environmental monitoring and other research efforts; the use of government-developed methodologies built a local relationship with the national government; and testing, validating and honing the methodology served as a pilot that provided lessons for applicability in other regions of Peru. Furthermore, the project's approach of creating a multi-stakeholder environmental technical review board (*Mesa Tecnica*) to validate the baseline at each phase of implementation served to strengthen the data's validity while creating a lasting mechanism for evaluating future environmental scientific initiatives in Ucayali.

Environmental data was complemented with a social and economic baseline of vulnerability conditions in four indigenous communities in ABC-LA's focus districts in Ucayali. This evidenced-based data and analysis on conditions of vulnerable groups in and around the Sierra del Divisor area informed the park's conservation and sustainable use plan.

Biodiversity conservation plans: ABC-LA articulated clear and defined goals and commitments around biodiversity conservation, based on the above mentioned environmental data, at the local, regional and national levels. These were then included in action plans for biodiversity conservation (*Planes de Uso y Conservacion*) and into nation-wide guidelines incorporating biodiversity conservation into community-level governance plans (*planes de vida)*. These guidelines have been approved by the organization AIDESEP, which represents many indigenous federations, at the national level as a model to be applied to *planes de vida* across Peru.

Environmental and social data collection, using different methodologies, had been done before in Ucayali to little or no lasting effect. This was due to the lack of a roadmap or forward-looking action plan, which rendered such efforts as little more than static diagnostics. ABC-LA worked with ORAU (AIDESEP branch in Ucayali) to: 1) articulate well-defined goals and commitments around biodiversity conservation (a commitment to protect a concrete number of hectares by a certain deadline, for example); and 2) integrate these specific goals and commitments into community-level *planes de vida*. This approach had three effects: wider community ownership of the commitments due to the use of *planes de vida* as vehicles for implementation, mechanisms for local governments accountability for biodiversity conservation efforts, and greater awareness and commitment to protect local biodiversity.

Capacity building in vulnerable communities: The project integrated socio-environmental conflict analysis into decision-making and management processes of indigenous groups. This was achieved through participatory conflict mapping and integrating the results into a conservation and sustainable use plan. ABC-LA's analysis showed that local and regional governments in Ucayali were largely unable to

meaningfully address socio-environmental conflict, particularly as a result of lack of awareness and information on the nature and dynamics of this type of low-grade conflict. Government authorities more often than not had no data on social-environmental conflicts and so addressed them only insofar as they overlapped with other country-wide conflicts, such as illegal logging, coca cultivation or illegal mining. The project developed conflict mapping and capacity building methods to identify, analyze, report and mitigate socio-environmental conflicts. These methods supplied local and regional governments with previously non-existent data with which to develop conflict management tools (integrated into *planes de vida*), which would then could be implemented through local stakeholders' increased skills and capacity.

Additionally, capacity building taught officials how to visualize the relevance and prevalence of socio-environmental conflicts in a way that influences and shapes decision making. This included showing the correlation between social conflict and environmental degradation, as well as carrying out the first ever economic valuation of the use or non-use of natural resources and environmental services in Peru.

Demarcation of areas of influence: As in Puno, ABC-LA expanded the biodiversity management area from the strict limits of the Sierra del Divisor protected area (plus buffer zone), to an 'area of influence' approach. This meant that the area of influence is now subject to biodiversity conservation management plans. ABC-LA, collaboratively with the central government and the regional government of Ucayali, prepared the Sustainable Use and Conservation Plan for Biological Biodiversity in the Calleria River sub-basin, which is within the area of influence of the Sierra del Divisor National Park and the Isconahua Reserve. This management tool sets out guidelines, guidance and priority action points that ensure the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity in the area of influence, while being integrated into the conservation management framework of central, regional, local and indigenous authorities. The plan is currently with the regional government of Ucayali for its implementation.

Colombia

In order to improve the enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation through better natural resource governance and reduction of socio-environmental conflict in Colombia, ABC-LA applied its core approach and good practice, as set out below. In particular, ABC-LA worked to build and strengthen vertical linkages among national, regional and local governments, and horizontal ones, among governments and civil society, indigenous groups and academia. In doing so, not only were capacities built directly at a national level, but skills and capacity created at a regional level have been developed in a way that can be transferred throughout the country.

Among these efforts was the work done in Santander around the zoning of the ecologically significant Santurban Paramo, one of ABC-LA's focal areas. The project participated in the MADS' ongoing process for development and implementation of land use planning policies that are sensitive to socio-environmental conflict and the complex realities attached to them. ABC-LA supported the work done by the Research Centre for Biological Resources "Alexander Von Humbolt" on sustainable use and management of the paramos. Additionally, the project contributed to Colombia's Environmental Information System by proposing a citizen science initiative, through which local communities use innovative, robust and low-cost technology to monitor and manage socio-environmental conflict and biodiversity conservation.

Likewise, the work carried out in Caquetá can enrich several ongoing national-level processes and initiatives: *Proyecto Vision Amazonia*, a national strategy to eradicate deforestation in the Colombian Amazon by 2020 within the REDD+ framework; the implementation Colombia's Strategic Plan for Biological Diversity (2011-2020), the National Biodiversity Plan, and the strategy for an economic valuation approach to biodiversity could all benefit from the environmental baseline applied by ABC-LA; and the government's National Development Plan can be supported by the project's work on Artisanal Small-scale Gold Mining (ASGM) and socio-environmental conflict mitigation.

Looking at specific project activities, including environmental baselines with a focus on extractive activities, citizen science initiatives, water monitoring systems, game theory, conflict early warning training and an ASGM assessment, ABC-LA's results can strengthen the work being done by a number of nation-wide agencies. For instance:

- National Planning Department: development, monitoring and evaluation of assessments, policies and projects linked to investments in mines and energy
- MADS: Integral Management Policy of Biodiversity and Environmental Services, National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity, Strategic Ecosystems, *Vision Amazonia*, REDD+, Forest Reserves, Environmental Information Service
- Research Center for Biological Resources "Alexander Von Humbolt": Paramos and Life Systems project, technical assessments for zoning of paramos
- SINCHI Amazonian Center for Scientific Research: Ecosystems and Natural Resources program, Socio-environmental Dynamics program, Sustainability and Intervention program
- Institute for Hydrology, Meteorology, and Environmental Studies: Institutional Environmental Information System (SIA)
- Ministry of Energy and Mines: national plan for formalization of informal mining operations
- National Hydrocarbons Agency: Environmental Strategy, collation of environmental impact assessments for oil and gas projects into the Environmental Information System

Caquetá

ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Environmental baseline study and monitoring protocol – Amazon Institute for Scientific Research (SINCHI)
- Conflict Prevention Capacity Building – Patrimonio Natural
- Communication, Youth, and the Environment – Fundación Red Desarrollo y Paz del Caquetá (REDCaquetáPaz)
- Vulnerable groups assessment – Fundación Para la Conservación y Desarrollo Sostenible (FCDS)
- Analysis of informal gold mining – with the Better Gold Initiative

STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN CAQUETÀ

- Colombian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS)
- Regional Government of Caquetá
- CorpoAmazonia (regional environmental agency)
- University of the Amazon
- Municipal Governments

REGIONAL PROGRAMMING IN CAQUETÁ

ABC-LA generated social and environmental data and strengthened local capacity to contribute to an environmental governance and socio-environmental conflict monitoring system.

CAQUETÁ ——— FOCUS MUNICIPALITIES

CAQUETÁ, COLOMBIA

RESULTS

- **1 environmental monitoring report** produced by SINCHI, the Institute's first study related to extractive activities in the Amazon
- **1 regional government** with institutions committed to improving natural resource management for biodiversity conservation
- **3 new initiatives** dedicated to resolving conflict and 2 municipalities with capacity to contribute to conflict early warning mechanisms
- **6** natural resource governance and conflict early warning **mechanisms** that include participation of vulnerable groups
- **331 participants** trained in natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and conflict prevention for a total of 3,344 person-hours of training

ABC-LA Achievements and Results in Caquetá

The project generated social and environmental data and local capacity to contribute to an environmental governance and socio-environmental conflict monitoring system in the Amazonian department of Caquetá.

Based on the assessments at the national and regional levels, ABC-LA identified the need for two complementary interventions in Caquetá: first, strengthen local processes around socio-environmental conflict, natural resource management and biodiversity conservation; and through those processes, build a high-impact biodiversity conservation strategy, together with local government and academic institutions, private sector and civil society.

Capacity building for socio-environmental conflict management: ABC-LA mapped socio-environmental conflicts linked to extractive activities and developed an action plan to manage them in the short, medium and long term. This was carried out in the municipalities of Albania and San Jose de Fragua, in partnership with local NGOs Patrimonio Natural and REDCaquetaPaz. While the mapping and action planning components were being applied, ABC-LA developed an innovative methodology to: analyze and evaluate environmental governance and natural resource management in each of the focal areas, carry out an institutional gap analysis of response mechanisms to socio-environmental conflict, and establish early warming mechanisms of extractive activities' potential impacts on biodiversity. While there still isn't a conflict early warning mechanism in Caquetá, there are now clear methods and actions to be applied when addressing socio-environmental conflicts linked to the booming extractives sector.

Environmental baseline: In collaboration with the SINCHI Institute, a government-sponsored Amazonian research institution, the project generated an environmental baseline in areas affected by extractive activities; the first to be conducted by SINCHI. This baseline is now considered a national and regional benchmark of how to measure and monitor the impacts of extractive activities on biodiversity. A key characteristic of the baseline was the participation of indigenous groups and youth as co-researchers, and in doing so, the activity built awareness, skills and capacity among local and vulnerable stakeholders to measure the impacts of extractive activities on biodiversity, generate the geo-referencing system for the data collected, and carry out follow-up monitoring activities.

Youth capacity building: ABC-LA implemented capacity building activities with local youth around socio-environmental conflict identification and reporting. In partnership with REDCaquetaPaz, local youth were trained on how to use communications and media tools as a conflict management approach. This initiative not only served as a skills building exercise, but it also increased youth participation in the development of public policy and the resulting documentaries became powerful tools for raising awareness of environmental and biodiversity issues in the focal areas.

Natural resource governance: Building on the previous three activities, and on-going initiatives in Caquetá, ABC-LA contributed to the development of a Regional and Institutional Alliance for the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Biodiversity Conservation. This regional initiative includes the participation of academic and research institutions with local government, with the purpose of: providing input on public policies focused on protecting the region's ecosystems through participatory environmental management, building a financial mechanism that would secure funds to implement environmental management policies; implementing multi-stakeholder initiatives around environmental participation, management, and education; and establishing a regional observatory for knowledge sharing in the Amazon.

Youth trained in audio visual technology and identification of socio-environmental conflicts and biodiversity conversation collect footage for a documentary in Caquetá, Colombia.

Santander

ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Consensus building and citizen monitoring in the Paramo of Santurban – Universidad de los Andes (UniAndes)

Analysis of informal gold mining – with the Better Gold Initiative

STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN SANTANDER

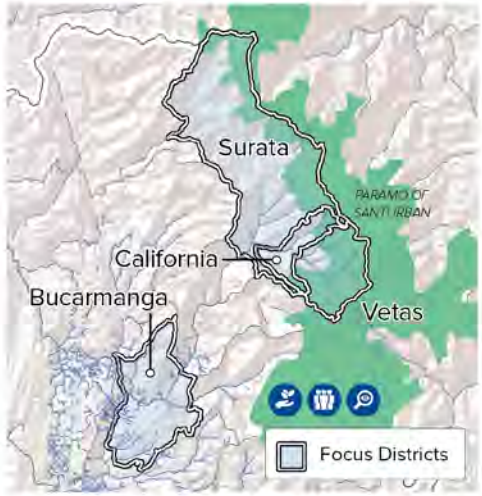
- Colombian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MADS)
- Regional Government of Santander
- Autonomous Regional Corporation for the Defense of the Bucaramanga Plateau (CDMB)
- Industrial University of Santander (IUS)
- University of St. Thomas (UST)
- Municipal Governments and Environmental Committees
- MIT's Center for Civic Media
- Public Lab

REGIONAL PROGRAMMING IN SANTANDER

ABC-LA built local and regional ownership of natural resource management and environmental monitoring of a biologically significant area impacted by extractive activities through citizen science and consensus building in the Surata River watershed.

SANTANDER ——— FOCUS MUNICIPALITIES

SANTANDER, COLOMBIA



RESULTS

- **68,900 hectares** of natural resources under improved management in the Surata River basin
- **1 environmental monitoring report** that measures water quality in the Surata River watershed produced through a citizen science initiative
- **3 local government plans** that include improved natural resource governance created with input from local communities
- **7 local government institutions** that demonstrate increased capacity for natural resource management
- **4 new initiatives** dedicated to resolving conflict in municipalities within and around the Paramo of Santurban
- **2** natural resource governance and conflict early warning **mechanisms** that include participation of vulnerable groups
- **288 participants** trained in natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and conflict prevention for a total of 1,490 person-hours of training

ABC-LA Achievements and Results in Santander

ABC-LA built local and regional ownership of natural resource management and environmental monitoring of a biologically significant area impacted by extractive activities through citizen science and consensus building in the Surata River watershed.

Together with strategic partners Universidad de los Andes (UniAndes) and Foro Nacional por Colombia, ABC-LA built on the progress and the momentum that started with the establishment of the National Park Santurban Paramo. This process opened up a previously closed-off and fragile social context to consensus building and new natural resource management tools.

Consensus building for watershed management: ABC-LA and UniAndes developed game theory workshops for community members to understand the local dynamics of ASGM in municipalities located within, or close to, the Santurban Paramo and to reach consensus around sustainable uses of their natural resources. These workshops offered a rigorous, structured and constructive approach for communities to build consensus around the use of water and their environment and catalyzed collective action for natural resource management and socio-environmental conflict mitigation. Through these workshops, participants reached previously unimaginable agreements around the background, processes and pressures that had often led to socio-environmental conflicts; sometimes even violent ones.

Citizen science monitoring: One of these agreements resulted in the development of a multi-actor platform for citizen science monitoring of water quality in the Surata River watershed, involving local stakeholders such as the University of Santa Tomas, the Industrial University of Santander, environmental committees in Vetas and California, and municipal water authorities, among others. This system allows local community members to measure and monitor water quality, with technical support from local university staff, using low-cost technology developed by Public Lab and MIT's Media Lab and adapted by engineering students at UniAndes. In collaboration with local water users, ABC-LA helped develop a technical-cultural definition of biodiversity and environmental quality that highlighted its importance and the need for its conservation and sustainable use.

This activity produced results on three levels: at an applied research level, through the generation of environmental data; at a local skills and capacity level, by linking community members with local academia so both parties can acquire and exercise technical-scientific skills in environmental monitoring; and at a social capital level, by involving local schools, youths and adults from different socio-economic backgrounds in the use of that data.

Natural resource governance: Building on the consensus reached during and after the game theory workshops, a multi-stakeholder group constructed a regional agenda for human and sustainable development for the municipalities located in the Surata River watershed. UniAndes and Foro Nacional led the process that resulted in local and regional agreements around natural resource management and land use governance in all municipalities within the Surata River watershed. This agenda laid out shared objectives, and challenges and steps to achieve them. The actions identified incorporate and allow for a holistic approach to natural resource management, socio-economic development, and land use planning in the Surata River watershed. In doing so, the biodiversity of the region is better managed and preserved, whilst the local communities are an integral part of the process.

Finally, and due in large part to the work carried out by Foro Nacional por Colombia, ABC-LA formulated sustainable land use planning working groups in the municipalities of Vetas and California, which are now considered the benchmark for land use planning in other municipalities. Each working group has developed individual action plans for the promotion and development of sustainable land use planning tools. Through these groups, communities in the Santurban Paramo have a place for dialogue and consensus building, as well as to identify ways forward in biodiversity conservation and natural resource management.

Gold miners in Santander, Colombia use clean technology during the extraction and processing processes to minimize their environmental impact on ecosystems and nearby communities.

ABC-LA SELECTED TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS AND VIDEOS

The following table provides links to the full documents produced through the ABC-LA project in collaboration with the referenced partners.

Partner	Document Title and PDF Link
ProNaturaleza	Gobernanza de recursos naturales e implementación de Alerta Temprana de Conflictos en Puno, Perú
Patrimonio Natural	Gestión de conflictos socio-ambientales en Caquetá, Colombia
UNU	Línea base ambiental en Ucayali Volumen I: Línea base biológica
UNU	Línea base ambiental en Ucayali Volumen II: Estudio de calidad del agua en el Rio Abujao
UNU	Línea base ambiental en Ucayali Volumen III: Valoración Económica de Bienes Ambientales
ORAU	Lineamientos de los planes de vida articulados a la gestión de desarrollo regional y la biodiversidad
ORAU	Gobernanza de recursos naturales e implementación de Alerta Temprana de Conflictos en Ucayali, Perú
ORAU	Bajo la Lupa: Base para plan de vida de la comunidad Santa Rosita de Tamaya Tipishca
SINCHI	Línea base ambiental en Caquetá, Colombia
SINCHI	Resumen de la línea base ambiental en Caquetá, Colombia
REDCaquetáPaz	Documental Solano RedCaquetaPaz
REDCaquetáPaz	Documental Albania RedCaquetaPaz
REDCaquetáPaz	Documental San Jose del Fragua RedCaquetaPaz
FCDS	Estudio de Poblaciones Vulnerables en Caquetá
FCDS	Bajo la Lupa Estudio de Grupos Vulnerables en Caquetá
UniAndes	UniAndes Acción Colectiva en Suratá Reporte de Fase I
UniAndes	Manual de Monitoreo Ciudadano de Calidad del Agua en la sub-cuenca del Rio Surata
UniAndes	UniAndes Acción Colectiva en Suratá Reporte de Fase I
UniAndes	Monitoreo ciudadano en la sub-cuenca del rio Surata
ProNaturaleza	Estudio de Poblaciones Vulnerables en Perú
ProNaturaleza	Bajo La Lupa Estudio de Grupos Vulnerables Perú
BGI Puno	Diagnóstico y Análisis de los Procesos de Formalización de minas en Puno
BGI Puno	Bajo La Lupa Minería en Puno, Perú
BGI Puno	Under the Magnifying Glass: Analysis of the Formalization Process of Small-Scale Gold Mining in Puno
BGI Colombia	Estudio de Minería Artesanal y de Pequeña Escala en Colombia
BGI Colombia	Bajo La Lupa Minería Artesanal y de Pequeña Escala Colombia
ABC-LA	ABC-LA Project Video with English subtitles
ABC-LA	ABC-LA Internal Bulletins 1-17
ABC-LA	ABC-LA Activity Summary Sheets

4. FUTURE PROGRAMMING, BEST PRACTICES, AND LESSONS LEARNED

As summarized above and detailed in the accompanying annexes, ABC-LA had notable achievements during its base period: improving institutional and community capacity to define and report emerging conflict, increasing participation of vulnerable groups, improving environmental data and monitoring, and improving management tools and processes for natural resource management. This laid the foundation for improving institutional and community capacity for addressing socio-environmental conflict and increasing capacity for natural resource management. However, work remains in focal areas to reach the project's anticipated five year goal: improved enabling conditions for biodiversity conservation through better natural resource governance and reduction of socio-environmental conflicts, in a context where threats to biodiversity and vulnerable communities will increase as extractive activities become more expansive. Results and knowledge gained during the project can be directly applied in future USAID and other donor programming in Peru and Colombia through the following approaches in each of the project's focal areas.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

Future programming in Puno can build upon ABC-LA's work through the following actions:

Roll out and institutionalize the use of sustainable land use planning tools (*planes de uso y conservacion)* by regional governments. Currently there are three types of protected natural areas in Peru: Natural Protected Areas (nationally-run), Regional Conservation Areas (regionally-run), and Private Conservation Areas (privately-run). The implementation of sustainable land use plans as a biodiversity conservation policy, as opposed to the current policy of continuously creating RCAs with limited or no funds, would secure a sustainable way of both securing and expanding conservation efforts throughout Peru.

Finish implementing the environmental baseline methodology. There are three envisioned stages in the process: first, the environmental baseline data gathering; second, carrying out an economic valuation of the environmental services in the area; third, monitoring and revising the methodology based on the findings after three years. ABC-LA and Pronaturaleza were able to implement half the methodology for both the first and second phases.

Create and consolidate a multi-stakeholder mechanism for socio-environmental conflict reporting and management. While municipal and community representatives have demonstrated capacity to identify and report conflicts, regional mechanisms for receiving reports and taking action are weak. In addition to coordinating with the newly established regional Office for Dialogue and Harmony for a conflict early warning mechanism, ABC-LA is providing office equipment to help strengthen the office as it creates its 2016 development plan.

Work in land use planning and land tenure and property rights (LTPR). While LTPR was included in the scope of the project, delays in implementation and ambitious timeframes for all project interventions meant that this issue was only limitedly addressed in Puno (and Ucayali).

Validate ABC-LA's model with the private sector. This refers to industrial mining in Peru and oil and gas companies in Colombia. As with LTPR, formal extractive industries were an integral part of the scope of the project but could not be fully addressed during this phase of the project.

Future programming in Ucayali can build upon ABC-LA's work through the following actions:

Further develop and replicate tools: apply sustainable use plans and *planes de vida* within Ucayali.

Finish applying environmental baseline methodology: carry out the second round of environmental assessments (part of the environmental baseline). UNU is in the process of securing counterpart funding to continue assessments for the next three years.

Bridge the gap between national and sub-national government agencies' approach to, and **management of, biodiversity conservation:** build on the relationships established with national government agencies on the one hand, and local/regional government institutions on the other, to unify and strengthen biodiversity conservation through natural resource governance and socio-environmental conflict management.

Create and consolidate a multi-stakeholder mechanism for socio-environmental conflict reporting and management. The original project-identified regional mechanism for conflict early warning proved to be weak and not in a current state to receive conflict reports. Through project assistance, ORAU has become an appropriate mechanism for receiving reports from the indigenous leaders trained in Ucayali and then reporting them to the corresponding government authority.

Approach other extractive industries: building on the knowledge and experience with small-scale artisanal mining, work with oil, gas and industrial mining companies to address biodiversity conservation and socio-environmental conflict.

Future programming in Caquetá can build upon ABC-LA's work through the following actions:

- **Influence Caquetá's 2016-2020 development strategy:** local municipalities and the department of Caquetá are working on the department's development strategy for 2016-2020 between January and May 2016. Influencing this process in a way that includes and builds on some of ABC-LA's successes is a unique opportunity to ensure the sustainability of ABC-LA's work. This effort would benefit greatly from the ownership local communities and institutions have over ABC-LA's outputs and outcomes.
- **Ensure tools and methods are replicated by ABC-LA's partners and others:** partners such as SINCHI or REDCaquetaPaz are well positioned to replicate these activities in other municipalities in Caquetá and beyond.
- **Include the Regional and Institutional Alliance in Caquetá's development strategy:** this Alliance should become an integral part of Caquetá's biodiversity conservation strategy by sitting within the "sistema general de regalias" (government agency), and form the basis for an environmental systems payment mechanism. Partners in this effort should include CORPAMAZONIA, SINCHI, UniAmazonia, and the international donor community.
- **Create a department-level conflict early warning mechanism**, which includes the municipality of Solano and the other eight municipalities in the Amazonian Piedmont region of Caquetá. This implies replicating the baseline methodology throughout the Piedmont region, particularly in the areas where oil fracking is to take place in the future, or where mining already takes place. Separately, work remains to be done around land use planning, including a capacity building and policy strengthening strategies

Future programming in Santander can build upon ABC-LA's work through the following actions:

- **Sustaining the citizen science initiative:** Local communities and academia have made a commitment to continue using, maintaining and expanding the citizen science initiative to monitor water quality. Once the environmental services payments have been set up for the region, there are

plans to include this monitoring tool as part of the package. Likewise, local stakeholders have agreed on the critical role this tool plays in the setting up of a regional environmental observatory for the Surata River watershed.

- **Strengthen consensus:** The dialogue and consensus building spaces that have been set up must be maintained and deepened, so that the progress obtained so far gives way to a more sustained and sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity.
- **Address gaps in environmental and social data:** These include information on water and land ecosystems, such as flora, fauna and soil. There is also a need for more social data regarding socio-environmental conflicts. A gap analysis around local actors' capacity needs is also missing in order to formulate and implement holistic biodiversity conservation plans in the Santurban Paramo. This could then feed into the Regional Agenda mentioned above.
- **Build conflict response capacity:** Based on further socio-environmental data collection, Santander also needs to establish a regional-level conflict response mechanism built on collectively-agreed upon action plans.

BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The following provides summary of lessons learned through ABC-LA experience in project's focal areas of Peru and Colombia that should be taken into consideration in future programming.

Peru

- **Community-level governance plans** ("Planes de Vida") and the processes for developing them provide an effective means for engaging vulnerable groups, for deepening and broadening understanding of biodiversity along, and for improving conservation and sustainable use into local and regional management plans.
- **Expanding the focus of conservation of "protected areas"** to an approach that incorporates greater consideration of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity resources in "areas of influence" helps improve the integration of efforts to improve biodiversity conditions by expanding engagement, resource mobilization and actions. The ABC-LA approach that expanded the scope to "Areas of Influence" helped engage and involve a wider range of key actors and institutions – from communities and district levels up through the provincial, regional and national levels. Encouraging and supporting the development of sustainable use plans and linking these with the "areas of influence" approach led to considerable increases in total land area benefiting from improved biodiversity conservation management. In addition, fostering improved linkages between community level governance plans (*planes de vida*) and sustainable use planning helps to integrate sources of government revenues, while promoting better engagement of vulnerable groups.
- **Strengthening vertical and horizontal linkages**: The project worked with local partners with strong ties to regional or national organizations or institutions, which fostered linkages not only among diverse local stakeholders but also with key actors from the local to the national and even trans-national levels. Doing so improved the feasibility that successful approaches could be replicated or more readily scaled up, as evidenced by the case of integrating explicit considerations of biodiversity conservation in *planes de vida* processes.
- **Employing government approved methodologies** for conducting environmental assessments helps to strengthen vertical linkages, garner government buy-in, and hastens official recognition and validation of results. Generating officially recognized results provides the added benefit of permitting stakeholders to use corresponding data, analysis and findings to inform, advocate and influence government policy, planning and resource allocation.

- **Improved approaches are needed to address problems and impacts of informal gold mining.** The issuance of Environmental Management Licenses, referred to by its Spanish acronym "IGAC", has been celebrated as an advance in reducing informal gold mining operations but has proven to be insufficient to the needs and largely unsuccessful in attracting significant numbers of gold miners. Government approaches need to be expanded and improved beyond better regulation in order reduce harmful practices resulting in negative impacts on fragile ecosystems and neglected social and other impacts on vulnerable communities including in places like Madre de Dios and Puno.

Colombia

- **Integrated and holistic development planning** for improving biodiversity and environmental conditions should more actively incorporate considerations of socio-environmental conflict dynamics. Government and donor supported efforts to improve enabling environments, if only for conservation, should seek to mainstream conflict management and mitigation approaches and tools at the national, departmental and local levels. Policies and practices associated with extractive activities and corresponding socio-environmental factors figure prominently in the broader conflict dynamics and context, and should be explicitly incorporated into support for the peace process and programming beyond the signing of the anticipated accord. Socio-environmental considerations should also be more purposefully integrated into existing or emerging locally based observation or conflict early warning mechanisms as part of the peace process, reconciliation efforts and to guard against backsliding.
- **Technical and scientific data** on key environmental and social dynamics, including those associated with extractive activities can be instrumental in helping to build understanding, shape a common vision about challenges and forge greater local and regional consensus on approaches and means for addressing them. Efforts to address data gaps, as shown through the initiative with UniAndes in Santander, are inexpensive and not particularly complex. The outcomes there demonstrate that such efforts contribute considerable value for informing citizens, communities and public policy. The evidenced-based findings and analysis helps build confidence and consensus.
- **Engaging under-represented, vulnerable or marginalized groups**: Partnering with academic communities and employing innovative use of communications technology such as the low cost sensors to monitor water quality in the Surata watershed, promoted greater youth engagement. Both the processes and outcomes provided citizens with better access to information on prevailing environmental conditions directly relevant to communities with deep concerns about contamination in a region with extensive gold mining. Partnering with indigenous communities and associations and fostering linkages between them and applied research institutes such as SINCHI has helped foster improved collaboration and highlighted the value and respect for traditional and local knowledge in applied research efforts.

CONCLUSIONS

There is growing awareness among critical actors about the urgency for better addressing challenges to biodiversity such as those posed by extractive activities. Initiatives like ABC-LA and other such efforts that promote integrated approaches should be encouraged along with efforts to define a more holistic consideration of both threats and opportunities.

Complex challenges often require multifaceted responses along with the recognition that there are no single or simple solutions. Inductive efforts or bottom-up approaches like ABC-LA that work at the sub-national levels are a viable means for exploring innovations and piloting initiatives. Where clear national leadership is lacking, local engagement can provide a viable alternative for engendering positive outcomes. These results can contribute to a demonstration effect and engender efforts that can be adapted, replicated and scaled up.

Ideally both national and local level leadership can be engaged to align efforts to improve policies and practices that reduce the negative environmental and social impacts associated with extractive activities. This is as true for private sector partners and civil society as much as government actors. As there is no single nor simple solution to resolving the challenges ABC-LA sought to address, there is no single stakeholder acting alone that can achieve success associated with promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; fostering solutions to sources and symptoms of social conflict; and fosters engagement and inclusion of citizens and communities, especially vulnerable or historically marginalized groups.

There is a clear need and an opportunity to promote better alignment among donors interested in addressing environmental and social challenges associated with extractive activities. In addition to USAID, the official donor agencies from Switzerland, Germany, Canada and Australia are among bilateral development partners which have committed resources to addressing issues on which ABC-LA was focused. Private sector actors, including national and international level extractive sector industry associations such as the International Centre for Mining and Minerals (ICMM) have demonstrated that they are ready, willing and able to join with other stakeholders at the local, national and international levels to develop and apply solutions. Finally, the engagement of national and local universities and applied research institutes in collaborative partnerships helps engage an informed and well-regarded constituency that helps to broaden and deepen efforts to build awareness, understanding and capacity; provide independent and evidenced based analysis; and foster and sustain collaborative efforts necessary for achieving positive impacts.

Despite the constraints and challenges associated with the ambitious scope of ABC-LA, the project was able to engender important processes and results within the limited duration of the project. Ultimately, consideration of the value or success of ABC-LA beyond project specific outcomes and results in the focal areas rests with the degree to which lessons learned, assumptions tested, and approaches piloted can prove helpful to informing future efforts. There is an opportunity for USAID to assume a leading role in helping to align and harmonize efforts to reduce the adverse environmental and social impacts associated with extractive activities and to do so through alliances and partnerships with other donors, public and private sector partners including governments at the national and local levels, and stakeholders from civil society and extractive industry.