

Community-based monitoring of fog capture and biodiversity at Loma Alta, Ecuador enhance social capital and institutional cooperation

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Abstract. Monitoring of fog capture and bird communities helped to build social capital for conservation at Loma Alta, Ecuador and encouraged the local community to protect 3000 hectares of tropical forest. Data collected during monitoring were used to facilitate action and cooperation at local, regional, national, and international levels for conservation of biodiversity in western Ecuador, including the designation of an Important Bird Area in the region. Through involvement with the monitoring efforts, local people became more aware of the value of ecosystem services, learned about local birds and their conservation status, became familiar with ecotourism, and began to include conservation of biodiversity with sustainable development planning in their community. The context of monitoring, the objectives and participants, field methods, impacts in terms of conservation action, and the costs and benefits of the two monitoring initiatives are described.

One contribution of 16 to a Special Issue of *Biodiversity and Conservation* 'Monitoring matters: examining the potential of locally-based approaches'.

Issue: Volume 14, Number 11

Date: October 2005

Pages: 2695 - 2707