



the small world foundation

ANT MAKES US WAIT (AGAIN)

This past June 15th, the last virtual meeting took place between representatives of the Colombian National Land Agency (ANT), leaders of San Martin de Amacayacu and the TICOYA reserve (newsletter 97). To discuss and plan the logistics and activities of the ANT visit to the TICOYA indigenous reserve, a new meeting was planned for July 2nd. Unfortunately, this meeting was cancelled by the ANT and until the moment of this writing, there has not been any proposal for a new date...

UDCA VISITS SAN MARTIN

Since 2008, the Colombian Javier Diaz has been involved with the initiatives of San Martin de Amacayacu (newsletters 22 and 23). For years now, Javier has been a teacher at the Faculty of Environmental Engineering and Geography of the Colombian UDCA university. Several

times in the past, his students have visited San Martin (newsletters 79, 86 and 93). Between last August 8-15th, finally another work visit was possible again by a small group of students and the faculty director.

Javier and Lady: "Because of Covid-19, we could not visit San Martin for almost two years and we received many messages from the community. We understood that over there in the rainforest, medicinal plants were being used to combat symptoms similar to those of Covid-19. It was amazing to understand that the community went through the pandemic well. Our goal still is to contribute to San Martin's process of community land planning. An important aspect of this is the identification of threats that can influence this process, such as for example erosion caused by rain or the





river. Erosion can cause soil instability, which leads to whole areas of land to become unsuitable for the construction of houses or other infrastructure. For these areas, a new destination can be found, such as green zones, for example, where birds and other animals can find a home.

The community is thinking about the best way to grow and to satisfy the demand for land for different purposes. If there is a final agreement for an area of land, we like to measure and describe it and register the situation in geographic information systems (GIS). This work requires a lot of dialogue with the community inhabitants and a drone helps us to present the data in maps. All this digital information can be easily adjusted according to changes in the situation. The environmental guard of San Martin has been essential in the reality of the conversations with the community inhabitants and to identify the areas of land that were being talked about in meetings or interviews. Especially those inhabitants of over 60 years of age have a clear opinion about how the community should develop.



The effects of climate change express themselves in different ways in the Amazon. The clearest effect is the lack of precision about the beginning and end of the rainy and dry seasons. Whereas that moment in the past used to be quite easy to predict, it can have a difference of months between **consecutive** years in the present. This affects the activities of daily life in the community enormously. For example, an agricultural field is best started at

the beginning of the dry season. If the rain unexpectedly happens to continue for another number of weeks, chances of getting plant diseases are much higher and the yield will surely be reduced. The presence and amount of fish in the river is directly related to water levels and quality: Very murky waters for weeks (due to heavy rainfall) and ongoing very low water levels lead to less catch. An unfrequent very high water level can also be called a blessing because it gives seeds the rare opportunity to reach areas of flooded land where they normally have no access to

(floating or transported by birds or fish). Sudden enormous rainfall can facilitate erosion and damage and unstabilize the river banks dramatically. Extremely long droughts lead to scarcity of suitable drinking water for the households, who then have to apply different methods to treat river water for consumption. All these factors are important to identify in the framework of the land planning process in San Martin de Amacayacu. UDCA students will continue this contribution. The next visit has been planned for half October”.



Would you like to support the Tikuna indigenous community of San Martin together with the Small World Foundation, and stay informed about local developments in this remote corner of Colombia?

Please transfer 15 euro yearly (or more!) to the following bank account in the Netherlands:

Account name: Stichting SMALL WORLD FOUNDATION

SWIFT/BIC Code: RABONL2U

IBAN code: NL28 RABO 0132 7262 03

Or check out the online contribution module on: www.smallworldfoundation.org/?page_id=68

Please DON'T FORGET TO INFORM US ABOUT YOUR NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS!!

(smallworldfoundation@hotmail.com)

The contributions will be spent exclusively on the development and realization of local initiatives in San Martin de Amacayacu in the Colombian Amazon. No wages are being paid to anyone. The expenses will be mentioned as much as possible in the newsletters.

For more information about this initiative, please check the website:

www.smallworldfoundation.org.