FACULTAD LATINOAMERICANA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES SEDE ECUADOR

PROGRAMA DE ESTUDIOS SOCIOAMBIENTALES
CONVOCATORIA 2009-2011

TESIS PARA OBTENER EL TÍTULO DE MAESTRÍA EN ESTUDIOS
SOCIOAMBIENTALES

Defined Territories and Spaces in Transition: Local Perspectives on Environment in
the *Baños de Agua Santa* Canton, Tungurahua - Ecuador

ANDREA MARIE RAZOOK

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For the unification of the baneña population and the surrounding towns to reaffirm the strength that they possess to avoid the imposition any other activity that endangers the environment and biodiversity of the area and affects the potential harmonious development of human beings with nature.

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Abstract

The environmental sphere is singular in its indirect and direct vulnerability to nearly every form of human activity and thought: development theory, social inequalities, global climate change, urban/rural, and human geography. Development and conservation have inhabited the global public arena for the past 15 to 20 years, but the specific forms in how it has changed local territorial occupation has recently entered into debate.

By focusing on the dynamics found in local governance and local environmental governance spaces a key pattern arose; the act of using local, and natural resources, as a platform for national energy agendas. Thus, a powerful trend has developed in the Ecuadorian Amazon and the *Baños de Agua Santa* Canton involving the physical and social conversion of natural landscapes into hydroenergetic frontiers.

There have been numerous debates about how exactly environmental and conservationist paradigms are formed. Using a community and municipality as the focus of a case study I conducted research on how the specific relationship between local governance structures affect environmental dynamics in *Baños de Agua Santa* located on Tungurahua province.

Environmental space, due to the need to reconcile often conflicting interests would be suitable to put the governance test, trying to motivate a real effort to avoid expressions of interest such as these that prevent the fulfillment of environmental objectives required by the government and society.

CHAPTER I
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Introduction

Environmental studies have been theorized and re-theorized over the years not only from place-based analysis, but also social theory of nature in general ranging from ecological Marxism, political ecology, and ecofeminism. The formidable task of undertaking these kinds of studies have been to articulate the natural as constitutive of the social, and vice versa, unpacking these relations for a better understanding of the political, ecological, and cultural.

From the recent literature surrounding social environmental studies, one can learn to recognize nature-culture hybrids— people, organisms, and things that are more complex than the distinctions between human and nonhuman suggest. This idea is useful for understanding the production and effects of new biotechnologies and commodities, which can lead to new political identities, tools, and strategies.

The social dynamics that produce environmental degradation and resource depletion would remain under theorized, or worse, ignored, as is argued, without a "new ecological paradigm" to displace traditional and stagnant notions that express more of a short-sighted understanding of the more millenarian dynamic between society and nature. Modern environmental problems hinge on its' own degradation through the consequences of human action i.e. global warming to bacterial water contamination, most of these events have become "knowable" only through particular scientific practices. Even for those issues that first become public through detection by those who are not professional scientists (e.g. people living in areas more susceptible to global warming, chemical spills, etc.), science has become a contested site for problem definition, problem framing, and risk adjudication, with tremendous legal, financial, and political ramifications.

With this in mind there are other ways in which to attempt to analyze the social and environment complex. This thesis has utilized governance and communication networks to present how local discourse affects environmental and political perceptions.

The first chapter will address the theoretical framework of this research based in theories of environmental complexity, Kooiman's interactive governance, and habermasian communicative capacity.

Next, the conditions in which actors are able to express and act upon their interest within the local and global environmental governance system is addressed, and at the end the first chapter, the methodological approach is defined.

The second chapter presents socioeconomic, geographic and environmental information of the Canton *Baños de Agua Santa* and addresses a convergence analysis in space, environment, and governance with a focus on the urban city of *Baños* and the rural *Río Verde* parish.

The third chapter addresses local perceptions of natural resources and conservation, and three main social and environmental phenomena are analyzed: Uncontrolled tourism vs. the Ecotourism pretense, the proliferation of hydroelectric projects, and the conservation of natural spaces vs. the appearance of hydroenergetic frontiers.

In the fourth chapter, the conditions for local environmental governance are presented. The main components are extracted from the use of local environmental mechanisms and municipality-community communication networks as acts of participation in the local political system.

Finally, we discuss the conclusions concerning the relationship between government capacities and the specific actions done by the municipality's local system as determinants in the potential in environmental management.

Theoretical Framework

Environmental complexity

Regarding the theoretical framework the approaches of some governance theory proponents are reviewed with a deeper basis on the interactional governance theory to understanding the relationship between the act of governing, public action, and the interaction processes communication between stakeholders. The theoretical guidelines have also considered the perceptions and representations of nature / environment, and have continued theoretical assumptions from Political Ecology.

The hallmark of living in the so called post-modern age rotates around the tendency to fragment and break apart all academic disciplines in the pursuit of understanding and seeking of knowledge. Thus, it leads to division and specialization of knowledge, which constantly presents concepts such as "objectives", "universal facts", "the real indivisible truth" and the explanation of the "how" and "why" of things. Many experiential aspects of research and academia have remained on the on the sidelines to theory based approaches. The "why", "how" "where", and many questions have been lost in modern social science research. Experiential studies stand out to be a specific skill set that has the ability to adapt and change over indeterminate stretches of time where the information gathered is valid for weeks, months, years, decades, or even centuries.

According to Mexican economist Enrique Leff, knowledge for knowledge's sake does not need to question the "objectivity", "universality" and "truth." However, in contrast, environmental crises, epistemological social, political, economic studies require a rethinking in the social and hard sciences, which increasingly do not question theoretical assumptions[1].The social world ends up hiding the causes, using economistic and instrumental rationality that has shaped modernity. This "naturalized" world-view produces ideas such as "progress", "development", "individual", and "property" that

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[1]The environmental crisis, as outlined by the political ecology is the visible expression of the civilization crisis caused by their ways of knowing (epistemological bases of which are in modernity), then the criticism should be given in, to and from their own bases. These bases include the social and legal norms and the interaction between the two.

ignore the diversity, multiplicity, and heterogeneity of all possible visions (Leff, 2002). The "universalization" of modern rationality is clearly a product of a hegemonic form of knowledge that deletes and removes any other knowledge bases, skills, and worldviews.

Environmental complexity does not occupy a single space for interpretation and analysis. In social sciences and the environmental complexity is not something revolutionary, but the effort to combine the two techniques, it is something new. Environmental complexity has emerged as an issue through modernity and as a worldwide recognition. According to Leff, environmental complexity is seen in the context of a crisis of knowledge, the objectification of the world, the intervention of knowledge about nature and the emergence of hybrid entities that go beyond the traditional sense of the role of the biological and social sciences. There are privileged places to observe the interface between the crisis of knowledge between the biological and social, as in the case of protected areas. Breaks and disconnects in the perception of nature and construction of space, not only arise in a context of strong economic pressure that leads to modernization, but also in political and legal.

It can be postulated that there is a crisis of modernity and an inherent is violence that rises with the loss of political discourse concerning the whole and not the minority in power. Local and global environmental conflicts are on a polarizing trend and become rhetorical speeches across social, political, and economic classes. Indeed, the environmental sphere has the advantage and burden of encompassing every facet of what it means to live in society. The problem is that a particular conflict is unlikely to lead to a resolution adopted during negotiation and is challenged by one party (Fontaine, 2005). If the environmental crisis is the visible expression of the civilization crisis caused by ways of knowing (the epistemological bases from which modernity is structured), then the criticism should be given in relation to and from these own bases that include social norms and laws, and their mutual interaction.

These epistemological bases of social norms and laws are the foundation for what has been called the great divide in modern thought, nature and society. There is a

tendency to separate what is organic and artificial, what is socially and culturally. Thus, this division can be observed in studies in the field of conservation and biodiversity as a break between the two areas. According to Escobar, we have to use view biodiversity as a construction where it joins a powerful interface through concepts, policies, and above all cultures and ecologies, which are contested and negotiated (Escobar 1998: 75). The nature and natural forms must be understood as actors with a materiality in conjunction with society (Goldman & Schurman, 2000). The worldwide transformation of biology is generating a variety of forms of nature (Escobar, 1998). The crisis is the crisis nature of the identity of nature. In this sense, nature does not exist in a single plane, exists in the physical and biological areas, and also exists in spaces invented by humans. It is necessary to consider therefore the political and economic transformations, which in turn influence the events in the history of social nature (Escobar, 1998).

In this context, we have to ask the central question, what are the social, material and symbolism of natural spaces? These natural spaces have gained several definitions over the decades, protected areas, green areas, preserves, reserves, and undisturbed habitats. How people live in, around, and among such a variety of natural areas yet at close range with urban areas in the same Canton? Insight can be provided in terms of environmental impact and the forms environmental perceptions present in the local cantonal populations. The argument has been made since the advent of environmentalism that protected areas are important because they are a way of seeing, understanding, and (re) producing the social world but on a more balanced level (Chan et al., 2007). As such, they are places rich in cultural production and social interaction because they exist within the urban and rural continuum categories that we have been accustomed to denote to modern human populations and settlements. Part of the problem, is that people considers environment as primarily aesthetic in nature. Most of us live in one building and work in another, and almost every other structure in a city, town, or community, is essentially decoration for our lives.

Governance and Governability: Implications for local environmental governance

The idea of governance is both internal and external to the society in question. Foucault stated that this idea is internal and external to the main embodiment of overall power, the State, since it is the tactics of government which make possible the constant definition and redefinition of what it is for the state and what not, what is public versus private, and so on (Foucault, 2006). This constant redefinition of what is in its jurisdiction calls for the implementation of different strategies for the level of each sector represented in the government: the state, municipalities and communities. Therefore, the implementation of a regional dialogue on governance would help to bring the complexity of the issue to a modern audience and build momentum for the exchange between local governments and the integration of multiple stakeholders (government, communities, private sector, NGOs, etc.).

Good environmental governance (just like principles for general good governance) is not the same for all those "players" involved (the state, society, nation-states, communities etc.), new ways need to be created and in turn new spaces to allow for the identification of new social actor. Indeed, if governance is a game for all intensive purposes, new players are now required to retire the old playbook and create a new a set of rules. Consequently, the unpacking of views of countryside and its management has to be sensitive to multiple identities, values and perceptions. Policy-makers recognize that citizens have legitimate rights and responsibilities to contribute to decision-making processes but they are often extremely cautious about using public perceptions to inform policy. This is due to a presumed lack of public knowledge and expertise in rural matters particularly from and urban context (Stren, 2001); and the notion that experts are best suited to interpret complex issues in a consistent way.

External social actors will have to eventually play a greater role in generating dialogue between communities and the municipality in political decision-making in conservation and economics. External by no means coming from outside of the canton itself; it means rather the inclusion of social actors who have previously been excluded from the governmental discussion, small non-touristic oriented businesses, public schools, private schools, residents from neighboring communities, and parishes. Further

progress in the expansion of social media, like radio programs, newspapers, and online discussion forums could connect rural communities to implement projects and improve their economical activities and also support conservation. It is expected to have more weight on the power play in the canton, and creating more balance. Other initiatives for participation must give way to express them and pursue the interests of communities and organizations, and the creation of a municipal monitoring body.

Indeed, according to Le Wales (Le Galès, 1995), "the term" governance "suggests (...) functions and actions of government, but without the idea of uniformity, rationality, or standardization. The term "urban governance" implies a greater diversity in the organization of services, greater flexibility, a variety of actors, including a transformation of the ways that local democracy might take, and takes into account citizens and consumers, and complexity of new forms of citizenship. "

New forms of citizenship affect the governing process and have been a concern that easily goes back to the classics such as Plato and Aristotle against a topic that has captured the attention of philosophers, political scientists, sociologists, among others. The configuration of the definitions of "act of governing" (rendering process and participation, decision-making process, accountability, legitimacy, efficiency, justice, etc..) These act of governing are capable of being analyzed and this analysis can be used as a parameter for assessing the governance process.

The act of governance is a process that involves at least two major groups (the rulers and the ruled) and it is about the role and character of each other where there are strong theoretical differences[2]. Equally with the acts, the role of the governed has undergone various interpretations. However, despite the differences in the conceptualizations of the role of government and citizens, there is a common point to be highlighted and the dynamics of interaction implies the act of governing. In this sense the analysis of the interaction between rulers and ruled is an evaluation parameter of the process of government (Medina, 2010).

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[2]We understand an act of government by political system articulated set of beliefs and values

Intense debate has been sparked over the governance concept, it generates a large amount of literature using the term in different ways, also denoting different dimensions of the governance process or by applying the concept to analyze a number of different situations. This process obviously was not without a variety of meanings and confusions. In this regard Camou (2001) highlights the vagueness about the concept, while similarly mentioning the lack of specificity "as this term is merely a label for a poorly defined set of political, rather than precise analytical concept (Camou, 2001)."

Although several authors have addressed this subject makes a distinction between governance and governance based on the "tracking" historical-semantic roots of the two concepts, I find it especially relevant reasons in an analytical sense. However, it is important to note that in certain academic contexts or regional, is used preferentially either concept, but generally wanting to denote the same. For practical purposes, and given the recent boom of the term governance, this is the term used in this work.

The transformations of the meaning of the concept of governance is no longer analyzed from a semantic-linguistic aspect, but rather from the operational dimension, which leads us to take this concept in the field of development cooperation also known "good" governance. Latin America is the easy target of cooperation, and the concept of governance is the concept at hand to make possible such cooperation.

The IUCN uses governance of the Commission on Global Governance and applies to protected areas, defining it as:

> "Governance can be Described as the Means by Which society define goals and Priorities and Advances cooperation, be it globally, Regionally, Nationally or locally. Governance Arrangements are Expressed legal and policy frameworks-through, Strategies and action plans. They include the Organizational Arrangements for Following up on Policies and plans and monitoring performance. Governance covers the rules of decision-making, who gets access to Including information and participates in the decision making process, as well as the decisions themselves. "(Scanlon and Burhenne-Guilmin, 2004: 2)

In a simple sense, governance understood as a complex dimension of the process analysis of a society and government that is determined by a mobile and dynamic

relationship of rulers and the ruled, cannot be analyzed from fixed parameters and the criteria of "good governance." These parameters would claim to overcome the regulatory process governing interactions from an absolutist notion of hegemony, without going through a participatory process or legitimacy. This would in turn ignore the dynamism and self-legitimation available to the interaction between civil society and not let bureaucracy and not think of a notion of democratic governance.

In this study, the concept of governance was viewed as a useful tool for understanding how social systems function and thoughtful politician, and the range of organizations mediate between the individual and the state. Taking the term further to include environmental governance will only specialize certain aspects of how these organizations mediate between the individual, groups, the state, and their physical surroundings.

According to Beck, the policy is then more than a science, an interpreter of these changes, and its function is to define and translate these changes in the game according to the historical setting and the requirements of human society (Beck, 2007). It is therefore more than an art, a living entity that feeds on social thought and reinvented it, rethinking it, he does "law" but mutable and always prone to be modified or abolished. While political action is 'led' but never controlled is a reflection of the collective, and even their leaders are likely to be overwhelmed if their action or "policy" does not interpret individual to others.

The term associated with the concept of "governability" as "governance" has introduced complexity to the debate. Additionally, not being enough with the multiplicity of treatments given to the concept, there is another factor that adds complexity to the analysis. This factor refers to the reshaping of the concept for the Latin American context. In this regard, Camou (2001) notes that, given the difficulties of reaching a dynamic medium of democratic governments consolidated and stable in the Latin American context, the notion of a finer parameter evaluation "mode" not yet rule became more important, and when done allusion to the concept, it was thought rather in the

possibility of consolidating basic issues such as public order and political (Camou, 2001).

Governance does not reflect an alleged nature of the state, but defines the reality of the situation in the continuity of practices ranging from a perception of control perceived by people advertising their problems with the government itself that the subject learns to perform itself[3]. The exercise of power manifests itself as objects of study within the macro and micro domains. What is needed then is a social space that provides the transition between the individual and society, between micro and macro levels. The social question is not a monolithic object, but rather a space where the boundaries between civil society and the state became less obvious and more than a continuous connection. This is what Jacques Donzelot has called the social: the social designates a field of governmental measures, which operate in and always on the discrepancies between the economy and society. Between civil society and social, in a market and an area of security, the government of the social question in the modern era seeks to create the best ways to connect to the population (Medina 2009: 62).

Environmental politics is approaching middle age. Although groups, societies and civilizations have been co-evolving with their natural environments throughout the history of humankind, modern nation states have only recognized the environmental problem as a political issue since the beginning of the 1960s (Brunnengraeber, et. al., 2006).The current state of environmental governance is arguably more fragile given the rise in complexity in modern day's human systems. Are, as Ian R. Douglas argues, "globalization" and "governance" simply two inseparable aspects of the modern project of elite control or just another way to interpret today's inadequate global governance (Murphy 2005)?   For example, what of the feasibility of global environmental governance, in the most reaching of environmental regimes proposed at the seminal 1992 Rio Conference-the "indispensability" and indefensibility" of U.S policies, as some analysts have called it, is likely to remain. They rely on piecemeal, haphazard formation of global regulation (Murphy, 2005).

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[3]Refers to the ability of the political system to incorporate, restrict or accommodate individuals and groups seeking to influence the political game

Social constructivists recognize that interests are never a given, they are historically embedded, enacted social structures, subject to rethinking and enacting differently. These interests in turn absorb into the economic, political, and environmental spheres. In the environmental realm, all natural areas unquestionably correspond with a geographic location and a historical context. The novelty of the protected area and / or protected natural area concept in modern public and private conservation efforts is supported by the existence of a precise legal status to which it is possible to add new considerations and modifications over time. Thus, the protected areas concept encompasses an ecological, sociological, economic, and political self. It may be a loss of perspective on conservation, governance, and local knowledge if the three concepts are analyzed as separate categories rather than a conjunctive whole.

We now talk about "social institutions", "governance systems", "mechanisms of social control", and "organizations" in addition to "regimes" as such. It is perfectly possible to adopt the view that actors and institutions are mutually constitutive. Thus participation in social institutions can affect how members frame their interests and understand their identities even when they have distinct identities established prior to participation (Young, 1999).

There are numerous national initiatives promoted but not enforced by local governments in environmental matters, as in the case of municipal conservation initiative, which have initiated extensive discussions and disputes on the existing environmental problems and the role of local communities in the country. In the Ecuadorian context these efforts and strategies of decentralization and devolution of environmental management have impacted the state, the community and the environment with positive and negative changes. Research in the creation of a subsystem of protected areas in Ecuador is related to three key aspects: biodiversity conservation, public policy / the identified local areas, and existing formal laws. It puts at odds two issues: first, the extent that this capacity addresses the state level which continues to rely on social control or control of essential resources, and secondly, as a "public resource "and the process of

defining the objectives of public action as a result of the interaction between political public and private actors.

Then, the tendency to separate between the biological and the social world could be understood as a complex system of interactions of government, which can be approached in three different categories: diversity, complexity and dynamism which are considered operational categories for social analysis.

Interactive Governance

According to Kooiman, each interaction consists of processes and structures and this becomes clear if we realize that interactions among systems themselves can be considered as systems. The process element refers to the action aspect of interactions; processes are the outcome of the capacity of social actors to act. The action or intentional level of interactions means social interaction. The structural aspect implies the structural and cultural frames and contexts in which interactions come about. In this way, this study will use environmental governance as a form of public action in these conditions, it appears as a form of government (in its broadest sense) in which the coherence of public action (problem definition, decision-making and implementation) does not pass through the isolated action of a political and administrative elite relatively homogeneous, centralized, but by adopting different forms of level coordination[4].

The interactions in the forms of governance, including civil society / state / private sector and the environment are complex and require different approaches to analyzing social and biological phenomena. We assume that there are cultural perceptions expressed in different languages valuation (aesthetic, moral, environmental, economic, social, cultural etc.) On the nature and its resources, which are not comparable on the same scale of values, and that even can be conflicting and contradictory.

It is also important to characterize the complexity and architecture of the interactions, and

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[4]Raising the issue of governance suggests an understanding of the articulation of different modes of regulation of a territory, both in terms of political and social integration in terms of empowerment.

characterize the dynamics or the correctness of the development process and interaction between systems (Kooiman, 1995). However, the social forces that are notions and the State have been interpreted as a speech polarizer. The notion of state as a company director is central to theories of governance (Kooiman, 1995).

In this regard, Fung (2006) makes a substantial contribution "denoting" main governance dimensions more clearly, and considers participation as it's built in a three-dimensional process. Views on government policy have changed in recent years by a growing recognition that government alone does not determine the future development of the sectors of society, but occurs through the interaction of many actors and public action[5]. Within these networks of actors, the government can adopt a position that is more central and dominant, or one that is not so. This change in the view represents a shift in the emphasis of government policy, or "government" to "good governance"[6]. The pattern of "governance" consists of all the consequences of the interaction between attempts to involve all stakeholders (Kooiman, 1993).

Some participatory processes are open to anyone who wants to get involved. The second dimension determines how participants exchange information and make decisions. The third dimension describes the link between discussions and policy or public action. These three dimensions (extent of participation, communication and decision mode and extent of the authority) is a space in which any public decision mechanism can be located. For the case study will consider the relations between the municipality and its surroundings as appropriate to address three major issues of democratic governance: legitimacy, justice and effective governance, following the approach of Fung (2006).

Participatory mechanisms vary along three important dimensions: Who

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[5]In the recent literature, the evolution of forms of public action, including prosecution networks are the most visible manifestation, usually summarized in the concept of governance. The term is relatively old and in English (governance) has been used as a synonym for government.
[6]Good governance has been a "misnomer" to explain the good practices of government through democracy. In this study, will be mentioned as an adjunct to visions of how to govern

participates, how participants communicate and arrive at joint decisions and how decisions are linked to public policy or public action (Fung, 2006).First, referring to who participates, some participatory processes are open to anyone who wants to engage, while others invite only interested elites [...]. The second dimension determines how participants exchange information and make decisions. In many public policy meetings, participants only receive official information announcing and explaining the policies after decisions have already been made. A much smaller number of cases are deliberative in the sense that people take positions, exchange reasons and sometimes change their opinions during the discussion. The third dimension describes the link between discussions and policy or public action. These three-dimensional extent of participation, communication and decision mode and extent of the authority, constitute a space in which any public decision mechanism can be located (Fung, 2006).

There has been a loss of understanding of what Foucault calls the art of governing, where the task is to establish temporal and authoritative continuity (Foucault, 2006). Some participatory processes are open to anyone who wants to get involved. The second dimension determines how participants exchange information and make decisions. The third dimension describes the link between discussions and policy or public action. These three dimensions (extent of participation, communication and decision mode and extent of the authority) is a space in which any public decision mechanism can be located.

A systems approach is where a system is a whole of entities, which display more interrelations among themselves than with other entities. Diversity (actors) refers to the nature and degree in which they differ. Complexity (structures, interdependencies, interrelations) is the indicator for the architecture of the relations among the parts of the system, among the parts and the whole and between the system and its environment. Dynamics applies to the tensions within the system and between systems. No single actor, public or private, has the knowledge and information required to complex and diversified problems; no single actor has sufficient action potential to dominate

unilaterally. These are basically the matters of the relation between governance and governing (Kooiman 2000).

In *Baños de Agua Santa* relationships between the municipality and the governing communities are not static and evolve in a historical context, besides carrying on a relationship of reciprocal influence. How the Ecuadorian State, municipal and local people come to transmit and disseminate information will be key to understanding the interaction of the acts of government and its effect on environmental governance and perception. Using Kooiman's three operational categories will be applied as follows to the canton; diversity: involved actors in local environmental governance at the communal, municipal, and regional levels; Complexity: analysis of the existing communication and social networks in public participation and environmental perception; and Dynamics: a revision of communicative acts and local environmental capacities within a national and local context.

Communicative Capacity

A first central issue of interest to this study is Habermas's theory communicative capacity. Habermas's insistence that we can only know nature in instrumental terms through science and technology has attracted strong criticism from those who see his categories of thought as part of the cause of the environmental crisis rather than its solution.

The new "interest" in nature, then, need not be circumscribed by the objectified image of nature that is called forth by instrumental reason. Rather, it would be able to draw on informal, non- analytic practices, and the traditional skills and knowledge of other cultures.

> "An alternative human interest in nature "must clearly ground and reinforce the emancipatory interest. An instrumental or utilitarian external attitude toward systems of which we are a part to the core of our being is mystifying and ideological. That is why the liberating form of interaction of ... [people] with nature should not be seen as instrumental or purposive-rational but as cooperative ... social and natural emancipation co-determine each other."(Habermas 2003: 16)

Unlike many other contemporary social theorists, Habermas does not equate communication with any particular set of institutional mechanisms (such as voting, a

separation of powers, representation, etc.). Rather, he understands democracy as any institutional order whose legitimacy depends on collective will-formation through discourse. It is important to understand that the term discourse does not refer to all communication but only that which follows the immanent (i.e. pragmatic-transcendent) logic of its own "validity claims" (Laes, 2007). Discourse, according to Habermas, is a particular form of communication that, removed from the context of immediate experience and/or action, is oriented towards understanding rather than success. Each participant in discourse should produce, in addition to intelligible utterances, statements that are true, right and truthful. Producing these statements require people's knowledge of what is the case in the 'objective' external world-out-there, awareness of social intersubjective agreements that give legitimacy to their actions and consistency of their actions with their beliefs and intentions. Intelligibility, truth, legitimacy and authenticity are the valid conditions for discursive action, which each participant should be prepared to redeem through discourse. This in turn requires some other procedural guarantees, namely that participants, themes and contributions to the discourse are not restricted except with reference to the goal of testing the validity claims; that no force except the force of the better argument is exercised; and that, as a result of the previous requirements, all motives except that of the co-operative search for a rationally motivated consensus are excluded (this is Habermas's famous concept of the "*Herrschaftsfreie"* Dialog or "ideal speech situation".

According to Habermas, an indispensable component of a "good society" is what he calls the public sphere that is an arena in which individuals participate in discussions about matters of common concern, free of coercion or dependencies that would incline these individuals to mere acquiescence. The public sphere should be the political embodiment of the demanding requirements for true discourse to happen. Therefore, it should be institutionally separated (e.g. through a system of political and civil rights) from collective powers of action located in the 'official' political structures, while also serving as a source of direction and legitimacy. Habermas – and this is crucial for our present topic – is not arguing that discourse can be the organizing principle of institutions. Institutions cannot conduct all of their affairs through discourse, any more than individuals would wish to devote their lives solely to discourse. Rather, we generally

tend to avoid discourse because it is so cumbersome and consumes much time and effort. Moreover, genuine discourse is made impossible by the division of labor necessary for any collective action. Summing up, Habermas's argument is not that democratic institutions should conduct their affairs through discourse but rather that they should be structured so that discourse can emerge (in the public sphere) when ruptures of shared understanding require some kind of resolution.

"...The utopian content of a society based on communication is limited to the formal aspects of an undamaged intersubjectivity. (...) What can be outlined normatively are the necessary but general conditions for the communicative of everyday life yet Habermas gives no concrete (or practical) guidelines for solutions for communicative capacity for everyday life. Thus, throughout Habermas's immense work, we are given the tools to construct emancipatory political projects, but the content of those projects remains stubbornly undefined.

Some have attacked Habermas on this point, accusing him of offering no concrete solutions other than a 'sublimely empty' model of ideal communication. We would not count ourselves amongst those, though. Rather, we propose to accept Habermas's challenge to seek consensus but refuse to permit closure. With this statement, we also want to react against those who want to wave aside the concept of 'the public sphere' as an obsolete museum piece, because it would no longer be relevant in the present (post-modern) context. It is not because the public sphere is subject to transformative pressures that it has become less important. It is however necessary to rethink this concept, as we have tried to demonstrate in this thesis. There are no easy "ethical" answers to the inherently "political" questions of participation and deliberation. However, we have argued that, rather than being depressed by this state of affairs, one should feel invigorated by the political possibilities lying before us. It is too early to say where these will take us, but there are strong indications that something is stirring, and that it will be difficult to revert to the old "expertise-as-usual".

The argument that Habermas offers however does not go terribly far beyond this assumption. He begins by distinguishing between validity claims and the "redemption" of

validity claims (Johnson, 1991). Parties to communicative action do not rely for the force of their acts on the validity claims that they raise. The force of each participant's communicative action derives instead from "the coordinating effect of the warranty that he offers: namely to redeem, if necessary, the validity claim raised with his speech act." Habermas thus attributes the coordinating force of communicative action to the "guarantee" that participants offer to defend their action if its validity is contested. This warranty or guarantee is not a matter of contingent choice, a policy that can be extended or withdrawn at will by parties to communicative action.' It is intrinsic to illocutionary speech acts deployed with an orientation toward reaching understanding Habermas thus reverts to the *"telosof consent"* to explain the mechanism by which consent can coordinate social interaction.

Habermas insists that the guarantee that binds parties to communicative action can operate only under appropriate conditions. He currently explains those conditions in terms of the theory of argumentation. In argument or discourse, participants contest and respond to validity claims. This is the explicit, reflexive mode of communicative action through which "different participants overcome their merely subjective views and, owing to the mutual it of rationally motivated conviction pursue a consensual understanding of their situation (Laes, 2007). Habermas does not, however, explain how parties to discourse or argument overcome their merely subjective views and bracket what he calls their "no generalizable interests." This is the point where the need for an adequate account of how consent operates as a coordinating mechanism for social interactions makes itself felt.

In opting to enter reflectively into negotiations over the definition of their situation, to partake in discourse, actors are not motivated solely by pursuit of understanding. In part, they also are motivated by a desire to "pursue their particular aims." As a result, they find themselves in ambiguous circumstances:

Once participants enter into argumentation, they can not avoid supposing, in a reciprocal way, that the conditions for an ideal speech situation have been sufficiently met. And yet they realize that their discourse is never definitively 'purified' of the motives

and compulsions that have been filtered out.

Objectives

The general objective of this thesis was to analyze the communicative capacity and local environmental governance conditions in the *Baños de Agua Santa* canton, in relation with social and environmental conflicts associated with tourism, the expansion of hydro energetic boundaries (non-consumptive) and conservation initiatives.

The specific objectives were:

1.) Mapping the interactions and communication processes between local government ombudsmen (district) and local populations in relation to the management of environmental issues

2.) Review the previous regional territorial occupation of the canton in order to determine any previous significant environmental governance patterns

3.) Analyze local governance conditions in the Canton and communicative acts within local context.

4.) Gauge the perceptions and values of biodiversity conservation in the *Rio Verde* parish and the *Baños* canton and their influence in shaping environmental thought.

Methodology

In addressing environmental issues in the canton *Baños* as detailed in this thesis included two areas of analysis and intervention: 1. Local political and environmental governance: the dynamic communication between the municipality and its population, and 2. Analyze habermasian communicative acts present in local environmental discourse. Governance is understood as a complex system of interactions of government, which can be approached in three different categories: diversity, complexity and dynamism. The analysis categories mentioned are useful tools to characterize the diversity of actors, or entities interacting in a given system, and that can characterize the complexity and architecture of the interactions.

Research took place during the summer from May to August 2011; months mainly dedicated the foreign tourist season in the canton, so it was key to observe daily

bañena life during the time giving it more dynamicism. It was also essential to gauge tourism as main economic activity in its peak cycle. During the three months of field research there were 2 events that characterized the cantonal environment: the illegal entry of machinery in the hydroelectric project *El Topo* that occurred in mid-June, and the political impeachment campaign to remove Hugo Pineda, the mayor of *Baños*, in late July. These critical incidents became of major events able to shape the conditions of governance perception of the environment and traditional governance in the canton.

The study began with a group from the Conservation Biology program at *Pontifice Universidad Catolica de Ecuado*r (PUCE). The original conception of the research proposal focused on making a biological characterization of the *Baños* canton to determine the potential to launch a proposal for Municipal Conservation Area (MCA) in terms of biodiversity. This characterization as planned should be combined with the generation of information and social analysis on the factors of community participation and communication resources in the county. On funding issues, the biological study was halted, and the study was initially planned social change. During the beginning of the field investigation, the local government failed to show interest in participating with a proposal for the implementation of a municipal conservation area (MCA) as a new subsystem SNAP autonomous decentralized country in the canton *Baños de Agua Santa.* In August 2010, the *Baños* municipality expressed that other legal forms needed to think about defining "green" spaces in the Canton. The difference in their reaction in less than one year during the investigative phase in the summer of 2011 may be associated with a passing interest of ACMs, which has been subject to political changes in the institutional and political structure within the municipality.

All field research methods were conducted in Spanish. The English text was translator by the author after all findings were synthesized. During field research, necessary collected information to analyze the local environmental problems in the canton *Baños* as explained in 3-phases below:

Phase 1

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In the exploratory phase incorporated the detection, collection, consultation and documentary collection of the information available in previous studies by *Ecociencia*, *Fundación Natura* and *Ecominga*.

Phase 2

In the research phase of field observation, ethnographic (participant observation), techniques, on-site interviews, and informal and semi-structured key informant consultations, were used. Information about the municipality and environmental management were collected via semi-structured interviews with leaders of social organizations and municipal employees

Collected information was processed by a qualitative analysis based largely on a survey of perceptions of officials and people in the urban city population and the rural *Río Verde* community to provide for set of comparisons and contrasts. Combined, the analyzed data was used to assess existing governance and governability conditions at a cantonal level in *Baños*.

In the process of creating new categories of management and categorization of natural areas / green, the relationship between the town of *Baños del Agua Santa* and its environment was central to the observations and analysis followed, with key analysis of the communication process between the *Baños* municipality and the community of *Río Verde.*

In the information-gathering phase, the objective was to evaluate the perceptions of the population of the municipality, municipal employees, public policy, media networks, and the level of public participation in local social organizations. The data obtained in this research has been supplemented by interviews, surveys, questionnaires, survey data of books, articles, and direct observation. The interviews were personal, and based on a semi-structured list of questions and were conducted using a recorder (model TP-M110 Aiwa) for verbatim responses.

The surveys were conducted in the city of *Baños* and the rural parish of *Río Verde.* The analysis was approached from the interactional concept of governance developed a map of the communications network of key stakeholders (municipality, communities), and the interaction between actors. Through the survey assessed the perceptions of the population in relation to the City: public policy, management, construction, media and public participation in local organizations and activities.

In the interviews, the study was based on questions concerning the identification of environmental stresses, internal and external environmental threats, identification of conservation values (what ecosystems, what kind of species, relevant sites worth preserving and protecting?), and the level of interest to protect environmental values. The differences in forms of use and implementation of public policies related to the environment were analyzed on a lesser scale to compare different perspectives on the use of natural resources. These differences were addressed with techniques of triangulation of data received from respondents.

Phase 3

In the data processing phase communication networks were used as variables towards the analysis of dialogue acts of within and across the urban and rural communities, the municipality, and to determine the areas where stakeholders can share information, and the mechanisms how actors process the interactions between them. This was done to analyze the changes in public action processes. In the analysis phase and information processing was also carried out a comparative analysis on the perceptions of local communities, municipal authorities and other stakeholders. With an additional focus on interpretative symbolic anthropology the collection and interpretation of the different perceptions of nature and the environment (as social actors, municipalities and communities) was made possible. The challenge was avoiding falling into the false "myth" theories during the research and analysis phases. The community, as a complex and heterogeneous entity, is built by the natural grouping of people united by ties of kinship, and social bonds, within a culture and geographical space. It is important to consider not only the common features of the group, but also their internal differences

and not romanticize or idealize them.

Justification

This research combined aspects and cooperation between social and biological studies within a framework of holistic approach between the two areas, which is a priority for further analysis and knowledge we can make in socio-environmental studies. The methods used can make in building a more integrated and comprehensive state of conservation policies in the country.

The preliminary study examined the potential of socio-environmental conflicts associated with tourism and water access in the canton *Baños de Agua Santa* with specificity in the parish of *Río Verde* and has tried identify possible new conflicts that may emerge from municipal interactions and the population's environmental problematic. In this context, a conflict was understood to appear as a specific situation that changes from one condition to another problem that causes an imbalance or disharmony in the target area. Negative consequences manifest itself as conflict, when the problem that generates can't be resolved by direct dialogue or through formal and conventional means. Specific aspects of the environment as a public issue are related to the tensions and possibilities generated by the polarization between, on one hand, understanding the environment as a public resource and, second, the particular nature of the understandings expressed that on the environment can have different actors in the context of the conflict.

The potential for legislative creation and implementation is the primary tool that sets the tone for institutional law on protected areas, and subsequent actions to conserve resources. However, the weakness seen in at the national level re-occurs at local level throughout the country. In the small and medium municipalities institutional weakness is found to assume new and misinterpreted responsibilities to the environment made unclear by the law. The establishment of environmental laws display some progress in the local enforcing legislation guaranteeing the right to a healthy environment for citizens in their jurisdiction, although the fragmentation of governance and duplication environmental

responsibilities placed on local governments is a difficult position from which to exercise effective environmental impact control and biodiversity attention (Fundación Natura,2009).

With regard to social organization, communicating with parish councils, city hall, the urban city population, and the *Río Verde* community was tantamount in order to attempts to articulate a comprehensive view of the social and biological disciplines with respect to conservation and community participation in the Canton *Baños de Agua Santa*. The information obtained from this study will be important and useful to local communities, the entire *Baños* canton, and also for local and international NGOs and Academia working on governance and environmental issues. In this sense, there are results of various studies conducted by various organizations such *as Fundación Natura, Ecociencia, Ecominga* Foundation *Oscar Efrén Reyes* and investigations conducted by professionals residing in the study area have been reviewed in the research process and provided important contributions and insight during the thesis process.

CHAPTER II

CANTON BAÑOS DE AGUA SANTA: A CONVERGENCE ANALYSIS IN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Study Area

The canton *Baños de Agua Santa* translates to a place of Holy Waters. It is located in the southern *Tungurahua* province of Ecuador, approximately 4 hours southeast from the country's capital *Quito*. The province has an area of 3369.4 km2 and is located in the center of the inter-Andean region of Ecuador, *Tungurahua* Province bounded on the north by the provinces of *Cotopaxi* and *Napo*, south, with *Chimborazo* and *Morona Santiago, Pastaza* on the east and west with the province of *Bolívar*. In historical terms, the *Tungurahua* province has only recently engaged in tourism. The *Baños* canton comprises the districts of *Puyal*, *La Merced*, *San Pedro*, *El Placer, Quilloturo, San Miguel, Cadenillas, Machay* and *Rio Verde*.

The province has a dry, temperate climate. Like all mountainous areas, the region experiences the phenomenon known as microclimates in which small portions of the province receive drastically different conditions from others due to winds, altitude, moisture, and area pressure. According to the 2010 national census, *Tungurahua* had an estimated population of 581,389.Approximately 10% of that population is made up of indigenous peoples, while another 70% are of mestizo or mixed race heritage. The final 20% is made up of peoples of African, Asian, and European ancestry. In overview, 34% of the economically active population is engaged in agro-livestock activity, 18% to craftwork and manufacturing, 18% in trade services concentration 16% and other activities (transport, construction, financial services, etc.) represent the remaining 14% (City of *Baños* Chamber of Tourism).

Map 1. Provinces of Ecuador

Source: *Baños* Chamber of Tourism 2009

The *Baños* canton is located in the very each of the *Tungurahua* province, closely bordering the *Pastaza* province. The city itself is located in a small valley surrounding by green hills and has population of 20,000 people across 5 parishes*: Vizcaya, Ulba, Río Negro, Río Verde,* and *Río Blanco*. The city of *Baños* itself is considered to be the urban center of the canton, with 12,000 estimated inhabitants, over 60% of the total cantonal population. According to municipal data, over 93% of inhabitants have a direct or indirect economic connection to the tourism industry. The canton promotes its high level of biodiversity through the offering of touristic activities that can be directly associated to it. These activities are rafting, kayaking, "canyoning" or waterfall repelling, hiking, zip lines, cable cars rides across sections of the Pastaza river, trout fishing, thermal pools, the Tungurahua volcano, and on a much more reduced scale, National Parks *Sangay* and *Llanganantes*.

Map 2. Populated Zones
Municipio de Baños de Agua Santa
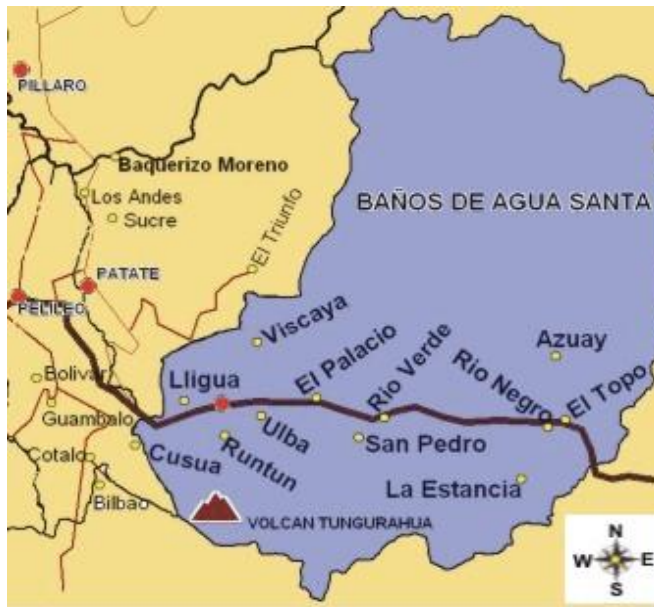
1.

Source: *Baños* Chamber of Tourism 2009

Development theory is inextricably linked to the temporal state of natural resources all over the globe. Stephen Bunker postulated that far more than modern industrial economies, extractive and agricultural economies are fixed in geographical space. Natural resources can only be extracted where they occur, and agriculture depends on soil fertility, climate, and relatively large proportions of surface space. The fixity of resources in space often isolates extractive enterprise from other enterprises and from the locational advantages that create urban agglomerations and their economies of shared infrastructure, labor pools, and potential for political organization and mobilization (Bunker 1989).

Extraction and agriculture are subordinated to industry in mutually reinforcing ways, ranging from dependence on markets and technologies outside of the regions that they define, to their low levels of articulation or linkage with other economies, to the additional costs that temporal distinction and spatial isolation engender (Bunker 1989). They are peripheral in all of the metaphorical ways familiar to world-systems analysts, but they are also peripheral in space. Their isolation in space is tantamount to isolation from other economic activities. In addition to limiting linkage or spread effects, this isolation makes the extractive economy peculiarly subject to the characteristics of the

commodity extracted.

Harold Innis was concerned with the entire the complex interactions between the act of extraction and the environment that produced the staple and molded the means and social relations of its extraction. The means and relations of production that transformed the staple into commodities or end goods, and the market for these goods was the end result of these interactions in context. To place these complex interactions between extraction and the environment has been the purposes of this research. First some key points of regional and territorial occupation for the *Tungurahua* province will be reviewed.

The Provincial Government of Tungurahua administers the province from its capital city of *Ambato*. The *Tungurahua* province is divided into 9 cantons: *Ambato, Baños*, *Cevallos*, *Mocha, Patate, Pelileo, Pillaro, Quero,* and *Tisaleo*. As of the 2011 census, the *Baños* was second in population, with 19,112 total inhabitants within 1,065 km2 (*Baños* Chamber of Tourism).

In the 1700s the canton became a popular destination for religious pilgrims who traveled great distances to bathe in the natural hot springs (viewed as a source of spiritual energy) and be blessed by the regional, symbolic virgin figure, to which various miracles (including salvation from volcanic eruptions) are attributed. In 1912 a significant change in the relationship between center and periphery was initiated: between 1830 and 1912 the state held the initiative to penetrate the regional and local authorities in the process of national integration. With the construction of the railroad system, the *Duran, Riobamba, Ambato, Latacunga, Quito*, and *Ibarra* route reinforced the country's cacao boom exports.

Historically, the opening of the *Tungurahua* province to the rest of the country was based in the dynamic agricultural trade centers between the highlands (*Sierra)* and the coast (*Costa*) as the market of *Ambato* resulted in an imminent and progressive introduction of market economy and dispossession of land and natural resources of indigenous peoples. The colonization process through territorial control would be

consolidated, years later, following the construction of the road between *Ambato* to *Baños* and *Puyo* in 1935 (Báez et. al. 2004).

Rural areas in *Tungurahua* have large tracts of agricultural terrain, and these areas are used primarily for domestic consumption. The main crops are wheat, barley, corn, potatoes, oats, tomatoes and onions. In addition, at the time of the twentieth century, large haciendas dominated the landscape of the province with relatively low population density. The agrarian structure of the province of *Tungurahua* still has those traits and trade from the beginning of the 20th century and is still the largest in the highlands area.

Initial regionalization attempts were linked to colonization policies and land reform, since the 1950s, with refugees from the disaster caused by the eruption of the *Tungurahua* volcano in 1949 (Báez et. al., 2004). Then, by the 1960s, these policies became systematic through land titling. The parallels with the Amazon are remarkable. The population figures given land and are very low, but served their primary purpose: to stabilize the population. In 1923, the uprising at the *Hacienda Leito* occurred in Tungurahua, and was considered as a worker/*campesino* expression movement. From this event, rural movement were interpreted and identified regionally and nationally as worker rights' movements (Báez et. al., 2004).

In the mid to late 90s the *Baños* canton was characterized by the eruption of *Tungurahua* in late 1999, the destruction and closure of roads to *Puyo* and *Riobamba*, and overall lack of communication. *Baños* was evacuated against the will of its inhabitants and dwellers, which had serious and direct consequences on the population and tourism. Its inhabitants and settlers re-turned to the city in defiance of the authorities. In addition, the war with Peru and the presence of *El Niño* was particularly intense - were made and seconded from the floor, the first as a negative factor and the latter as indirect benefit, in that *Baños* transformed into an alternative destination for people who could not travel to the coast. The problem of urban and rural garbage/waste also internally increased as a result of urban growth and tourism. New threats appeared on the natural environment with the reconstruction of the road *Baños - Puyo* and the presence of the *Cartelone*

Company in 1998 with new hydroelectric projects. As we will address later on Chapter 3, there has been resurgence in hydroelectric projects once again in the same area more than a decade later.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), among its principles for effective policies, sets out three main challenges facing renewable energy: climate change, environmental degradation and energy security (Lopez, 2011). From a perspective on energy governance (Fontaine 2010) these elements pose several fundamental problems, especially for energy security concerning the nature of supply and the depletion of hydrocarbon reserves in the next three decades compounded by low installed power from renewable energy sources (Lopez, 2011).

Increasing pressure is identified on watersheds to satisfy national energy sector needs through projects that adhere to utilitarian criteria of water resources, -with considerations of integrated management of water resources, ecosystem protection fragile the source of the water or renewable energy development beyond the promotion of energy efficiency, as it is-established on the Constitution of 2008 (Articles 406, 411, and 413). This new issue of water governance for energy is related to a bill, now stopped due to lack of consensus on use rights and international schemes institutional water management. Nor is the reformulation of the law of the electricity sector includes considerations of integrated management, to ensure the quality / quantity of water resources, and social participation in the planned harvesting.

Another key factor for energy governance studies refers to the new role of the state in planning and implementation of hydropower projects- as the renewable energy sub-sector now contributes more to the energy matrix and the greatest installable potential. Different sectors (business or community) wonder about their potential contribution and participation in this process and on the scale that would allow the government- (mini or mega power projects), under the current scheme of operational planning by the same State. This confirms the challenge that identifies (Fontaine, 2010) for the State to "develop new tools that can improve their capacity for action."

In short, the expansion of hydroenergetic boundaries (non-consumptive) is a problem of energy governance based on national policies to the attention of an unsustainable demand, but with renewable energy projects designed without much attention to the regulations sector, environmental and social participation in the electricity sector, no consideration for local development based on integrated watershed management, as seen in the *Baños de Agua Santa* Canton and the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Denial of the special characteristics of extraction at the national and local levels, coupled with attempts to increase local or internal benefits from it have led to some spectacular failures, including "boom economies" to which Ecuador is not a stranger. The next boom may not follow its past products, banana, rubber, cacao, and oil, but will perhaps follow an energy matrix "boom" in an attempt to break its oil dependence and harvest more precarious and environmentally fragile hydroproject incentives in the process.

Even on a regional discourse level, Inter-Agency Technical Committee of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean has embraced certain economic policies that have been altered to suit the sustainable development paradigm as constructed by the outside. The bioregional focus of planning presents important advantages related to the tools and traditional concepts of planning development and permits to formulate policies simultaneously using different geographic and institutional scales (ITCFMELAC, 2000). The bioregional scheme can therefore include extensions measuring thousands and thousands of hectares. It may be no bigger than a small spring or it can be as large as a province or department (state). A bioregion can extra-limit the borders of two or more countries where human communities and ecosystems go beyond political limits. Normally, a bioregion covers a small or medium size watershed, a mountain range, or a coastal zone. It must be emphasized, still referring to the environmental sustainability, the importance of utilizing the marketing mechanisms, such as estimates and tariffs that incorporate to the private expenditure the costs of environmental preservation.

Convergence in Biological Space, Social Environment, and Pre-existing Environmental Government

Biological Spaces

To understand the context, let us set as a precedent that Ecuador is one of the 17 countries with greatest biodiversity on the planet, being the first in density of plant and animal species per area unit (Granizo et al., 2006).The natural wealth and the challenge of developing production strategies for the conservation of these resources to improve living standards of humans who depend on them has been in debate for years.

The *Baños* canton is located in the central part of mainland Ecuador, in-between two National Parks: *Llanganates* and *Sangay*, which converges to an area where humid winds from the Amazon bring moisture and have a direct impact microclimate forming over of the upper basin of the Pastaza River. The western edge of the Amazon Basin contains some of the most diverse cloud forests in the world, and some of the most endangered. The number of public reserves in the *Baños* canton is nil, with most private reserves bought, managed, and identified by local NGOs such as *Ecominga* through land purchases. Within the *Baños* canton is a considerable amount of endangered wildlife such as Mountain Tapir, Spectacled Bear, and Highland Wooly Monkey. A study supported by the World Land Trust and the *EcoMinga* Foundation may reveal the evolutionary history of one of the most remarkable plant radiations in the world, the 30 recently discovered species of *Teagueia* orchids, which grow only on the mountains around the southern edge of the *Baños* canton.

According to Ecuador's Forestry Law and Conservation of Protected Areas and Wildlife from 2004 define a national park as a large area, with the following characteristics or purposes: 1). One or several ecosystems, including within a minimum of 10,000 acres, 2). Species diversity of flora and fauna, geological features and habitats of importance to science, education and recreation, and 3). Maintenance of the area in its natural condition for the preservation of ecological features, aesthetic and cultural, with any exploitation or occupation that shall be prohibited. *Llanganantes* National Park was

created in 1996, and preliminary ecological assessments contain flora determined the presence of more than 800 species of vascular plants, including some rare and endemic to the region that were not registered before. *Llanganates* or *Llanganati* which means "beautiful hill", as known to the ancient inhabitants of the Sierra, were used as sacred sites by the natives of the region of *Rumiñahui Píllaro* residents, and after the Inca occupation became an important ceremonial center or *"Huaca"*(1992 Uzcátegui cit. by Larrea and Vasquez 2000). The Incas used *Llanganates* like mining area, were admitted to extract gold from the mountains and created a road infrastructure whose traces can still be seen today (1998 Anhalzer cited by Vasquez and Larrea 2000).

Sangay National Park was created in 1975 and extends across four provinces: *Tungurahua, Chimborazo, Cañar* and *Morona Santiago*. Politically, most of the territory (80%) is in Morona Santiago (MFA, 2004). According Freile and Santander, the Park has 586 endemic species and nearly 45% of these are orchids. It is estimated that there are over 500 species of vertebrates. The most representative group in terms of abundance, are the birds with 343 species, followed by mammals 100, amphibians and reptile species with 25 with 14 (Freile & Santander, 2005).

Much of *Sangay* National Park's territory is within the 65 areas considered most important for conservation as identified by the tropical Andeseco-regions, and the area comprising the Ecological Corridor *Llanganates - Sangay*, which is possesses of a great biological diversity. Within this area of high biodiversity are local rural communities with their own visions and adaptations of the environment, which is also an area of cultural diversity.

Map 2: Recognized National Parks and Protected Areas

Source: Enviroment Ministry Parque Nacional Llanganates 2006

The Ecological Corridor *Llanganates - Sangay*, is the first area of this type created in Ecuador, covers an area of 42.052 hectares squared, located between the *Sangay* and *Llanganates* national parks and will be handled by the municipalities of *Baños, Mera* and *Palora*. The *Baños de Agua Santa* canton holds 60% of the Corridor area. The objective of this zone was to ensure the flow of species between parks *Llanganates*and *Sangay*, as it will allow biological connectivity for isolated habitats for the populations of animals and plants to maintain their genetic variability. Like its national park surroundings, the Corridor is an area rich in biodiversity: 184 endemic plants of which 91 are orchids, 270 species of birds, 101 species of mammals of which 21 have some degree of threat (Fundacion Natura, 2005).

Social Environmental Space

The *Baños* canton presents a mixed case for public and private conservation with 2 national parks and 6 recognized private reserves *Rio Zuñac, Cerro Candelaria*, *Brand Stand*, and *Rio Anzu* created in 2008 and *Rio Valencia* Reserve and Nature trek Reserve formed in 2010.

Unlike many parts of South America, the economy is propelled primarily from tourism rather than timber or mining so the local people in these rural areas are supportive of concrete efforts to preserve these forests. The economy of this region runs largely on tourism in natural places, which is not the same as ecotourism. By working closely with the local people and by establishing ecological reserves in strategic places, we can preserve this region's biodiversity and simultaneously improve the standard of living of the people who live here.

Private initiatives exist at the time as in the case of Foundations *Oscar Efrén Reyes* and *Ecominga*, dedicated to conservation, and a high interest in population and tourism. Furthermore, the area comprising the Ecological Corridor *Llanganates-Sangay*, which possesses a rich biodiversity and high levels of endemism, especially in the group of orchids with 91 endemic species *Ecominga* registered by the foundation. In the area are also important areas for birds (IBA's) declared by Bird Life International (ECO56-Llanganates National Park with 231 species; ECO61 *Sangay* National Park with over 400 species and, EC057-*Sangay Llanganates* Ecological Corridor with 242 species) (Freire & Santander 2005: 68), also 101 species of mammals which is 100% of the expected species for the altitudinal gradient, and the presence of endangered species like the mountain tapir and spectacled bear.

Only a small percentage of the urban and rural populations are aware of the efforts in private conservation. Private conservation in the canton has tried to construct reserves that are owned and managed through a connected system that seeks to join high risk geographical areas thus protecting threatened cloud forest, tropical rain forest, and alpine grasslands on the western edge of the Amazon basin, in the provinces of *Tungurahua* and *Pastaza* in Ecuador. These reserves are strategically located in areas of high diversity and endemism, and high threat.

There is a clear institutional disconnect between local private conservation and Ecuadorian national conservation goals. Local NGOs in private conservation began an initiative to declare the existing private reserves in the *Baños* canton into the "Protected Forests" (*Bosques Protectores*) system that is monitored by the national government of

Ecuador. The process began in late 2008 shortly after the new constitution was adopted and still continues to be stalled by bureaucratic conflicts. It is a concern that government programs and national planning initiatives have been apathetic and exclusionary in officially recognizing and respecting the special conservation importance in individual cantons.

The minimal participation of international environmental NGOs following the 2002 declaration by the World Wildlife Fund has been in private conservation entities and almost a decade later. In 2010, the Netherlands Postcode Lottery, to strengthen and expand one specific private reserve, *Rio Zuñac*, sponsored a joint project with the IUCN-Netherlands/SPN. Besides buying land, the project has also attempted to aid the surrounding landowners get legal titles to their land, in return for legally binding promises to preserve 96% of their area. This will effectively add about 1000 ha to the protected area around the *Rio Zuñac,* tripling the area protected, at a very low relative cost to the local conservation community and municipality.

This institutional conservation disconnect has been attributed to the staggering emphasis on tourism. According to numerical data from the *Baños* Chamber of Tourism, since 2008970,086 tourists entered Ecuador, in by 2009 this figure amounted to 1,005, 297 tourists which represented an income of 745.2 million dollars, thus placing tourism among the first six productive activities that generate foreign exchange (Ministry of Tourism, 2010). Seeing as tourism is the main economic activity of the canton, the conservation and care of biological diversity, cultural and landscape is a priority for their information. However there is no participation of local government ordinances that regulate touristic activities at the city or cantonal level, in natural spaces or otherwise.

In addition, the linkages that exist in terms of tourism production that can generate economic mobility in most touristic services, such as restaurants, hotels, travel agencies, shops etc. all function individually and have no shared social capital besides personal profit gains. Therefore, we can consider that natural areas are raw material for operators / tourist servers, especially given the interdependence between them and the

tourist attractions. Even if this interdependence is not directly addressed by civil society yet is visible on surface in daily social interactions.

In rural areas extending stretching southward out of the city of *Baños* entering *Rio Verde,* there is concern about the actual possibilities that exist to become more involved in tourism and conservation initiatives, which are claimed to support mechanisms and productive incentives. Major challenges posed to the Canton are rooted in the need to involve the urban and rural spheres, integrate the two so they aren't seen as opposing entities, and broaden the organizations and associations with common social interests. The *Baños* township has to deepen its role in their public speech and protect both the existing laws and potential for new legislation as reflected in citizenship demands. Municipal action and the strength of established local institutions concentrated in business, touristic services, and agriculture could have the ability to resize the actions and perspectives of urban and rural populations around tourism and the environment.

Table 1: Primary Actor Characterization

Primary Actors	What do they do?	What are their interests?	Who do they relate to?	Problems/Observations
Municipality Baños de Agua Santa	Govern and Coordinate between communities in the canton	Tourism, security The local government coordinates with the canton regionally and in times of emergency with the province	Chamber of Tourism, Chamber of Commerce (Agriculture), Touristic Services	Lack of coordination among cantonal entities
Ecuadorian State Environment Ministry SocioBosque Conelec (National Council of Electricty	Country authorities	Maintain power relations and give legal framework	Civil Society	Difficulties in networks and means of communication between the state and other actors
Fundación Oscar Efren Reyes	Field work on cantonal biodiversity	Local interests in biology and conservation	Local populations, nature	Funding, Continuing studies, public access to information
Ecominga	Field work on cantonal biodiversity	Local interests in biology and conservation	Local populations, nature	Funding, Continuing studies, public access to information
Ecociencia	the purpose is to increase scientific knowledge on biodiversity and ecological processes	Environmental conservation, protected areas management, climate change	local regional governments, municipalities, provincial councils, local NGOs and community organizations based in finding solutions to social and environmental problems in Ecuador	Continuing studies, public access to information, multi foundation/organization cooperation at the local, regional, and national level
Rural Community Leaders *Río Verde Río Negro Río Blanco*	Try to represent politically their communities	The community and neighboring populations	The community and the potential to "lobby" the municipality	There isn't much coordination nor contact across communities or unified political solidarity

The public sphere in the canton *Baños*, as in any societal space, should be that where actors recognize each other and establish dialogic relations, become visible each other and understand their demands and needs. In the public sphere negotiate different interests of stakeholders. In rural areas the situation is far different in the urban center. Field research found no coherent coordination between local organizations in the Río Verde parish with those of other parishes, or strong personal ties between the presidents of local organizations and the city of *Baños*, mainly due to a lack of mechanisms and access to information that would allow fluid communication between them.

Pre-existing Environmental Governance

This new public sphere identification in the canton *Baños de Agua Santa* cannot follow the traditional Western models or those that have been historically used, but must be tested modalities according to local dynamics and the context in which actors are limited in discussing the social, cultural and environmental.

Public policy, including ordinances, laws, and codes, is mostly fixed in terms of a year to 3 years, which generates a sense of only limited continuity into the future. In order to modify this temporary sense of governmental policies the chamber of tourism and the chamber of commerce could be integrated on common and consistent long-term objectives about tourism and the environment. The increased participation and interest in environmental issues can flourish from tourist campaigns and generate participation at community levels. Such a level of coordination is lacking across municipal institutions and in channels that need to be created by the local society to gain entrance into the municipality itself which remains relatively closed off to its own constituents.

According to the Cantonal Development Plan, last revised in 1995, the tourism environment (but not income) has shifted to rural townships and the outlying area necessitate an intervention in territorial order and land titling which became a linchpin in the economic, social and environmental sustainable development in the city and the

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canton[7].This tourism rural shift, if it existed at all, was clearly short-lived as to the fact that tourism levels for the past 10 years in the rural parishes have remained little altered. Civil society in the urban area of *Baños* has experienced improved living standards, better education and access to health, compared to the rural parishes in the past 15 years.

Its social fabric is characterized by: urban organizations hinged together by family relationships, and similar economic interests, such as to improve and expand services to increase tourist influx of visitors to the canton. This group, concentrated positions in the urban and its members belong to traditional families, known as the "elite" of the canton. This group maintains close relations with the municipality, either by family relations or by investments (economic interests). Larger organizations are the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Tourism, which comprise the vast majority of registered businesses in the city of *Baños*. It is said that the combined chambers have enough bargaining power and decision-making in the municipality but not if they act individually, plus their combined effort can act as umbrella organizations collecting the interests of its members.

Table 2: *Baños de Agua Santa* Municipal Organization
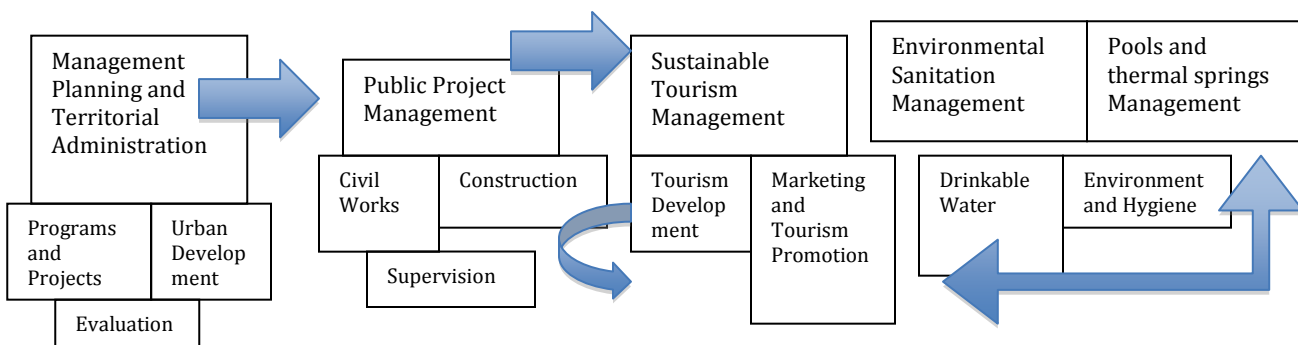
Source: 2011 *Baños* Municipality Proposal/Author's elaboration

Reading the above table from left to right we see the basic foundations of the municipal structure are based on 5 categories: (list from left to right) Planning Management and

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[7]*Baños* Cantonal Development Plan Section "2.1 Rol histórico y tradicional del Cantón"

Territorial Administration, Public Works Management, Sanitation Management, Sustainable Tourism Management, and Thermal Bath Management. Out of the 5 total sections, 2 are devoted exclusively to tourism. Apart from sanitation, environmental concerns are placed directly under the jurisdiction of tourism in two branches under Ecological and Tourism Development and Marketing and Tourism Promotion.

Rural organizations in *Río Verde* for their part, are disjointed each other and have weak relations with the municipality. The majority of these organizations are smaller appendages of national ministries, such as housing, the public health clinic, and a local police substation. *Río Verde* has actively sought to join the tourist circuit for the past 5 years, but think that Chambers of Commerce and Tourism, interests' that are exclusively supported by the Municipality, control the circuit. There are consolidation efforts that can bring together the interests of agricultural organizations in and with more environmentally sustainable forms of tourism. These more sustainable forms of tourism are not to be interpreted as synonyms for ecotourism, It is important to note that in the rural area of the matrix, and the parishes of *Río Blanco*, *Rio Verde*, and *Río Negro* attempts have the potential to emerge and to bring together the interests of local farmers in convergence with the potential for a more environmentally informed /aware tourism. These most remote parishes are excluded from the tourist circuit, i.e. *Lligua, Río Verde,* and *Río Negro*, the articulation of interests is needed to ensure adequate representation of those communities in the municipality's cantonal agenda. These areas have not been and aren't receiving the most visitors for decades.

Despite being a little studied scientifically movement, civil society's participation in the conservation of ecosystems is being manifested as a rising trend, both in Ecuador and worldwide. Although the country's natural reserves were first legally founded in 1930, they have received relatively low public investment in its current configuration and in the creation of protected areas' management. Modern society's growing interest in conservation actions and the explosion in popularity and misuse of the ecotourism term has created a unique environmental problematic in Ecuador. In *Baños*, many decisions regarding environmental issues and tourism are not taken (or even visible) in the public sphere but in the private sphere. In that sense, the nature of *Baños* public space has

shifted considerably, the space where political efficacy and unity (or disunity) are made visible. In the *Baños* private sphere, decisions are taken under collective considerations, family, or economic, that otherwise in a democratic space because it would not hurt other sectors. In the social space, privacy is replacing public. So, what should be discussed and decided in public is instead decided in private.

In the canton, as I have stated above, there is no involvement of local government ordinances regulating the tourism activity in relation to environmental matters. In addition, the entire area comprising the canton in is subject to constant pressure caused by agricultural expansion, logging, poorly controlled tourism, eco-system fragmentation and forest conversion to pasture (Freire & Santander, 2005). These social pressures on natural resources have resulted in generalized environmental hazards throughout the urban and rural spheres in the canton. Tourism pressures have exacerbated these previous social pressures on natural resources by accelerating the rate at which they can be exploited and for what reasons. Most ecological degradation in the canton is justified through financial and economic gain. The population is not necessarily booming in density yet the carry capacity of water, soil, and timber are being depleting faster than human populations in the canton can even try to begin to replace them.

Not surprisingly, the local social discourse in *Rio Verde* also rotated around tourism with a clearly different end goal. In the rural sphere, is perceived to be steadily dropping and this is evidenced by *Rio Verde* residents concern with specific negative urban tourism trends such financial gain in the form of price gouging on every national holiday, to only see the city alive with tourists, and the everyday loss of opportunity to earn income for the parish. This concern is valid based on hyper focus on the municipalities' past efforts to seek new ways to promote tourism in the city.

Rio Verde residents attributed ambition and the popular expression *"Baños is Baños",*no longer has the same meaning as it did in past decades, stating that visiting people should not be victimized with inflated costs, deception, for failing to show solidarity with the rest of the canton, social indifference, and lastly the lack of devout

Roman Catholic religious practice.

Polarized Relations: the urban-rural gap

The policy analysis and participation in rural areas is based on a number of situations and scenarios built from the outside, with incomplete information, second-hand and often inaccurate. Some of these views see it as geographically isolated space, peasant communities and as an environment free from political or "pre-political", marked by the absence of State for reasons of neglect, lack of resources, ethnic discrimination or other factors not permeate the communities so that rural areas are left to their own fates, without institutions and existing policy frameworks. With this, the rural areas are placed on the periphery of the system, with all that that implies informality, lack of regulation, precariousness, illegality and proclivity to develop *clientelistic* forms, when they do not corrupt, in connection with the larger society (Diez, 2008).

Political participation and micro political representation are provided by rural organizational and institutional framework present in each local area. Each sector has its own configuration, the result of a particular combination, historically-formed from a series of pieces known and recognized, with characteristics, at the medium term, with predictable procedures (Diez, 2008). Thus, each local space at the same time presents a number of organizations with other typical and common spaces and a number of peculiarities result of their particular institutional settings (and actors), which make it unique.

Rural areas are organized under two types of records: first, the institutions of the political structure provided by the laws and organization of government (municipal, government and magistrates' courts). On the other, the many organizations generated from civil society, from rural communities to religious associations. *Rio Verde* and the canton are no exception to some of these characteristics. *Baños* cantonal functions, as a protector and enforcer of existing legislation, keeper of urban and rural records, and absorber of demands, the municipality has been lacking in both. The Canton of *Baños* is a

special case for municipal action that has the ability to resize the actions and perspectives of urban and rural populations around tourism and the environment (Lozano, 2004).

During field investigation, it observed that the presence state is demonstrated by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) (the public school system), the Ministry of Public Health (MSP) with the Sub-Health Center, Ministry of Social Welfare (MBS) the Rural Social Security, INECEL with the main Provincial Council, and *Andinatel,* which has built a small office telecommunications provides occasional services. Among non-governmental institutions, Rio Verde has a branch in *Baños* Cooperative Credit Union Ltd OSCUS. The latter provides people with training in alternative productive activities such as preparation of jams and preparation of dishes aimed at improving the family diet.

Río Verde has also seen the presence of NGOs as *EcoCiencia* with the application of GIS techniques and conducted a rapid ecological community *Machay* in 2005, belonging to *Rio Verde.* Other institutions are religious in nature in *Rio Verde* are the Catholic and Evangelical.

There is standing conflict in *Rio Verde* in land titling of potential tourist attractions, low supply of services and attractions by insufficient infrastructure and lack of promotion of tourist attractions. There is also a multiplicity of interests among the rural parishes that has resulted in a weak urban-rural with low awareness in urban areas. There is a little community participation in the formulation of proposals and decisions of the parish to be a possible explanation for the limited technical knowledge - methodological natural resource management and environmental education. The consequences of these limitations are deployed in poor rural and urban environmental education, and general misinformation. The existing territorial problems are due largely to the lack of coordination between the provincial agencies.

The settlement population in the area comprising the parish of *Río Verde* is relatively recent and has been a great change compared to 15 years ago. According to the older inhabitants in town (between 70 to 75 years old) at the beginning of the 10th century there existed a farm called *Río Verde* whose main activity was the cultivation of

sugarcane. In 1935, some families of the highlands began arriving spontaneously, who went to work on the farm and started a parallel process of clearing the mountains to cultivate the land.

Map 3: Spatial Relations Map of Social Actors
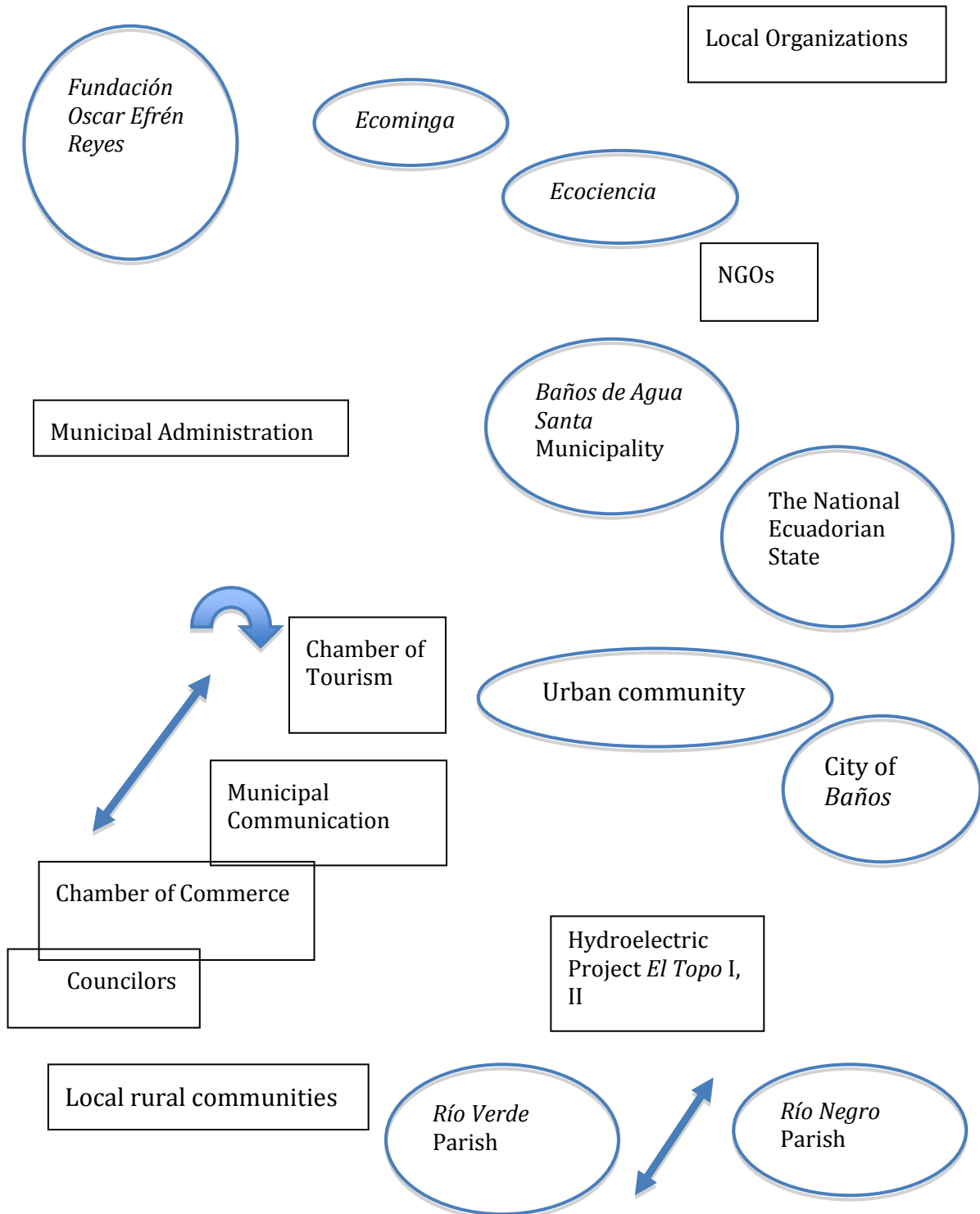
In 1938, the main asphalted road was constructed, which facilitated the extraction of resources and agricultural land use. In 1960, the late Ecuadorian Institute for Agrarian Reform and Colonization (IERAC) divided the estate, the benefit of those already working there as more recent settlers. The mass distribution of this fact attracted more settlers and workers.

The construction of the road and settlement policies and land reform, driven by IERAC are the two most important events in the history of human settlement in Rio Verde. The construction of the hydroelectric project in 1950 *Agoyán* (first project of its kind in Ecuador) generated jobs in the area, strengthening the development potential of the population.

Rapid population growth in 1961 allowed *Río Verde* to be declared as a parish, and Tenure Policy was enacted. Settlers and colonists were slowly stocking up on basic services. Addition of water had abundant light services, health or education. In 1950 the only public primary school *Santo Domingo de Guzman* was opened. Other public services began to emerge in the 1980s such as water piping, the, health center, and electric light in 1984. Additionally, a stadium was built in 1995 and a theater in 1997.Men and women share in agriculture labor although the latter assume a leading role only in times of migration. Migration is temporary, and focuses primarily male at work in oil companies located in the province of *Orellana* and sawmills. Domestic roles for their part are exclusively designed for women.

The people of *Rio Verde* are aware of the progressive deterioration of natural resources, particularly water, and taking responsibility for their irrational use. Analyzing the experienced trend, people frame their future in mostly negative terms. However, this attitude does not follow a full conviction for the need to conserve and protect natural heritage, but it shows a strong desire to return to the past and the original state of natural resources, which could be influenced by the potential touristic development interest in the

area, for which, conservation status of plants and wildlife is inextricably bound.

In terms of agriculture, are commercially grown crops include tomato tree, guava, and *naranjilla*. Most of the population is comprised of families dedicated to food (subsistence) and local commercial sale in a few choice crops. Migration has been an activity for several years, especially among men, as it is a sure way for temporary income, other than agriculture. Tourism, fueled by the growth of this activity in the city of *Baños* and the major waterfalls on the *Ruta de las Cascadas*can be seen from *Rio Verde*. This activity however doesn't involve the majority of the population is constantly growing at unequal economic proportions. Tourism in *Rio Verde* has increased to a moderate degree with the opening of the *Baños-Puyo* road and improvement of nature trails to the waterfall the Devil's Cauldron waterfall (*Pailón de Diablo)* so marked touristic activity began roughly in 2004, however there isn't any real statistical data on tourism, so *Rio Verde* does not have historical data on tourism demand, and all information has to be inferred from the general data existing in the municipality. The institutions responsible for tourism management in *Baños* considered *Río Verde* as competition rather than an addition to or integrated part of the touristic offer and appeal[8]of the Canton.

The historic and lack of a strong government presence in *Rio Verde* has caused the inhabitants to have a strong paternalistic and localist view of governance practices and influences, that has created a feeling of alienation from the national and local political culture, is more marked than in the other parishes. This is reflected in the lack of organization and in the absence of local initiatives for development management or, more generally, the welfare of the community. There is no clear perspective of how to promote participation and how to channel demands in this regard. The lack of a strategy and / or policy makes this very clear. Beyond the lack of information, the city's negative perception is reinforced by other former municipal practices that have not been eradicated in the past 15 years.

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[8]The definition of appeal as attractive "natural" comes from the context of tourism in the canton

The Canton is known for its tourist attractions that are grounded and sustained by the natural landscape, especially during holiday seasons and holidays. Most of the year round tourists are Ecuadorian, but foreign tourism from the United States, Europe, and Australia is also important. In previous decades agriculture was the primary activity, however there's historical record of the city of *Baños* as the summer resort of the wealthy classes in nearby cities and haciendas in *Riobamba*, *Ambato*, and *Quito* since the 1840's. From then until now affluent Ecuadorian visitors have come, as part of regular religious pilgrimages to the canton's appointed Virgin shrine, and also have been motivated by the use of hot springs. Tour operators, hotels, restaurants and shops are concentrated in the city of *Baños*.

The elite's commercial dynamics favor the concentration of business in the city, with very few businesses or accommodation in the parishes. Tourists book activities with tour operators in the city yet engage in said activities in the rural parishes that receive minimal financial gain or attention. For this reason, the inhabitants of *Río Verde*, resent the fact that tour operators organize tours of the city for rural areas, earning revenue for the same service, but leaving nothing for local families. Tourism is scarce and limited due not because of the absence of natural appeal, but through the dearth of tourism management alternatives so that very few families in the local rural parishes receive or can generate income from tourism. Most, if not all the families of this parish, are engaged in agriculture. In *Río Negro* there are some lodges and restaurants, however there are not many tourists who visit the parish.

Municipal management in the *Baños* canton has a greater presence in the city of *Baños* than in the parishes, and that is why the rural population has less social services and political representation as seen by fewer departments, councilors, social organizations. City dwellers in the urban sphere are also overrepresented in the municipality data and general agenda, and then compounded by the traditional family elite ties of various municipal officials. Not many rural families that live off tourism or receive a significant amount so their income neither enters nor leaves the tourist circuit. Rural aspirations to enter into this circuit independent of the municipal decision making

process were limited by the characteristics of civil society and current local governance management. The exercise of government functions is becoming increasingly difficult since the growing demand for social and governance in *Baños* in the context of a modern and pluralistic society.

In social terms, people distinguish between city dwellers and rural areas-including the parishes and rural communities in the array. Also within the city, is perceived as different from a group of families (popularly identified by their last names) that are considered the traditional power of the city, and have a symbolic prestige based on the time they have lived in the Canton, descended from earlier founding populations, former landowners and traders settled in the city for long. The civil society organizations have no links between them, nor have an organization representing agricultural interests or tourist. The links go through the parish council. For this reason, rural organizations are struggling to find "bridges" that allow them to negotiate or make exchanges with other components of society bathe, and his ability to negotiate with other actors is fragmented by the lack of a second-tier organization that represents their interests on a larger scale.

Similarly, a 2005 *Ecociencia* study focused on agricultural production and agricultural associations do not have a party to defend its interests and also serve as a link with the Municipality and other sectors of society. The associations found only relate to the religious-based organizations.

In *Río Verde*, for example, the usual voiced complaint is that the Chamber of Tourism prevents any initiative-stay accommodation in *Río Verde* to keep the tourists are to have fun and sleep there. This ensures that these return to the *Baños* epicenter for this purpose, with a subsequent payment for services to the operator of the city. According to them this would explain why the city council passed an ordinance banning buildings over four stories in rural areas. From the perspective of the people, the real objective was to prevent the building of lodging (hotels and hostels) and restaurants in *Rio Verde*.

The general opinion of people in *Río Verde* is that no municipal management or

previous municipal administration has cared about or incorporated them. In their view, the municipality is responsible the creation of a "single matrix" that is the city as the main urban center. The reason for this neglect of the parishes was explained in that each municipal administration has served the interests of "enrichment of politicians" and the power of the individual chambers to make their own municipal decisions regardless of a cohesive agenda. In addition, villagers believe that the representatives of chambers will never parishes to establish links with local organizations, and never make viable initiatives for capacity building for tourism because they do not want competition.

We can assume that it is important to expand the public sphere if we create a platform where they discuss civil issues and environmental tourism. To the extent that the media and opinion leaders are tourism and environmental concerns, it would be possible for civil society to press for their rights to participate and be informed. To the extent that Bath is a canton with the ideal characteristics for the implementation of conservation and ecotourism projects, external actors will eventually play an important role in the process described above.

Amazonian *Río Verde*? A reflection of Cantonal disjointed policy and perception

In rural *Baños*, *Rio Verde* and continuing south, 70.8% of the population is poor according to the 2010 census. The subsistence base of rural groups in the *Tungurahua* province is agriculture, and they supplement their income with seasonal migration to work especially as laborers, or selling handicrafts (*Benítez & Garcés, 1992*). The *Baños* canton is considered the gateway to the Ecuadorian Amazon.

In the early nineties, the Institute for Eco-development of the Ecuadorian Amazon Region - ECORAE, was created in order to respond and find solutions that permit consolidate the development of the Amazon region, so that they could satisfy the demands raised by the population. According to the Amazonian Regional Eco Institute (ECORAE), Law 010, published in Official Gazette No. 30 in 1992, has permitted Amazonian regional governments to develop transportation projects and sanitation to

meet needs of the Amazon's underserved population. In 2008, the *Río Negro* and *Río Verde* parishes located within the Canton of *Baños*, entered into this classification. In order to equalize some development inequities in the Amazonian provinces, promoting environmental conservation and strengthen the bodies of the Amazon Region sectional, Law 010 was issued.

> "The interest of the government was to provide more resources to the aforementioned regional governments, in order that they can better implement health plans, environment, public safety and urban regeneration in order to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of that sector. "(Official Gazette No 245).

This statute was included in the 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution as a transitional provision which states that it must create "the law governing the participation of autonomous governments in operating income and industrialization of renewable resources," adding that no one entity may reduce the revenues established in Law 010. In practice this does not necessarily guarantee anything, as mentioned by Alfredo Cajamarca Mayor of *Mera* in the *Pastaza* province. The rule provides funding beginning from 2008, that $1 per barrel of oil exploited in the Amazon region, which together cover about $200 million annually, 58% be distributed among the municipalities, 28% to prefectures, ECORAE receives9%, and 5% to parish councils, however, in no case shall ECORAE allocate these resources to finance regional governments projects

The Amazon region is comprised up of six provinces: *Sucumbíos, Francisco de Orellana, Napo, Pastaza, Morona Santiago* and *Zamora Chinchipe*, which just from the oil extraction process, have been valued for their economic importance, but also served as a criterion that excluded them from the national development process. There has been social struggles, based on strikes and mobilizations that have cost small percentages of the national budget. In this context, the law creating the Fund for Eco-development of the Amazon region was approved and the strengthening of regional governments in occurred in September 1992. This fund was financed initially with tax revenues equivalent to 0.06 cents for each barrel of oil sold in domestic and foreign markets. Since 1993, this fund was increased by 0.01 cents per year to reach 0.10 cents per barrel of oil, an increase that takes place the first of January each year.

Given the requirements of the Amazonian population and authorities, at the initiative of the President of the Republic, Economist Rafael Correa, the Law Amending the Code to the Act of the Global Eco Amazon and Strengthening Regional Agency of Sectional, is raised to fifty cents to one dollar for every barrel of oil, from January 4, 2008 (RO 245) 10. The municipalities' proportionally share the 58% and includes the rural parishes *Rio Verde* and *Rio Negro*, and the Cantons *Baños*, *Matus*, *Altar, Candlemas*, *Bayusig*, and *Penipe*[9]. The 28% is destined for provincial councils, 10% is destined for a fund to strengthen higher education, 9% for ECORAE, and 5% for the establishment of Parish Development Fund Amazon. This fund helps finance parish council needs, which still form new government, and have faced many difficulties in their organization and financing. The percentages for the sectional bodies referred to in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 are distributed as follows: 60% equally, 25% in proportion to the population of each jurisdiction according to official figures from the last census, and the remaining 15% based on the oil production from each province.

The cantons that border the politically defined Amazonian region defer to the state for their specific special and priority needs, especially the cantons bordering the neighboring country of Colombia, because of armed conflict and living border towns of that nation have forced thousands of Colombian citizens to cross the border and settle in the provinces of *Sucumbíos*, *Carchi* and mainly *Esmeraldas*, causing population growth that exceeds the possibilities of care by decentralized self-government. Internal migration continues in the northern provinces of the Amazon, mainly in *Sucumbios* and *Orellana.*

ECORAE is an institution created by the Ecuadorian State to respond to the requirements posed by the inhabitants of the Ecuadorian Amazon. The funds through which finance their functions come from the oil revenue should be invested in strengthening the sustainable development of the area. The high population pressure coupled with the rapid extraction and exploitation of natural resources, both soil and

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[9]Taken from observations for the second discussion draft code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization (COOTAD)

subsoil, surrounds the Amazon citizens in multiple conflicts where various interests are opposed and the existing legal framework does not provide the guarantees needed to meet present in the region, such as population growth, deforestation, pollution by oil, among others. However, populations of eastern Ecuador are not only subjected to a broad range of socio-environmental conflicts, they must also face increased poverty and inequality in the redistribution of resources, which complicates the relations of civil society with the State, as there is a latency of dissatisfaction with government action because it maintains a policy of removal and use of both renewable and nonrenewable resources in the Amazon.

Throughout its history, projects financed by this institution have been mainly economically productive, which favored small social organizations such as federations and associations. In the first phase of its activities, 1995-2001 was allocated more money to finance projects than in the second and third phase (2002 and 2003 respectively). In addition, priority was given to infrastructure projects on environmental, political, institutional and socio-cultural. The provinces that had the most money were *Napo* and *Pastaza* economic gap that has caused discomfort in various social sectors and between agency representatives sectional, and so the reduction in the amount allocated (33,000 dollars is the current background) by province for the development of projects, compared to an average of $ 339,731.25 for the period 1995-2001 provincia1. Currently, funding for small projects is not a priority for the ECORAE, his attention is directed *Morona Santiago* is second, but was not considered in this study. The calculation was performed based on the economic resources received by the provinces of *Napo, Pastaza, Sucumbios* and *Orellana*.

The development of large projects continue to search for strategic partners. Implemented new policies intended to strengthen partnerships with agencies sectional, national NGOs and international and international lending agencies, but leaves a little to one side to the social organizations that comprise the Ecuadorian Amazon. This new direction decreases its presence in the Amazon civil society, as their activities are not visible in the different economic and social sectors that make up national civil society.

So far, this institution is unable to strengthen their actions in the framework of sustainable development for the region and its relations with the sectional bodies. Strategic actors and civil society in the Amazon do not have a stable livelihood for the interests of both the institution and the groups involved, they find a balance between the demands of society and state responses. ECORAE is an example of weak democratic governance processes in the country. So far, this institution has been unable to strengthen their actions in the framework of sustainable development for the region and its relations with the sectional bodies for over a 20-year period since the early 1990s.This institution was created in order to plan and implement strategies and projects for sustainable Amazon, but their actions have not been effective because they have been conditioned to unbalanced power relations and conflicts that have affected regions far distanced from the Amazon itself and into the low highlands as in the case with *Rio Verde*.

The Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador establishes preferential treatment to the Amazonian provinces to ensure the protection and conservation of ecosystems. So then it is interesting to see how the implementation of Law 010 has affected socio-political life in *Rio Verde*. This parish has seen an expansion in its development over the past 10 years and not exclusively since 2008. As of 2008, as the local *Rio Verde* governing committee has received $ 850.000 directly stemming from Law 010. This amount of funds can only be used for projects in *Rio Verde* but approval mechanisms remain under the authority of the city of *Baños* in the urban sphere. Because the city of *Baños* can't extract funds to channel the 010 Law in its tourism infrastructure, thus, tensions and political isolation among rural-urban areas have increased over the last 4 years. The inclusion of rural provinces in the *Baños* canton is yet another alarming sign of the momentum that the hydroenegetic frontier is gaining through "State" apparatuses. If the direct appropriation of resources geographically placed in the Amazon become too difficult, it can be postulated that the national energy matrix has sought to find them in neighboring provinces with similar Amazonian ecosystem characteristics.

CHAPTER III
PERCEPTIONS OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION: CONDITIONS AND PROBLEMS

This chapter aims to present the findings, referring to the Municipality of *Baños* de Agua Santa and the community of *Rio Verde*, focusing on existing perceptions about the current state and perception of natural resources in three areas: uncontrolled tourism vs. ecotourism pretense, proliferation of cantonal hydroelectric projects, conservation of natural spaces vs. national development dialogue (new subsystems legislation)

Uncontrolled Tourism vs. the Ecotourism pretense

Before 1995, the city and the canton *Baños* were characterized by a process-transition from being a zone-oriented agricultural production toward what it is today: a landmark national and international tourism. Agriculture is distinguished by a large presence of sugarcane production until the mid-1970s of the last century; the Law of Tobacco Growers and progress in road construction caused the gradual disappearance of these crops. It also produced a remarkable variety sweet potatoes and a variety of fruits. *Naranjilla*/lulo/little orange production boomed between 1950 and 1970, until there was a plague that significantly affected this crop. Pests easily destroy a crop of this species. This limits its use for agriculture. This signified less pressure on the forests that were being affected to generate spaces for crops and from then on balsa woodcraft production gained more importance.

At this stage there was a notable presence of forests and natural resources. Springs generated more water, pollution was limited and, in general, the impact on the environment was lesser. Historically, it was not until the 1980s that tourism began to have a significant impact on the local economy and social and physical landscape. The first sections of the economy to expand were small local businesses such as restaurants and lodging. It is difficult to pinpoint a specific time period when the potential ecotourism of the canton became known. According to the informant interviews in was in the same decade, however, that the first negative ecological impacts were produced such as the disappearance of ecological nature trails, increased trash/ littering behavior and

implementation of trout farms increased pollution of the *Ulba* and *Pastaza* rivers.

During the 1990s it was still a common belief that tourism was the linchpin of economic activity in the canton, and the creation of National Parks *Sangay* and *Llanganates*, became a mainstreamed gateway to further ecotourism social construction. This period is characterized by the eruption of Tungurahua in late 1999, the destruction and closure of roads to *Puyo* and *Riobamba*, and overall lack of communication *(EcoCiencia, 2005). Baños* was evacuated against the will of its inhabitants and dwellers, which had serious and direct consequences on the population and tourism. Its inhabitants and settlers re-turned to the city in defiance of the authorities.

The war with Peru and the presence of *El Niño* was particularly intense - were made and seconded from the floor, the first as a negative factor and the latter as indirect benefit, in that *Baños* transformed into an alternative destination for people who could not travel to the coast (*EcoCiencia*, 2005).Tourism had already become the linchpin of the local economy. Within the new hotel infrastructure and created services the building of the first cable car in *Rio Verde* in 1998was mentioned as a landmark.

Municipal organization was consolidated and made the first development plan can-tonal. *Baños* were leading presence in the local and foreign tourist scene. In 1997 the City Tourist Information Office was established within the city.

Environmental progress was made in strengthening proposals linking with reforestation and the creation of protected areas however new threats also appeared on the natural environment with the reconstruction of the road *Baños - Puyo* and the presence of the *Cartelone* Company with new hydroelectric projects. Internally also increased the problem of urban and rural garbage/waste as a result of urban growth and tourism.

From 2000 to 2004, the local perception in *Baños* and was dominated by the eruption of Tungurahua and its consequences, i.e. the evacuation of people and their

subsequent return against even the national authorities (the return occurred on January 5, 2004). This is a period of crisis produced both by the eruption of the volcano and the misinformation/miscommunication about *Baños* occurred that at the national and international public opinion. Dollarization, the economic crisis and the corruption combined with the above, formed a negative environment for tourism.

After this stage and a momentary drop in tourism, local perception stated that they witnessed a process of revival and change in tourism. Increased tourism, a change in the type of tourists that began to arrive, no longer the "backpackers", began a more exclusive trend and increased tourist profiling, with the economic consequences that this entailed. In addition there were activities affecting the environment such as the construction of the interconnection tunnel of the hydroelectric San Francisco, the construction of the *Banos-Puyo* road and San Francisco new bridge over the Pastaza river connecting the city to the *Illuchi* community (*EcoCiencia*, 2005).

As the city experienced increasing tourism demand and supply in the late 1990s, waste production and demand for basic services also increased. The landscape once known as an environmental sanctuary continued to deteriorate.

In the mid 2000s, there was small consolidation of tourism management, although it is centered in the main regional town and its immediate surroundings. The tourist infrastructure - policy has increased and the supply of basic services is inadequate to the increasing demand, especially in peak periods, issues such as garbage collection, the waste management, treatment and water supply and use of urban spaces require special attention.

Social actors are becoming aware of the importance of coordinated work even though this is a topic, which shall need further actions. New organizations charge life. In the environmental sector new feats such as the signing of the tripartite agreement of cooperation between the municipality, *EcoCiencia* and *Fundación Natura* and greater concern and training in environmental education, both authorities and the population as

well as the implementation of projects and publications on the importance of biodiversity in *Baños*.

On the other hand, local perceptions showed serious, although temporary concern about construction of new hydroelectric projects. Since the mid 2000s to the canton's current unrest with hydroenergetic frontiers, a decade has almost passed. Environmental consciousness for all of its potentiality apparently has a short-term memory in the urban cantonal sphere. It is estimated, as with the previous ones, they will cause serious environmental impacts. The rural sphere showed to have greater concern for intervention in tourist activities, policies and conservation, which are claimed to support mechanisms and productive incentives.

The municipality as an urban institution has the formal mechanisms to influence political decisions and organization, whereas rural parish organizations do not have the capacity to cultivate these mechanisms and geographically excluded from those existing. In the interviews was often mentioned that county administration favors people and organizations in the city, and that he forgot to change the rural population. For example, according to interviews, advocacy of the Chambers of Commerce and Tourism Municipality influence and push for ordinances and actions favorable to their specific interests.

The lack of a more direct relationship between the municipality and local civil society is most evident in the case of remote the parishes, the information takes longer to arrive or doesn't arrive at all. On the other hand, there are striking similarities between the municipality and urban civil society. The municipality supports the discourse of urban *Baños* population driving the idea the canton dominated by tourism for its natural resources and landscapes used as economic assets.

The Municipality has not recently taken a definite position on the issue of environmental ordinances. What it has done is to relate the growing environment to tourism, for example in Article 51 # 8 of "The Substitute Ordinance Organic Functional

Regulation of the Canton of the City *Baños* de Agua Santa" is enacted:

> "The promotion of citizen participation processes tends to generate aconsciousness and collective practice for the development, promotion and tourism sustainability, respectful of culture and environment."

Article 52 of the document, expresses the need to define policies and strategies to solve problems concerning the development and ecotourism in the canton. However, these differences do not only prove that there is an imbalance between urban and rural. This also explains the municipal address the region as a "*Baños* Eco-touristic Canton " shared by the sectors related to tourism, which states that tourism is the main activity of the canton and development motor.

In the last 15 years, environmental perception has changed considerably in the *Baños* canton. The levels of biodiversity and biodiversity-related resources that have been used for tourism development have increased at a dramatic and almost unsustainable rate as the economy in the urban center conquered by tourism. Thus, the state of natural areas and tourism are inextricably linked and almost dependent on one another in the canton *Baños*. The Canton is considered one of the most important recreational sites in the central region of Ecuador and is the fourth most visited city, according to statistics from the Tourism Ministry. As a consequence, an entrenched population identity association linked to tourism has risen drastically. Two specific domains have adapted a mutually beneficial relationship, the government and private sector, which can be used to study the tourism as a social phenomenon in the canton.

The concentration of tourist attractions in the canton has in turn augmented the concentration of this activity in the city of *Baños* and has developed an entrepreneurial attitude through tourism. That entrepreneurial attitude that has, in historical terms, recently emerged is based on the marketing and sale of tourist activities. The paradox, however, is the actual use of this kind of tourism. The definition of tourism is not very clear in the *Baños* Canton. Furthermore, the definition changes depending on the subject in question and such travel agencies / tour operators tourism conceived from a monetary

definition of tourism business that is expressed in business plans, and from the side of ecotourism offerings directed preferentially for foreign tourists. The latter motivated by the easy access to the canton from *Quito* the capital city and other cities.

There are 47 registered tour operators and 110 hotels/hostels/pensions in the city of *Baños* alone. The main street in the city of *Baños* is lined with travel agencies on both sides of the street, many offering the same services to the same attractions. Foreign and Ecuadorian tourists are more likely to book and spend money on tours and touristic services in the urban center than in the rural locations where the actual tours take place. Most of the rafting, kayaking, and biking packages are offered using the landscapes, rivers, and waterfalls in the *Rio Verde, Rio Blanco*, and *Rio Negro* parishes. In *the Río Verde* parish, both sides of main street closest to the highway leading to and from the city of *Baños* are plastered with signs offering trout, farming lodging, and restaurants. The main difference is that the two restaurants have been closed for at least 3 years and the signs are barely legible through the faded paint.

High emphasis on tourism and density of touristic activities are some key issues in perceptions of the local population on the environment. As noted above, most people have direct or indirect economic and social ties with tourism. Tourism is a temporary and cyclical social phenomenon in the canton, and revenues from tourism activities that get the population depends on the season and how to sell every day. Thus, the population of the city of *Baños* tends to project the short and medium term and emphasize concerns the use of natural resources and environmental issues.

The natural scenery and landscape attract a growing conventional and ecological tourist market. The tourist services offered, however, the existing infrastructure there is nevertheless a mismatch between tourism demand and touristic capacity. There are a small number of public cultural institutions such as theaters, museums, and libraries compared to that of other cities in the canton. The amount of environmental interpretation that is placed in existing touristic attractions (waterfalls, rafting sites, biking trails, trash, and recycling) and recreational facilities such as playgrounds and

parks is minimal. Long-term maintenance and a concern for the upkeep of these attractions are not apparent in municipal ordinances or in public memory. The cyclical and ultimately short-term nature of the local tourism industry, and as a result, the short-term economic strategies of the urban population have extended itself to equally short-term conceptualization of its necessary counterpart, the environment.

The investigation used a random sample of local perceptions of *baneño* citizens and residents of *Río Verde* on the current status of natural resources. From the data collected it can be inferred that there is a lack of knowledge or conscious awareness of urban city residents about their natural environment because of vague concern about the status and condition of natural resources. Furthermore, these natural resources are spoken about in very generalized terms. Thus, one can infer that urban city *Baños* state of environmental perception is very abstract where the details are unclear and unknown.

Certain urban city residents did, however, show more negative concern about the indiscriminate use of natural resources throughout the canton, and referred to issues such as the speculation that squatters live in ill-defined areas near the two national parks without paying taxes, and the lack of legalization of land titles in some communities.

According to administered surveys, urban citizens believed that there exists a certain level of social hierarchy and nepotism in different local organizations, for example in parish councils, church groups, and specific family owned businesses such as prominent bakeries and pharmacies, and hostels. When asked about specific actions that could be taken about the environment they suggested that mechanisms are needed for the implementation of laws, rules, ordinances, regulations, agreements and resolutions relating to the environment, but in the interests for the management of the environment as economic resources in relation to commercial agriculture and logging. No specific natural resources were cited as examples, and the "environment" is considered as an abstracted and generalized whole.

The rural population based in *Rio Verde* and benefits from biodiversity and

natural areas in an entirely different way than in the urban center. This biodiversity is not seen as a benefit, it was used as an identity and income staple. Natural resources, rivers, crops, livestock, and the climate are what enable them to sustain their livelihoods and insure food security. Land use is meant for sustainable agricultural activities not housing and business construction. The plants, vegetables, and fruits that are cultivated vary from the wet season to the dry season and also differ based on personal or commercial use. The major commercial crops are passion fruit, corn, and sugarcane and are sold in local markets within the community or are transported during market days in the city of *Baños*, Wednesday and Sunday.

Río Verde is a small parish that is located 12 km east outside of the urban center of the city of *Baños*. The distance is not great in physical terms but the differences are jarring. Out of the 70 families that live in *Río Verde* most used personal cell phones as the main channel for communication. Landline phones were rare and only two establishments offered intermittent Internet access. Most of the 12 or so streets were not lit and the most recent public works project was the establishment of a sewer system in the 1990s. Interviewed families in *Río Verde* stated that working with the ground allowed them to see the rewards of their hard work very clearly, you harvest what you place in the ground and take care of. Geographic isolation has also created a distinct sense of social identity. Although 12 km may not appear to be much, it is enough to create an identity of exclusion between the people who live in the rural parishes and the inhabitants from the urban center.

As opposed to urban residents, the *Río Verde* population has a seated distrust of government institutions in the canton and in their own parish. They commented on the limited capacity of government representatives on a national and local level to manage financial and natural resources and argued that there is effective collaboration. There is weak social organization and also, lack of economic and financial support and political will of the local government.

Río Verde residents voiced their concerns about the accelerated depletion of

natural resources, specifically water and cloud forest, in several ways. For example, there is no understanding of the uses and values of water resulting from insufficient administrative capacity of the water boards and the absence of control systems for nearby watersheds. For its rural location, the local population of *Rio Verde*, unlike the city of *Baños,* has a greater interest in environmental issues and knowledge about the variety of biodiversity and landscape but this does not converge with a full awareness of the range of environmental issues. This is explained by the lack of environmental education offered from competent authorities to the population. There was no current training regarding the use and management of natural resources and finally there is little community participation in decision-making. It was also commented that there is implementation, or enforcement of the laws relating to the environment in the Canton, and there are nosocio-economic alternatives beyond tourism, which can match a level of financially stability.

During field research, analytical local perceptions of tourism and ecotourism concepts presented as polar opposites in the public discourse. The concept of tourism that is handled is loose and is presented as a set of activities that generate income. Within this scheme of income, ecotourism appears in the speech without actually having this character. There is likewise a kind of popular tourism in the city of *Baños* which offers rides on specially painted buses called *chivas* along a road that passes by several waterfalls, go to the baths, or offering of adventure tours marketed as "adrenaline" tours. Adventure tourism focuses on water activities because of the high concentration of watersheds, waterfalls, and rivers in the region, such as rafting and kayaking.

In the dominant local perception, if there is no tourism, there is no life in *Baños*:

> "For anyone thinking about other options than that tourism that could be dangerous, because we have to gain as much as we can because of the volcano ... *Baño s*and tourism are now completely synonymous and highly integrated economic activity but they must diversify (A1 Interviewed 06/08/2011)."

The tourism demand in *Baños* is seasonal because Ecuadorian national tourists and foreigners take advantage of the vacation time and holidays to visit the Canton. There are clearly marked seasons, with a greater flow of foreign tourists during the months of

June, July, August and early September that coincide with holidays in Europe and the United States.

Tourism, as well as being the main economic engine in *Baños*, is also the focus of development discourse of the *baneña* elite. The cantonal elite is composed of a sector an urban group that belongs to old traditional families with historical roots to the Roman Catholic Church families. Not surprisingly this elite is connected to the tourism boom being owners of lodgings, restaurants, operators and bars nightlife.

This elite has surmised that the main economic activity comes from the local tourism market and has carved a specific niche focused on adventure tourism and labeled "eco-tours". The superficial and widespread application of eco-tourism has become polemic; "ecotourism is the way to development."

Meanwhile, however, it was stated that the *Baños* elite commented with concern that the company responsible for the dam had made an agreement with the Río Negro parish to accommodate them, in exchange for supporting the project. However, at the same time, this elite discourse did not take into consideration that this attraction of rural populations was based solely in obtaining work there are sectors that feel socially and economically excluded from tourism. In most optimistic of scenarios, sectors feel that they are minority partners in tourism, as *Ulba* and *Rio Verde* receive a meager income from this touristic activity.

> "It's a shame not to learn how to implement a project on land blessed by something of this magnitude that directly affects the people of this place. Is one of the most touristic places in Ecuador, precisely because of its ecosystems. I am an Ecuadorian who likes to travel and the foreign people that I've met have visited *Baños*. My advice is to respect nature and most of these places that have much to offer tourists. Ecotourism is the future to remember "(A5 Interviewed 20/06/2011).

During the investigation period in the summer of 2011, the issue of building dams in the Canton has become polarizing. In 2011, the situation was completely changed in relation to popular reactions on hydropower. In June 2011 the community of *El Topo* rose against the entry of machinery to construct two new water projects called *El Topo* 1 and

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II. This protest had no support the inhabitants of the city of *Baños* with a majority of the citizens unaware of any hydroelectric projects in the canton besides the *Agoyán* and *San Francisco* dams. Since the *baneña* elite's attitude was against the presence of dams to generate a risk to tourism in the canton, we could say that this attitude was formed in purely monetary basis and are not necessarily founded on a thorough understanding of the environmental impacts of hydropower. Their concern revolved around scenic tourism that would be harmed and the difficulties that would result unintended economic development.

While expressing displeasure over the parishes that "choose" not to participate in the economic benefits provided by tourism, the city of *Baños* elite class spoke as if their interests were all encompassing: "The town has been defined by ecotourism, we do not want a hydroelectric damn. We want *Baños* as a beautiful place. "" It is important to mention that not to say that many rural people do not believe that the city's elite sufficiently understand what ecotourism entails and that its very implementation would have to take place in the rural sphere with the urban sphere taking most of the visible credit and economic gain associated with its promotion. Many have assumed this homogenized ecotourism (basically traditional tourism with a slight nature twist) discourse, and therefore are interested in creating community and tourism companies to be included in the travel circuit. In the statements gathered in during field investigation the population of the city of *Baños*, expressed for example:

> "Identity at the cantonal level is based in nostalgia from the 2005 (development) plan. All of these current talks of identity and modernity and the need for architectural and urban services only idealize the past. People want to recover the past before they live in the present in *Baños*. From the 2005 plan the popular thing in it was ecotourism, who even knows what that was then, let alone now? (Interviewee A4 06/18/2011). "

In interviewees' statements there was a clear idealization of the past of *Baños* at a city and cantonal level, its environment remembered as "pristine", lack of social problems such as crime, smaller, "true" *Baneña* population with morals that was that was born and raised in *Baños*. Urban city respondents did not consider the life situations in the past of the other parishes in the canton; to them the canton in its entirely is only the

small city itself. This discourse was dominant, in urban inhabitants and contrasts with the lack of interest in the current political affairs. However, in *Rio Verde*, the "Eco-touristic" *Baños* discourse is often stated to emphasize the need to strengthen the sector, and provide greater participation of communities.

Pre-existing factors that have not been addressed in depth are connections or lack thereof among ecotourism, protection of natural areas, and other strategies for biodiversity conservation. Initiative for environmental planning, by offering services and natural attractions and then linking it with aspects of cultural interest was severely underdeveloped. The diminished local government capacity to receive and respond to demands in civil society was clearly paralleled in its inability to answer efficiently to touristic and environmental demands and interests.

Some comments on this type of "popular" tourism are that there's a surplus of undifferentiated services and a lack of commitment among local tour operators. While domestic tourism is mainly associated with recreation and relaxation, there is a latent market potential for ecotourism. With so many tour operators offering the same product, in this case experience and adventure, it generates a lack of vision in social and environmental responsibility. Also, it confuses the meaning of ecological tourism or ecotourism adventure merely an activity that does not apply sustainability concepts. On the other hand it is noteworthy that the use of tourism by certain employers has affected small communities and natural areas.

The tourism system assumes the role of a safety valve, rupture promised for domestic visitors burdened with the daily rhythms of the cities, and fails to support a more sustainable eco-tourism. Ecotourism is not proposed as the solution to all problems, but the understanding the 2005 proposed ecotourism campaign disconnect and the Canton's current state could aid in the development of more sustainable tourism and conservation methods.

According to local people, the conservation theme always coincides with the

tourism phenomenon. Therefore, the management of tourism in protected areas is growing weaker and weaker and the number of visitors in protected areas is increased slowly and the most popular natural areas. There are conflicts between national and international tourists, those who use and visit the same tourist attractions.

Ecotourism, in its purest form, should be proposed as a complementary economic activity so that there is no over-dependence. In this sense, ecotourism activities should promote the development of other projects and / or improve the capacity of communities to use their environment in a sustainable manner. Ecotourism aims to integrate sustainability principles in all instances (ecological, economic and cultural) with the educational nature of the tourist experience in a preservation setting (Boo, 1992). It also means a commitment to the local community in the planning and management of long-term activity. However, according to Azevedo Luíndia (2005, 2007) ecotourism has not been able to provide conservation measures for natural landscapes. The conservation program costs are high and largely, no lack of investment in clean technologies: water management, waste separation, and alternative energy, recycling, among others. Although the package prices are high, the fact is that you cannot generate an appropriate investment to cover the costs of conservation areas (Azevedo Luíndia, 2007).

The question of *baneño* citizen identity revolves on the maintenance and creation of new political representation and spaces where public concerns can be voiced and circulated. Human activities and the environment are transformed into each community and parish, they happen to have a meaning of a complex of interactions where the approximations are reinvented between tourism, culture, and traditions. With this, the culture thus assigns symbolic and economic value to nature through their own modes of appropriation of resources (Leff, 2000).

When the "symbolic forms" are metamorphosed in ecotourism attractions, function as strategies of ethnic and economic benefits. The most used symbolically in the canton *Baños* is the Virgin *de Agua Santa* (Virgin of Holy Water). With over 200 years of religious pilgrimage, his image is now linked to water, in particular to the only

waterfall located within the city of *Baños*.

Eco-touristic planning policies and destination management need to be improved through more coherent and consistent planning (Pasquis & Andrade, 2008). In this thesis, one could argue that there is surplus of perceptions or views of the economic and social elite in *Baños*, and project proposals and business strategies help to maintain a false image of each actor, which feed the numerous conflicts in the region. The dialogue between actors should be better known and publicly circulated so that the views in play can be understood consistently among the various actors, including the urban population of *Baños* and the rural parish population.

Linking the happenings and social interests in the *Baños* canton to the national context makes it evident that the Tourism and Environment Ministries are relatively new institutions with budgetary and technical-administrative weaknesses, and possess debilitated coordination between them. The *Baños* Environment and Tourism offices are one in the same. There is no current public information about the actual demand profiles and potential eco-tourism against which the operators are able to compare so they perform their own analysis with missing data. The canton and most municipalities in the country have technical and administrative weaknesses that surface publically when management responsibilities appear. Ecotourism management faces many obstacles in the canton with a lack of alliances and agreements between actors who offer products and services. Ecotourism has developed out of sequence with the pace of the social, economic, and political spheres of the canton. Because of infrastructure instability the quality of some destinations in the rural parishes such as restaurants and nature trails have decreased and fallen into disarray.

In Canton *Baños* during field research there were no studies that addressed the capacity limits for specific tourist sights, nor systematized information or databases about the number and origin of visitors visiting certain attractions. This signals a significant disconnect in the cognitive and temporal treatment of tourism for the Canton from the municipality especially considering the contemporary growth trend of tourism. This same

growth trend can be used to reintroduce the argument for justifying the expansion of the classification of protected areas.

Tourism, as seen as a sector that generates jobs and wealth, has been treated as a modern myth. The employment generated by tourism is largely poor, unstable, and without the capacity building that is necessary to balance other economic activities that it tends to compete with on a monopolistic scale. The penetration of tourism in some areas has led to economic dependence on its services sector and focuses the issue of monitoring the impact of public use and availability of resources to two distinct social classes that rise, the tourist and the non-tourist. The components for environmental conservation in the *Baños* urban center were clearly tangible economic values. Thus, according to some *Baños* tour operators there is no other way to promote conservation, you have to "sell" the idea of keeping as an activity that is first and foremost economically profitable.

In biodiversity conservation, issues such as identity and social cohesion are essential to consider. Conservation has been defined as a development social construct and as an intervention by outside, "First World" agents. A "social construction" is not something that exists in nature per se but is set in historical processes. The idea of "invention" refers to some manipulation by the political power of individuals and groups, including intellectuals and scholars, who are the objects to be selected assets and then look for its legitimacy on the part of society. Thus, international initiatives for the conservation of nature and the environment inhabit a delicate balance between politics and local awareness/connection to natural resources.

Cultural heritage and landscape preservation are considered two of the essential elements for development of tourism (Boo, 1992). In this context, tourism is a complex of activities caused by the temporary and voluntary movement of people away from their place of habitual residence, investing and spending their resources that enter into the places visited. Tourism as a modern social phenomenon arises from the need of different social classes to change the routine of everyday life, family and work, for reasons such as working hours and stress. Tourism is the practice where social groups express their

cultural norms acquired in the daily life of their environment, to carry out such practices as specific to their history and culture. Tourism is very pliable and its practices are defined by the cultural norms and physical environment of each social group.

Social classes in the canton differ in relation to production, access to natural resources, ownership of certain assets, but also for the symbolic aspect of consumption. The benefits of tourism development in *Baños* are obvious: obtaining financial resources, employment generation, provision or improvement of equipment and urban infrastructure, and improving public spaces. Tourism can become, however if not adequately planned, a threat both to the heritage sites themselves and for some aspects of life of host communities. The term "sustainable" means development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs in the economic tradition, which implies a state of equilibrium between production and management of natural resources.

The process of economic development in some rural areas of the country has in recent years intensive occupation of the areas where they concentrate more favorable conditions for tourism investment. However, it is often observed that the inadequate management of the municipality and regional representatives of the province and canton negatively affect tourism.

The close relationship between environmental conservation and the growth of tourism raises several questions for the management of regional and local authorities as well as private entrepreneurs involved in the sector. These questions implicate the compatibility of tourism development and economic diversification, how to deal with threats and demands on the local tourism market, and socioeconomic problems. The urban-rural continuum is crucial in the social and economic inclusion of rural communities into the social fabric of the *Baños* canton.

Canton *Baños* Environmental perspectives in relation to the presence of hydroelectric dams

There are additionally two consistent, long-term environmental threats in the *Baños* canton: levels of *Tungurahua* volcanic activity, and second, the construction of more dams in the area. These two threats are intrinsically related to environmental conditions, the first is given by natural processes themselves, and the second, a derivative of human intervention.

The Canton hasn't escaped the sustainable energy discourse that has dominated the global and national agenda and natural resource semantics in legislation. From an energy governance perspective (Fontaine, 2010) energy supply, demand, and consumption pose several fundamental problems, especially for energy security (supply) by the depletion of hydrocarbon reserves in the next three decades and low installed power from energy renewable. Also, to meet renewable energy total energy consumption, growing at a rate higher than GDP, the country's dependence plays (seen in other sectors such as hydrocarbon) on foreign investment in China and Russia for hydroelectricity and imported technology packages for the implementation of projects from renewable sources (biofuels, solar, wind or geothermal) (Lopez, 2009).

Dangerous precedents have already been placed in the Ecuadorian Amazon. National integration policies that modern states have implemented in the Amazon have seen it as a region of extractive resource reservations. The electricity generation from the most abundant and unstable in the Amazon (water) as seen in the problems faced by government policies and strategies to promote *Coca Codo* Sinclair project in the *Napo* Province. The *Baños* canton is geographically considered as an ecosystem transition area from the Amazon towards the southern highlands and has been referred to as the "gate to the Amazon." The proliferation of hydroelectric projects may have deeper roots in the hydroenergetic frontier movement than what is visible on the surface because of its close proximity to the Amazon and the number of water resources that eventually feed into its tributary system. One can infer that many of the political and legislative constraints that exist in the Ecuadorian Amazonian provinces towards certain mega hydro projects may be avoided if implemented in a non-Amazonian province such as *Baños de Agua Santa*. Amazonian references and presence is already present in the canton as previously

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mentioned with the 010 Law and *Río Verde*.

The amount of existing water resources in the Canton further benefits and harms the conservation potential and landscape value, but there are few studies that document this biodiversity. The sub-basins of the Canton also provide water and electricity to many villages/towns/cities of the country, especially two dams *Agoyán* and *San Francisco* located 6 km and 12 km outside of the city itself. The two are located within twelve kilometers from each other. These water systems from the southern the *Pastaza* River Basin, which is shared with *Peru,* and then feed into the South American Amazon River.

There is little published information that can pinpoint the source of the construction and externalities (social and environmental) of these two major dams. For the sake of national electricity generation and energy polices, contactors from the Ecuadorian state Environment and Energy Ministries, approved the dams *Agoyán* and San Francisco causing big losses at environmental, cultural and social levels such as the disappearance of the *Agoyán* waterfall and a decrease in eighteen water sources between Rio Blanco and Rio Negro a distance 45 km. This has adversely affected hundreds of families and communities of *Río Blanco, Río Verde* and *Machay*.

According to local people, the economic benefits provided by the hydroelectric dam *Agoyán* in terms of employment are practically nonexistent, just as those of the San Francisco dam. The elite of the city of *Baños* has internalized, at least the private discourse level, that hydroelectric projects proposed by the national and regional government would jeopardize the current tourism infrastructure. In late 2000, unlike the population of the city of *Baños*, the *Río Verde* and *Río Negro*, parishes were initially identified as potential hydroelectric project projects because they did not receive the any economic income from tourism.

Local families in the rural parishes of *Rio Blanco, Rio Verde*, and *Rio Negro*, 6-20 km, outside of the city of *Baños* have had very negative experiences concerning the construction of hydroelectric dams in the Canton, which has created a very specific

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environmental awareness with water. Moreover, the effects on the Canton and its inhabitants are crucial: The disappearance of the *Agoyán* waterfall also dried 11 kilometers of the Pastaza River, next to *Llanganates-Sangay* ecological corridor, dried the drinking water in several neighborhoods and polluted the waters of others. These are only some effects mentioned by the population a full a social and environmental analysis is necessary to determine the full ongoing and past effects. It is very clear that hydroelectric projects should not be approved without an analysis of all environmental and social externalities, but this is rarely the case in an area with low political and governmental transparency. Also, it is not very clear what are the real benefits to the country versus the Canton, with low hydroelectric generation. The matter is placed on a scale of whether to justify to solve the national energy problem compared to the only 20,000 thousand affected who are already facing environmental problems such as the possible eruption of the Tungurahua volcano.

The San Francisco hydroelectric project opened in November 2007, nine months in advance, so that the Brazilian company *Norberto Odebrecht* could receive 20 million dollars as a construction incentive. Through a system of interconnected tunnels, the *Agoyán* dam draws water from several natural springs to generate 157 megawatts of electricity. But after a year in 2008, the *San Francisco* dam, which cost the nation more than $ 240 million (excluding the 20 million incentive price tag), was blocked by construction problems, after which the company *Odebrecht* was expelled from the country.

President Correa stated in 2008, when he drove to *Odebrecht* out of Ecuador: "It is confirmed that (*Odebrecht*) is gone and yesterday I signed the decree affirming the expulsion, and also expelling the audit firm, because it is also responsible for San Francisco disaster, which has also the fault of Brazilians. "And this: "We cannot allow a company to make mock our country and *Odebrecht* has." And now a company becomes plump caused serious damage to the Ecuadorian State. Despite their previous expulsion, *Odebrecht* returned to Ecuador in 2010, the transnational corporation that left 18 sources of water dry, including the *San Jorge* waterfall in *Baños*, by the Tunnel construction technique anti Hydroelectric Project San Francisco. Now *Manduriacu* build a

hydroelectric project in northwestern Pichincha. According to *Odebrecht* functionaries, the Brazilian company pledged with the Ecuadorian government to resolve all disputes and techniques to make the investments necessary to ensure that the San Francisco hydroelectric plant continues to operate fully in the long term.

If the current development model continues to be followed with the extractive political spoils and the national energy matrix based in oil, their social and environmental reality will drastically change.

Hydroelectric Project Illusions *El Topo* 1 and II

During early June 2011, a series of demonstrations against the hydroelectric project *El Topo* I and II that would generate 24 megawatts to the national energy matrix, divided the population of the *Río Negro* parish into clear pro and con camps. The relationship between them became aggressive verbal confrontations. Thus, residents of *Río Negro* supported and worked on the project, while the residents of *El Topo*, those living next to the construction of this work were opposed. National authorities in the electricity sector have sought to approve the construction of at least six new private hydroelectric projects in the *Baños* canton*: Topo 1, Topo 2, Abitagua, La Victoria, Río Verde Chico* and *Mullo Lligua*. It is anticipated that these projects will cause environmental degradation and poverty of the local population, who now lives sustainable tourism, the disappearance of the main attraction that drives that activity

On June 17, 2011 construction machinery entered the site area with the help of national police and dozens of residents who support the project and removed the road obstacles placed by the local opposition. The atmosphere of confrontation has spread to other towns and the *Azuay* and *Llanganates* colonies.

As an eyewitness to this event, I can attest that there was clear confusion in how the events were published in national newspapers. Thus, national newspapers *El Comercio* and *El Universo* reported that opponents faced forty local policemen they were mobilized from the city of *Baños* were placed in the middle to prevent assaulted with

sticks and stones. In practice nearly a hundred more national police and municipal baths, blocked the protesters from the village of *El Topo*, who were mostly women.

The main argument of *El Topo's* population to block hydroelectric works is environmental, based in the potential damage to vegetation and subtropical rivers in the area. Substantial and irreversible would occur, for example, with the *El Topo* River, which was described in 2002 as "a gift to the earth" by the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF). According to the WWF, *El Topo's* unique ecosystem holds 17 endemic plant endangered species and huge biodiversity as of 2002. Now, almost 10 ten years later, limited investigation has been able to be conducted to gain deeper knowledge into the biodiversity present in this area. The placement of hydroelectric projects will but obliterate this possibility.

The problem is part of a constant theme that began in 2005 when the country's national electricity company (CONELEC) issued the environmental permit for project construction and operation to the Energy and Environment Projects Company (PEMAF). The 120 inhabitants of *El Topo* maintain a radical opposition to the project. Meetings with the Governor of *Tungurahua*, Alexis Sanchez and involved community representations in June and July of 2011 have not been successful due to lack of solutions and differences in the language use and commonalities for recovery of the natural resources in question.

The president of the central area of *Río Negro*, Edgar Zavala, says that only the *El Topo* district disagrees with the projects. As in the case of *El Topo*, the *Río Negro* parishes will receive $ 140 000 cash for local infrastructure and approximately120 local people will be hired. Also, after building, the parishes have the long-term potential to receive USD 100,000 per year for 30 years. *Victor Mera* PEMAF legal adviser explained to the national press that the company spent seven years managing the construction project and the company comes under Articles 313 and 314 of the Constitution. Also, the company apparently doesn't need permission because the national electricity company CONELEC was previously authorized by the state in 2005 yet the constitutional articles

that have been cited didn't legally exist until 2008.

The articles in question state:

> Article 313. - The State reserves the right to manage, regulate, control and manage the strategic sectors in accordance with the environmental, precaution, prevention and efficiency principles. The strategic sectors, decision and exclusive control of the State are those which have their significance and magnitude decisive economic, social, political or environmental, and should be oriented to the full development of the rights and interests. Are considered strategic sectors of energy in all its forms, telecommunications, non-renewable natural resources, transportation and refining of hydrocarbons, biodiversity and genetic heritage, spectrum, water, and others determined by law.

> Article 314. - The State is responsible for the provision of drinking water utilities and irrigation, sanitation, electricity, telecommunications, roads, port and airport infrastructure, and others determined by law.

The Ecuadorian Constitution in the Landscape and Ecosystems section states however that:

> Section 404. - Ecuador's natural heritage unique and invaluable includes, among others, the outstanding physical, biological and geological value of which from the standpoint of environmental, scientific, cultural or scenic requires protection, conservation, restoration and promotion. Its management will be subject to the principles and guarantees that is enshrined in the Constitution and will be conducted according to land use and ecological zoning in accordance with the law.

In relation to the instituted on certain items in the Constitution, there are gaps and contradictions. In legal parlance, one side is justifying the entry of hydroelectric projects in the Articles 313 and 314, while Article 404 and 405 mention the protection, restoration and conservation. This division within the same legal language, is also present between the positions that stakeholders, in front of the subject hydroelectric *El Topo*.

Dilthey distinguishes between two levels of understanding, basic understanding, which is the understanding of expressions in what he calls properly understanding the objective or goal that spirit is what we do every day in our own language and our *sensus communis* (Dilthey, 2004). According to Dilthey (2004), the way things are said is more important than the possession of the truth, the pragmatist has no theory of truth, needs no realistic epistemology as the philosopher does. In this sense an existential perspective is taken on the linguistic – dialogic relationship, and makes a case for an interpretive relativism when faced with linguistic, cultural social, historical dimensions. The search for agreement between the partners must be through conversation or a fusion of horizons.

A bad deal is created if it possesses an ideal whose rules are strictly linear in nature and do not consider the complexity of an agreement.

The search for agreement began on a superficial cantonal level during the months of May-June 2011 a select segment of population in the City of *Baños* tried to demonstrate a common position before the hydro facility in Canton, which is clearly expressed in the following sentence "Community that denies hydropower contributes to conservation?" To preserve this image a variety of advertising mechanisms was used that attempted encouraged citizen participation in the collection of 700 of registered voter signatures under the national political banner of the (*la Revolución Ciudadana*) Citizens Revolution.

The campaign sought to combine the approach on environmental degradation in the Canton, the need for dialogue with the national state on the intensive presence of hydroelectric plants and dams and implement awareness programs on the subject. Expressions such as "The City of *Baños* breathes tourism" was a rallying point during the voting campaign because it represents a source of income for the population and economic base for most *báneño* citizens who depend directly or indirectly on tourism. Then, the campaign was a way to express on behalf of environmental protection and the threat of water resources on tourism as a key factor that has the status and conditions of nature.

The list of potential problems mentioned were water shortage, low productivity of agricultural land, and the few income of rural communities in terms of these we reflect on the interrelationship between society and environment, to understand the socio-economic phenomena and management of strategic natural resources for tourism. The key was the creation of a social base of cantonal cooperation on natural resources, primarily focused on water resources[10].

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[10]This was to strengthen the popular consultation process for water, directed by various sectors of *Baños*

Baños has seen the construction of two power plants: the *Agoyán* dam, which created literal tunnel for sewage from the provinces of *Cotopaxi, Tungurahua* and *Chimborazo,* located at just two kilometers from the city's center and *San Francisco*, whose technical construction using rock boring and anti-tunnel driving water caused the disappearance of primary and secondary water springs, waterfalls and streams, a fact that brought serious environmental degradation and immediate reduced quality of life to the rural parishes, and increased poverty levels for hundreds of villagers living along 11 kilometers the left bank of the *Pastaza* river.

The National Electoral Council (NEC) gave permission for residents to collect signatures and carry out the plebiscite that contained a single question:

> "Given the economic, social and environmental determinants of local population: do you agree that the waters of the rivers of Canton *Baños* are utilized solely for tourism and conservation, water projects for human consumption and agricultural use, from the completion of this consultation? "

The keywords that have been coined in Canton have been, preserve, protect and recover. Faced with only this question is was intended to encompass issues related to the status of hydroelectric dams, rivers, tourism, and conservation.

The real result of the voting campaign limited the field of action and the entry of new players that could contribute to the enforcement and practice of local environmental governance that proved ineffective and was eventually applied to the nation-state level. Then, with the involvement of the State, there was a legitimate effort by the municipality at local and regional levels. To achieve its objective, the registered voter community in the canton needed 1,565 signatures. After fulfilling the requirements, the CNE needed to verify the authenticity of the collected signatures and then pass the case to the country's Constitutional Court (CC). As argued by the local population, this measurement is performed based on Article 104 of the Constitution, which reads that "the public may request the convening of public consultation on any matter (...) When local character will be supported a number not less than 10% of the electoral register."

As a manifestation of the people who live and depend on water sources in the

canton *Baños de Agua Santa*, the request for a water referendum was meant to encourage the protection of it as a strategic resource and point out the direct connection between the state or condition of nature and tourism. Conservation can also be seen as a strategic resource but according to municipal actions and reactions community-based strategies to communicate very well have been routed. In summary, overall urban population believes that the main task is to improve municipal infrastructure, and within that, to improve water service. In relative terms, for urban dwellers is also very important to promote tourism and beautification, which in turn is less important for the rural parishes. These where appropriate, consider that the responsibility of the municipality must be concentrated in the tourist infrastructure, buildings, public works and others.

According to the governor of the province of *Tungurahua* Mr. *Alexis Sanchez*, the company offered thousands of dollars to communities that are supportive. With this support, the governor is on the side in favor of hydropower. He cited that Ecuador recently signed a contract for the construction of the hydroelectric project *Delsitanisagua*, located in the province of *Zamora Chinchipe*, with the company *Hydrochina* for $ 215 million.

During an interview in late July of 2011 by popular radio broadcast in the *Baños* canton, the governor described the project based solely on economic terms:

> "Officials from various government departments including the Ministry of Interior, *Senagua*, CONELEC, headed by the Governor of T*ungurahua*, *Alexis Sanchez*, entered the area of *El Topo*, in *Baños*, to see the beginning of the work of building the hydroelectric project will generate 22.7 megawatts. The *El Topo* project complex will cost of $ 43 million. Construction will last about two years after it was postponed for about four years due to opposition from various community members. The postponement has led to damage to the State of about $ 40 million annually, which is the cost of thermal power production for meet the 22.7 MW that can't be produced by the construction of the project not Mole.   Prior to the start of construction, several residents held demonstrations. For this reason, the National Police intervened with an operation to dislodge them".

In the perspective of the people of *El Topo*, there was no communication or dialogue process on the income of electric utilities, engineers, and state officials.

> "There is no paper signed by an *El Topo* inhabitant of to give permission to these people. Contract firms went directly to *Rio Negro* people do not even come to the communities closest to the anticipated site and especially don't intend to contract them to work with hydroelectric projects.

Where is the justice in that? Nobody wants to consult before the entrance of the machinery so we had to demonstrate, protest, and be heard in some way. We're not dead, not yet. We like that when we remove all the water (A7 Interviewed 07/05/2011). "

According to the governor, *Alexis Sanchez*, if facilitated the dialogue before entering the site, and pledged to ensure compliance with the agreements reached with the community, including a trust of about $ 170,000 to finance social works for the village type of influence on what will be the new hydroelectric plant. Would be planned so that 70 percent of inhabitants of the Canton are part of the plant workers in the works. In addition, the governor says that is "congratulate" the beginning of this project to continue development of the country's energy mix to renewable energies. In his view, opposition to such projects are usually given by "ignorance, bad faith and worse by corruption, so it is necessary that projects are properly socialized and part of its resources generated annually, serve to sustainable development of the area. "

In a text published in the newspaper "My City" is expressed as follows:

"As always the live-away business owners and companies, their supporters and true disruptive power of sister communities are already enjoying the benefits and fatten their pockets from the sale of certified emission reduction of CO_2, i.e. you put a price to fresh air provided by forests of Topo more electricity to come at a good price, the government quickly recover the investment, rarefying the germ of death for new projects to the rivers of Canton. You be dying of thirst beside the fountain itself. "

Despite previous experience of local people regarding the *San Francisco* hydroelectric *Agoyán* and installed in the canton, environmental awareness on the implementation of new hydroelectric projects has not lifted a unified force positions. There are isolated segments of residents of the city of *Baños* who were trying to spread leaflets with the slogan "Wake up People of *Baños*: Solidarity begins at home" without the name of the responsible author, in an attempt to sensitize the local population, and had a radical language.

"The Criminals of Nature are celebrating. The evil bastards, who do not realize the value and respect due to our motherland, sold and prostituted to the lives that they bought. "

"When people do not acolyte to the particular interests of the government of *Rafael Correa*, discriminate and spits on the noble ideals of environmental awareness."

"For the good living of our people, we say no more hydroelectric plants throughout the territorial

jurisdiction of this beautiful paradise of America *Baños de Agua Santa*. You are destroying *El Topo*, where is our *Baneñidad* spirit ? "

On November 10, 2011 the National Electoral Council (NEC) denied the request for a voting referendum requested by community members of *El Topo*, in the *Rio Negro* the parish. The query was for the population of the canton *Baños* to be allowed to rule on whether the waters of the rivers of the canton could be utilized solely for tourism, conservation activities, water projects for human consumption, and agricultural use but not for power generation through the construction of hydroelectric plants.

CNE's resolution to deny the request was justified because the signatures supporting the referendum did not arrive "on time" rather it was due to deliver until September 10, 2011 and *El Topo* committee delivered it on the September 12, 2011.

In the excerpts, the social construction of an identity of a "people" is presented that hasn't materialized yet, but rather the emerging collective construction of *Baneñidad,* or local identity is analyzed.

This non-materialization is also present by the lack of clear data presentation evident in the local government structure to inform the public about the water issue in the canton. Faced with the circumscribed ability to report using a neutral language that allows access to technical and environmental criteria precisely, by the town of *Baños* and the *Tungurahua* governor, the few cells that if there is environmental awareness in the Canton, it has become more extreme in its language and expression, thus generating the same limitations to reach consensus and understanding under Habermas's communicative theory guidelines.

As one interviewee stated:

> "The projects we currently have in our city have not helped in any way, socially or economically, or with employment, or lowered costs, on the contrary persistent resources have declined and that many of them are permanently contaminated, it is time to get up as many times we have to defend our little piece of heaven, a true oasis. Interviewed 06/07/2011 A8). "

Identifier words like "oasis" and "small piece of heaven" and exemplify how local people view and interpret their environment in idyllic terms. But there was no movement in any part of the Canton *Baños* to join sections of the population to confront the "threat" of hydroelectric projects. The local environmental awareness exists only in a few isolated groups linked to local NGOs such as *Oscar Efrén Reyes* Foundation.

Local conservation Dialogue

Levels of mass public participation and community cohesion have been shown in times of heightened natural crisis during natural disasters, chiefly from the Tungurahua volcano that has been particularly active since 1999. The immediate objectives in times of heightened alert of the population of *Baños* are mobilization and evacuation. An example of this are the evacuation procedures and return to the district after the eruptions of the *Tungurahua* volcano. The persistent threat of the volcano has been a unifying force across all social classes, rural and urban areas, local and provincial areas, since 1999.

In 2002, a study by the University of South Florida conducted a community resilience strategy analysis in the context of natural disasters and health, mainly in the Canton *Baños* after the longest evacuation period after the 1999*Tungurahua* eruption. According to the survey, citizens exhibited a special and unique cognitive reaction with natural hazards after the evacuation event. Most of the cantonal population was in temporary locations for three to six months in October 1999 to about April 2000. The last refuge was closed in September 2000, but many residents who lived in the predominantly rural areas had not returned home at that time. Groups of mainly women in numbers of 20 to 30 broke down the barriers surrounding their homes and properties guarded by the national Ecuadorian police force in order to gain access and continue with their interrupted lives.

The emergency evacuation experienced by the population aggravated the already tense social situation, resulting in negative consequences, primarily in the form of social upheaval that escalated gradually in the coming months and years (Tobin &Whiteford, 2002).According to the University of South Florida study, during the evacuation, urban

and rural residents reported a high competition for scarce resources like water and food in the temporary shelters. The statements of interviewed people showed that such competitive behavior has become common in the *Baños* canton in the years after the initial crisis. Since 1999, the competition for economic security in the form of businesses catering to the local tourism industry has fused economic, social, political decisions into one single theme, exclusivity. "*Baños* is for *Baneños*" and the distinction is clear with the high levels of tourism that *Baños* has throughout the year; social groups are socially identified as foreign tourists, Ecuadorian tourists, or "real" *Baneños* entailing being born and raised in *Baños*.

To understand environmental issues in the Canton, the research process centered on social communication networks among the urban population in the city of *Baños* and the rural perspective from *Río Verde*. In overview, dialogue analysis was implemented during public community events sponsored by or concerning the municipality. This information was used to determine the areas where stakeholders and constituents in the population can share information and the mechanisms by which diverse social actors process the interactions among them.

Most people interviewed throughout the research process thought that natural resource conservation could be successfully achieved through tourism on a business level and not through local governance mechanisms. The comments and collected perceptions showed a range themes based in sustainability, local political competition, and the use of nature as a form of marketing.

In relation to sustainability, people channeled their criteria from this perspective into the argument that conservation can be achieved through the activities related to sustainable tourism and is the best way to promote agendas while local conservation improves the local economy through natural resources and scenic attractions. The urban and rural interviewed populations did not mention exactly "sustainable" signified or how it could be applied, but did refer to it as a type of management unrelated to "those grandiose construction projects" built just for politicians. This was in reference to two

specific hot springs renovation projects launched by Mayor *Hugo Pineda* (before the impeachment process began) in 2009.

For those interviewed, tourism and conservation management should be categorized as private because government institutions are unfamiliar and ineffective. The common perspective found in this body of opinion was that tourism is critical to the development of the Canton so it's easier to educate tourists visiting the region trying to "take care" of natural resources through awareness campaigns rather than diversify the local economy. This approach was contradictory stating the need to educate the tourists in conservation and not the actual local population itself, urban and rural. They recognized that *Baños* has a real sense of nature but that it should be tapped and not left "untouched" as it would be in a conservation scenario. Conversely, the related challenges and perceptions of tourism were based in consumption; they consume rather than conserve natural resources.

Another set of perceptions with religious overtones, claimed that God gave this world to "protect, enjoy, and not to destroy." Future generations have an increasingly difficult and complex a role in respect to nature because they have to pay for the past transgressions of their ancestors.

During the research some features commented on "special" collective image of the Canton. Several informants have referred to the social status of the *bañeno* in the last 12 years as a "psychosis". Attempting to incorporate so many facets of population identity in the canton, natural disasters, community resilience, tourism, and foreignness, can disfigure the matter at hand so instead I analyzed the unique nature of the *Baños* population in regards to governance and the environment.

Collective thinking about green spaces in the canton was diffuse among urban and rural inhabitants. For example, a *Baños* citizen said "The protected areas that we have in our canton, must be maintained like the *Sangay* and *Llanganates* National Parks because they have been given to us by the Environment Ministry.

The Ministry of the Environment has the national and local authority for managing protected areas, however these sites correspond more towards municipal management than to national. One respondent from *Río Verde* stated:

"All I can say about nature is that there are people who understand it and others may not realize it exists. We, in *Rio Verde*, count on nature to live each day (A9 Interviewed 10/7/2011). "

"Politicians can talk because they have words to waste, but here we know how important the environment is because we have to conserve space in the entire canton, not only in these national parks (A9 Interviewed 10/07/2011)."

The divergence between the two statements is subtle, but essential. In the everyday urban conservation discourse there exists a means of promoting tourist attractions and in the rural, the same issue will demand an analysis of their own spatial and livelihood needs because their daily lives are dependent on natural resources

Local and international NGOs have not been able to unite the interests of social actors, even when the parties share a shared interest in the canton, as is the common goal of increasing tourism. Furthermore, it is difficult to comment on the range of expectations of the general population of *Baños.* In theory, a hegemonic discourse in *Baños* has been established and is characterized by considering tourism as an "engine of development" and on this basis have been alienated public functions. This address is shared by much of the county, even in sectors that are not tourism. Still, the problem is that in *Baños* municipal participation and political representation focuses on only one sector, the urban organizations related to tourism and traditional sources of financial support for the municipality.

Baños has been in a gradual, transitive process towards Westernized models of modernity ever since its' tourism began to gather momentum in the last 15 years. During the last four mayoral election campaigns the canton has been constructed in an image of long-term tourism. On the civil society level, there has been apparently increased interest in environmental issues but always through a touristic lens.

The discussion and development of both issues demand a greater participation in government. However, on a practical level, the coordination between city hall and local civil society is weak. The dominance of the private sphere in decision-making is almost unspoken with general public of canton unaware of the real reasons behind its importance; as a result, the public sphere loses value in the eyes of local civil society. In *Baños*, many of the decisions on environmental issues and tourism are not taken in the public sphere, but rather in the private sphere. In that sense, has moved the public space, which is the space where democracy takes place.

Ecociencia held workshops in the city of *Baños* during the drafting stage at the Cantonal Development Plan in 2005. It was revealed that the local population had no social fabric that unified them and personal interest was the greatest social motivator, which added more to the distrust of the population and displayed the weak institutional capacity of cantonal councils. That study was based on an analysis of the Cantonal Development Plan formulated in 2005. The development plan objectives issued in an estimated period of ten years to 2012 in the fields of territory, environment, economy, and social development. The main vision concerning municipality functions as per the 2005 plan is reflected in the following paragraph:

> "Municipal management and other institutions must be made to a policy of conservation of natural resources in addition to the tourist to achieve sustained and sustainable development. The cantonal vision for 2012 will be an ecotourism destination of the equatorial Andes, and route to biodiversity is an international ecotourism adventure center and cascades, enclave of *Sangay* and *Llanganates* ecological corridor, known for its natural and cultural richness, enveloping themselves at the foot of the volcano *Tungurahua.* "(Cantonal Development Plan, 2005)

In the six years after the incorporation of this development plan there have been few efforts to foster a better relationship between the environment and tourism activities. Upon further analysis, the natural resources of the *Baños* canton are in the same categorization of exploitation as a source of tourism revenue, without going into a more sustainable relationship among conservation, environment, and economy.

The basic management of the *Llanganates- Sangay* ecological corridor has been

placed with the national parks and has not been incorporated with the rest of the canton nor with any sort of societal attachment since its creation by the World Wildlife Fund in 2002 (Ecociencia, 2005). The lack of institutional technical capacity, along with the problems of patronage and the underrepresented rural, is characteristic of the institutional problems of the municipality. It has limited technical capacity to implement zoning, management plans, and conservation projects, among other environmental initiatives.

Conservation practice in the Ecuadorian protected areas subsystems is subject to conflicting interests and when it comes to implementing the goals of autonomous decentralized protected areas due to lack of understanding of environmental issues in context, on a case by case basis. The Ecuadorian State has been the prime initiator of the creation of protected areas in the country since the 1930's, in the twentieth century following the logic of conservation needs identified in the international arena as a priority to ensure the future livelihood of mankind. Thus, in 1936, the State created the first protected area, the Galapagos National Park and by 2006 there were total 34 protected areas, covering 18% of its land area (Ministry of Environment). For this purpose, in most cases, areas far from population centers are chosen, as in the Amazon region through the historical review may show that the State has not been able to exercise control over the interests of traders and even same representations of their local institutions. The general policy during the two decades (1960 to 1980) in the twentieth century was the expansion of the agricultural export-oriented and colonization pressure to reduce Andean peasant (Ministry of Environment, 2007).

The issue that is not always at the surface of these environmental conservation decisions is the political agenda, be it economic and social conservation, it isn't a subject of interest at that time, it is difficult to understand why in the 1970's the most important conservation areas in the country were created, in terms of surface and geographic/political representation. In the 1980's, which coincides with the general economic crisis and the dismantling of state policies on various issues (particularly so in agriculture whose institutions were the subject of conservation), there wasn't any impetus to create protected areas (Narvaez, 2007).

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The second period of great growth occurs in the 1990's to 11 new protected areas. By then there was a global positioning of the subject, and Latin America, the concern was evident. It is significant that until 1996 creating new protected areas and beyond the country is experiencing an intense political instability.

The policy framework on protected areas in Ecuador has grown steadily in recent decades (Ministry of Environment, 2009). Beginning in 1992 when approving the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), this instability coincides with the creation of the Ministry of Environment and this assumes control of the National System of Protected Areas (SNAP) (Ministry of Environment, 2009).

In 2005 the Ministry of Environment has formulated the "Policies and Strategic Plan of the National Protected Areas System 2007-2016." It is a guiding document and planning tool that guides the efforts of the National Environmental Authority, and the document was consolidated as mandatory for the Ministry of Environment and the actors involved in the management of protected areas in the country. Strategies for strengthening the SNAP, the plan developed a proposal for structuring that serves the interests of conservation of regional governments, indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian communities, and private owners.

For some local representatives and members of the municipality, the ecological corridor *Llanganates - Sangay* is not relevant because it presents no current political or legislation value, its presence is symbolic. This was compounded by distrust of the municipality by the parties concerned in it's creation through the World Wildlife Fund in 2002. (Ecociencia, 2005). The general *Baños* population did not, and do not, necessarily share this municipal distrust. In this sense, the municipal institution is not a reflection of civil society, but is an entity that should provide the space for the cantonal identity formation.

Thus, the perception that people have of the municipality as an institution is better in the urban sphere than the rural. One explanation for this is that the municipality is

closer to the people of the city, while its policies are not aimed at overcoming the rural-urban divide. This gap is also marked by physical and geographical distance, but is much more to do with the little interest to the rural local government, which is expressed in disconnection of public policy. These differences not only demonstrate that there is an imbalance between urban and rural areas, but that there is a weak centralized decision-making process them and lack of demands and environmental issues, social and economic fabric of urban and rural population of the municipality.

The problems facing civil society also directly affect municipal management. The debate may be concentrated to two pillars: the level of incidence of civil society and municipal capacity to process social demands. So the first is based on creating a public sphere, public participation and mechanisms to allow access to municipal decisions. The second is based on the need for strong institutional and technical capacity of the municipality.

It is important to keep in mind, as a precedent in the canton; social actors' meaning citizens, participation has been limited to a kind of "consultative" capacity. In *Baños*, political apathy has significantly impacted the local social fabric. The missing links and relationships between organizations have clear associations with political beliefs and decades of opinions about the Ecuadorian state. The technical capacity of the municipality, distrust of the population, and the same practices of favoritism towards the municipal urban conditions affect environmental governance in the entire canton.

Nevertheless, the successful implementation of a municipal subsystem of protected areas could be possible if the public sphere expanded and created a platform on which to discuss environmental issues related to tourism, combining the biological and social variables present in environmental management.

According to modern social science, human beings and nature are related based on three core elements are: 1) the work or the material transformation of nature, 2) the mythology or the search for the explanation of the origin (being human as part of

something), and 3) the aesthetic experience of admiring natural forms. All thought of every culture is composed of these elements, but cultures are differentiated by the emphasis on each of them. The term culture refers not to a specific culture, rather to certain trends that all human cultures have in how they relate to their environment.

In Ecuador, the national environmental authority leaded by the Environment Ministry, has designed several strategies such as promoting the creation of conservation areas, with the participation of local governments (municipalities). Most notable of these, is that national policies and the Strategic Plan of the National System of Protected Areas recognize sub-Sectional Government Areas at municipal local governments. They include at least 16 areas in three different periods of viability, as well as some more specific proposals, given by the municipalities themselves, to organize the management of these areas. It is an important, though not the only, the in situ conservation strategies, which added to the areas of regional interest, contribute to national systems of protected areas in different ways, for example, in the conservation of biodiversity, maintenance of environmental services and conservation of water resources and forestry.

Protected areas of regional governments would be important segments in land and ecosystem connectivity, and they should encourage inter-municipal coordination and coordination with various levels of government and other local actors. They have arisen mainly as an initiative of the local population, which can achieve its commitment to protect and participate in its management.

Environmental issues have great potential to mobilize a large segment of the population, based in the interest in conservation and ecotourism projects. This potential has been revealed through biological studies of more than seven endemic species of orchids of the genus *Triënte Teagueiamas* of endemic plant species that can only be found in the high basins of the Pastaza River. Certain environmental initiatives have gained the municipalities interest, but not for purely environmental reasons.

During early 2011 the municipality was approached by a few proposals to conduct

studies on carrying capacity on select touristic attractions, the possibility of legalizing all nature paths in the canton in the name of the municipality, and the possible creation of a municipal protected area. Each of these proposals had to be passed first through the Chamber of Tourism before it could go any higher in the bureaucratic process. If the proposal did pass this first step, the individual or organization had to essentially market the proposal with specific emphasis on the amount of financial that it would need and could generate for the canton. The municipal protected area proposal specifically only gained momentum towards the summer as the tourism season drew closer seeing as the municipality peaked interest in the touristic presentation of the canton to national and foreign tourists. The original supporters of this kind of protected area were the two local environmental NGOs *Ecominga* and *Fundacion Oscar Efrén Reyes.* The proposal couldn't gain enough interest in other parts of local civil society since the predominant capital providers in tourism couldn't develop the area with restaurants or hotels and the municipality couldn't provide any funding for the project.

CHAPTER IV
CONDITIONS FOR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Factors affecting environmental governance in the Canton *Baños* are not expressed in an isolated manner; rather, appear in certain combinations that contain their own consequences and effects. Using Kooiman's three operational categories will be applied as follows to the canton; in terms of diversity, complexity, and dynamics. These categories are useful tools to characterize the diversity of actors, or entities interacting in a given system can characterize the complexity and architecture of the interactions, and can characterize the dynamic or the correctness of the development process and interaction between systems (Kooiman, 2005).

Diversity: Rulers and the governed: the demands and answers cycle

First and above all these, the challenge in the *Baños* study was to define the size of what we know as "political" and its relationship with civil society. Starting from this premise politics have traditionally been associated with specific sectors of society such as the church and private business institutions and in turn these structures have been seen as "power". Defined as political action, how it represents itself as a complex mixture of relationships where social actors and institutions constantly converge and struggle in a sort of circle that gives rise to times of social tension and cooperation which in turn, serve as rules that determine the functioning of social life. The process of governing, is in essence, to create knowledge, called an art form to secure access to communication as an essential right of citizenship. The focus on citizenship has to be public, participatory, and visible to the urban center and the rural parishes in the canton.

Participation is an essential aspect of the representativeness of the political system. The lack of participation favors the manipulation of interest, and provides both the 'sub-' as the over-representation of some of them. For participation to be enhanced by communication, is necessary to network operational information distribution, rather than hierarchical; invest in communication infrastructure in which the user can see and hear but also speak and be heard, and universal credible, accurate and timely (Lahera, 1995).

Only in this way, the communication process in the local area provides a link between the government and their local environment regional15. The process is manifested by the ability to activate functions of the different communicating involved in the relationship. This implies rights and responsibilities of information dissemination and other communicational elements that reinforce the process of local development and ensure community participation.

In the case of a rural area like *Rio Verde* with a location close to tourist circuit of Canton *Baños*, the environmental and conservationist discourse has focused on sustainable development then it is almost impossible to separate one from the other axis. Municipal conservation areas belong to management categories that have no correspondence with the overall management categories recognized by the national systems. It is essential to redefine as natural areas can coexist with urban populations and connect with the national protected areas. According to the collective thinking in *Baños*, citizens do not realize the societal and biological importance of National Parks *Llanganantes* and *Sangay*, and perceive them in abstract terms, bearing a weak connection related more to objectified maintenance rather than conservational concern.

A feature of the municipal leadership in *Baños* was found to be based more on personal circumstantial decisions about the personalities of the representatives employed. The common knowledge of the mayor's and councilors political parties and affiliated was not considered to be vital information so it wasn't in the population's long-term memory. In historical terms, the behavior of mayors based on the generation of polices and political action was very erratic, with some mayors being incumbents for upwards of 12 years and others barely serving their 4-year term. The main forms of communication that *Baños de Agua Santa* municipality generated correspond to a traditional model of a closed system.

The municipality demonstrated a mainly one-dimensional communication model where flyers are posted and printed based on the possible ordinances, amendments, and issues that internal communities deemed as salient. The municipality was understood as

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the dominant giver and the population as a passive receiver. The messages were issued without considering the establishment of a reciprocal relationship with the receiver, without considering the possibility of an exchange of roles between sender and receiver. Thus, local communications have been designed primarily to serve the needs and interests of municipal government.

Taking the range of comments, in general, municipalities are expected to generate continuous communication channels and committed to the information needs of citizens. The results in this area in *Baños* are modest, probably because the efforts put into it are few. For example, they mentioned the recent creation of a simple bulletin board as an important step for informing people who come to the municipal institution.

Currently, most municipalities in the country use different media to broadcast their messages, such as newspapers, local radio stations, and the Internet, but the interest remains at its heart, apolitical marketing strategy. In the *Baños* municipality, for those involved in the professional areas of information, the priorities of its work were aimed at creating an image of the municipality as an actor and promoter of tourism. Their efforts were devoted to matters of protocol, ceremonies and events all involving tourism. In this context, the vision of communication as an information process that is planned to serve the public was primarily lost.

Citizens employed by the municipality that participated in this research reported that the best way to be informed of the political sphere was to establish personal ties or associations with specific city officials. In this way say they are aware of what happens in their areas of interest and reported as to having friends in specific municipal social programs such as recreational summer school, and civic advisory boards. This implies, in turn, that people who do not maintain an integral person based relationship with the institution cannot use the municipality to fit their needs, thus not allowing for an overview what the *Baños* municipality as an institution in terms of their policies, programs and actions.

The multidimensional nature of the relationship between society and government has generated various approaches. However, the proposals of the theory of governance and a more specific approximation to environmental governance as a parameter for evaluating this relationship are still as rough estimations of the phenomenon, which must be specified when trying to analyze a specific case within a research project. This implies then limit what specific aspects are intended to evaluate and by what conceptual tools.

Different sizes, levels, and varieties of participation presents the need for abstraction and denotation, but also the consolidation of specific concepts such as the modes of communication influence that participation; abstract enough to be configured as a general tool analysis, but concise enough to allow an empirical evaluation in this regard. A communicative level of abstraction is an appropriate level for scientific research involving dynamic information gathering empirical and theoretical abstraction processes.

In this regard Kooiman (2005), indicates that long-range social trends have gradually increased the interdependencies between social subsystems, also generating a complex system of public-private interactions that have high complexity. From these positions we see governance as a system that denotes the agreements and the interactions between public and private dimensions to create opportunities, solve problems, set up institutions which will host the agreements and set up principles and rules governing such agreements and such institutions (Kooiman, 2005).So, governance as a system of complex government interactions can be approached in three different categories: diversity, complexity, and dynamics.

The complexity of public-private interactions can also be analyzed by grouping them into three different types of governance: self-governance, and co-governance hierarchy. The dynamics of self-governance, appeal to the notion of autonomy as a self-referenced dimensions but would be impaired for interactions with other systems however governed sectors outside governments hardly accept them. This mode of

governance tends to be chaotic but fluid interactions (Kooiman, 2005).

Civil society in this vein can be all encompassing as well as severely limited based on what is being analyzed, whether from the public or private sector, or both. Some citizens in the *Baños* canton are aware of this diversity present in the social spheres in which they inhabit but voice publicly in times of important public events such as elections:

> "In these times that we live in let us not be swayed by the usual suspects, they have already had their chance one way or another. Elections are opportunities and rewards to who deserves them. They have to earn their real respect for our people and its true development, one that in its work plan includes all of us: youth, adults, women, workers, entrepreneurs, farmers, and tourists. We are actors and we're there every day and not remember us only because they need to campaign (A9 interviewed 7/11/2011)".

Ironically this acknowledgement was found more in rural inhabitants' interviews than with the urban population.

> "It is time to change and make way for new people to give us a different perspective of what is really expected of them so we listen to their proposals and consider each point, its real value, and feasible projects to be fair with us and our city. That is what really matters, that whoever is to govern the canton be from the city, what could someone from any of the parishes know about running such a big and complex city? It's a question of different living standards. The mayor for example has to live in the city not on a farm. (A8 interviewed 7/6/2011)."

What Max Weber called civil society to a social relationship to the extent that social action is inspired by "an interest compensation for rational reasons" and / or "a union of interests with the same motivation" is clearly present in the above excerpt. However, the image of the civil society that is presented is fixed on the urbanity of the canton as opposed to conceiving it as an open integrated system of inputs and outputs. "The city" is the power source of civil society and this view observable among inhabitants from both the city and the rural parishes. The rural parishes tended to be absorbed into this urbanity dominance but the sheer fact that they are geographically isolated from the hub of popular verbal discourse. For local governance it improve in the *Baños* canton, taking from Kooiman's view, focus on horizontal interactions between

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public and private sectors aimed at strengthening arrangements through cooperation, coordination and collaboration must occur. Civil society is composed of diverse organizations, agencies and individuals that can be integrated with other human groups. Complex and diverse processes in different areas characterize civil society. From the beginning, civil society has been defined as a distinct space of a response to state and local phenomena. Society may reside in a "rational agreement or covenant" based on rational action (Weber, 2002 [1922]). Civil society is rarely free of conflict and the *Baños* canton is no exception.

> "Recently, tourism entrepreneurs with hotels have been acting solely in an attempt to improve their income, rather than be ahead of the competition through process reengineering, implementing strategies, economic reinvestment, and more business improvement decided to raise their prices excessively on holidays-nor make reservations for tourists without an alternative, and not paying a price commensurate to the service provided. My intention is not to attack the hotel industry, which is a very lucrative organization, but their touristic practices shouldn't define us all (A12 interviewed 7/18/11)

Response by part of the citizens can also be used as logical tool to attempt to achieve a specific agenda. Above, the individual was concerned with the actions of a few defining the majority. The rational action here under Weber would be balanced on the ability of citizens integrating among other agencies and organizations to try to auto-regulate certain functions that they interpret as negative ("hotels raising prices excessively") and express it publically to try and stop or alter them.

Complexity: The elusive definition of the use of environmental governance: beyond policies and law

Norberto Bobbio defines civil society as, "the sphere of social relations that are not regulated by the state in relation to non-governmental areas (Bobbio, 1989)." There are affirmed natural rights of individuals and the presence of components present in the local area but too small to have room in the national dialogue, therefore limiting the sphere of political power. Civil society consists of various forms of partnership, integration, and social change. The same combination forms exist in any group of human beings living in a shared space. So we can see so many complex relationships and

sidewalk viable levels of governance, and capacity to govern. But it is necessary to extend this approach to civil society participates in multiple spaces, dynamics, strategies that allow displays to intensify dialogue in and out of it, but also directing them towards the political system, it has the task to respond to them.

In the postmodern age, there is a diverse range of demands on the system from the perspective of institutional governance deficits and from how much governments have to absorb, construct, reinvent, refuse, and process these demands. It is therefore understandable that there are normal and expected imbalances between demands and responses, which become conflicts tolerated. There is however, a level at which the usual governance responses are ceasing to be adequate. Furthermore, these inadequacies come to the forefront when proliferations of anomalies or unexpected imbalances produce levels of crisis. For the *Baños* Canton, it is considered that these levels of crisis have not yet arrived but are a not so distant possibility.

Addressing Kooiman's complexity category in our local environmental governance matrix, the search for an institutional system response through existing mechanisms is still the target of local populations within the municipality that can absorb urban and rural stresses with a certain level of transparency. These mechanisms require legal recognition of instruments designed to solve conflicts from the lack of outlets to voice and express demands from the local government and filtered to the rural parishes. Social and environmental degradation is due to the lack of legal instruments that regenerate social fabric and protect natural resources. According to Kooiman (1993) and Fontaine (2009), the process of governance is a process of adjusting the social and political system determined by the interactions between the needs of the population and the ability of the government in question to answer. Beyond this capacity to respond is the ability to absorb and internalize demands. This process does not so unilaterally or unidirectional. Regarding a diagnostic of local environmental governance, one needs to analyze how people channel their demands to the municipality, as it processes them and level of interest by the municipality to promote it. One such demand was stated as thus:

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"So blind are our authorities. More and more we undermine our habitat and they liquidate a forest to buy a million guava trees but that never will grow back, it is filled with trees supporting local wineries to sacrifice a native forest, and the fact of deforesting everyday life, is real injustice. Nature is now outright rejection to the authorities, officers, sponsors, organizers and all those complicit in the destruction of these natural places and only for government gain (A11 interviewed 7/14/2011)."

Governments should be stimulated directly by societal participation. If not, they appear "blind" as the above excerpt demonstrates. The blame for this kind of environmental degradation in the form of deforestation is squarely placed on the "authorities." Who are these authorities? They have been generalized so that it can incorporate the image of every governmental official and to create the conflict as a direct battle between local environmental governance and the environment. The actors present in civil society are free from blame but also don't have any responsibility placed upon them to act upon their demand to the local political system. Thus, the actors can't remain inert and must put into action the information provided by the various sectors both private and public. This is crucial for maintaining accountability mechanisms where government reforms are aimed at building co-governance, based on accountability, including the social partners from the beginning of the process (Ackerman,2004). As we have seen, overall public participation in local governmental is low which has direct links to the number of public social outlets for expressing concern and sharing demands. Traditional power groups and families that have their base with the catholic church, agriculture, and businesses that began during the first tourist boom in the 1980's continue to hold dominion over local and provincial politics.

Demands concerning political transparency, economic sustainability, and environmental conservation that have not been effectively answered and the *Baños* canton continue to exacerbate the situation by the lack of solutions given by organized political actors and the level of citizenship present in civil society. A local commentary section from My City published on June 12, 2011 commented on the mindset of the typical *bàneño* voter:

"No one asks the right questions. Were serious citizens dissatisfied with the actions taken during your term? What makes you think that this look will be different? Do you have some new work? Have you contributed something to the city? Only the sovereign people

at the polls will respond to these questions, I personally think that this chance has passed and it should lead to new generations that undertake a new real change, not a continuation of what could be and was not."

Again we can observe additional emphasis on "the city" rather than the canton as a unified whole. The "questions" that need to be raised to the local political system are clearly to reflect differing interests and citizen objectives. Environmental interest could deviate from preservation goals towards a more commercialized view as an investment which are both contingent on the local political discourse of the canton as we have seen throughout Chapter 3. As such, environmental problems in Ecuador cover a range of contexts based on each region and ecosystem that any conservation effort has to consider. The mechanisms are designed for proper conservation must take into account the space, location, relationship with the environment, the current management of natural resources, and the views of these so called "serious citizens" whose demands will either make or break the local political system that will embody environmental legislation. That is, each town has different roles to the environment and therefore different needs, to this we must be aware of the site is developed in which a given issue, to be effective and viable solution.

Seeking to provide practical, reality and not hypothetically based solutions in *Baños* has taken into account the social interactions that form citizens' identities first in their microenvironments such as neighborhoods, communities, and local social groups such as schools, churches, commutes, marketplaces, and parks and then to larger macro entities such as the Canton, province, and country. During the research period, the local discourse from surveys, interviews, and participant observation saw the repeated use used the idea of "popular" sovereignty as a primary axis to address issues of political transparency and religious practice.

> It seems like electoral campaigns are always behind some corner or another and rumors are the only things we hear of several well-known political leaders. I just hope we remain without having the terror known religious leader because it brings up the importance transparency and honesty in the task of managing the hub of Catholic Christian faith in the country (A10 interviewed 7/12/11).

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Dynamics: Communication as an act of participation in the local political system Resurgence of communicative capacity and governing ability

> "The people of this canton know to make known their feelings of support or rejection at the polls." -Former Mayor Hugo Pineda July 2011

The public perception of the needs, politics, and relations between public and private, local and global, has also been powerful transformations. The notion here proposed local governance (local governance) highlights its political dimension and placed in the center of the debate on the interdependence between the public and civil society. The prevailing idea is that if you do not organize the multiple interests of civil society, it is impossible to anticipate the success and governance products. Consequently, with political action, local governments have a strong need to search for alternatives to traditional models of public management. This search involves several issues, including governance strategies associated with the opening and/or improvement of participatory channels and reaching consensus with the technological modernization management (Andrade, 2009).

Among the meanings of governance, participation, and control there stands out, as one of the most important increasing roles is the act of citizenship. One dimension of the this discourse is on citizen participation, focusing on allowing citizens greater access and participation in government decisions through the use of information networks and alternative media with wider application.

It has been quite difficult for the canton to achieve political satisfaction and local politics have not mirrored the stability mirrored in national politics since 2006. In the local view, younger generations should be prepared for new councilors/representatives in the belief that surely new blood will bring new ideas, and desire to translate their ideas and initiatives. According to interview data, any longstanding politician is seen with a general sense of distrust that rooted in the already present political apathy towards any political process as expressed in the interview statement below about the nature of previous political campaigns in the canton:

"One or two politicians aren't who are not worth much since their personal and public lives leaves much to be desired, and some who are only outsiders that are settled in our city. Several candidates that have entered the political fray for the first time and have not been well received but in this attempt have won over many expectations that could be cultivated for the future, like others who have received positive responses to their banal speeches and not only from the clear objectives resentment attempts or projects leading to his youth and inexperience has led to detract the people and pay them the reprobation with dissonant words. We have all been victims of this "mediocrity because the public never remembers what it should about politics (A11 Interviewed 07/14/2011)"

The electoral process in the canton *Baños* for the mayoral candidacy is surprisingly lax, given that unlike for council and assembly posts, political parties, affiliations, and experience in elected office, are not necessarily mandatory prerequisites. Over the past decade, most candidates have been male businessmen. Hugo Pineda was working in the OCSUS (*Cooperativa de Ahorro y crédito*) bank when he launched his campaign with only the support of his family at the beginning. Some say that for a lack of strong candidates that year his lack of direct political was overlooked and was elected as mayor of the *Baños* canton in 2008. He was approaching the last quarter of his elected term in 2011 when the impeachment process began in July of 2011.

This event occurred midway in fieldwork so it was analyzed as a sample of key divisions and gaps in the local political system. Using Stren's conception of "local government" and its association with a formal description of powers and responsibilities of urban authorities this impeachment process had the potential to reveal stratigraphic and cyclic patterns involving political practices with social grievances. According to Stren,"policies [public] premises and how they were administering French cities were changing rapidly." Therefore had to adopt a new concept to translate these changes and, therefore, explains Stren, Patrick Le Galès proposed to speak of "urban governance" (Stren, 2001). The ability to institute (or not) these new translated change can been seen in local *bàneño* discourse. From this basis in order to search for mechanisms to connect the act of government and society in the impeachment process, what we have is actually a well-developed social construction with its main features are in communication. The ability to govern is in a way, the capacity or ability to selectively communicate.

Entering into the importance of communication, I referred to Habermas's communicative theory taken into context with the relationships to addressing social and environmental conflicts in the case of hydroelectricity in the canton. Many environmental conflicts are rooted in the lack of or failure of communication between stakeholders. Between the two main actors (municipalities and communities) interest and the expression of these interests form the structure of how to communicate. Habermas opposes the field of communicative action, which he defines as "an interaction mediated by symbols." This action is core mandatory standards or rules of action that define reciprocal forms of conduct and must be intersubjectively understood and recognized. The ability to govern is in a sense, the ability or the ability to selectively communicate.

Real communication is full of problems that prevent these ideal conditions of speech. There are all kinds of pathologies in human communication, but this does not preclude the need for an ideal communication model as a reference, or model the correct use of language would require. When there are disturbances in the communication we are all aware that the process communicator is treading on unsupported assumptions, that there is an anomaly. A socio-environmental conflict, it is mainly an anomaly. The results from the main social actors during the water dialogue event, the community and the municipality, are disproportionate. Then it is necessary to propose the question, is there a real and effective communication between the municipality and the people in your environment? If the answer is no, the explanation is not simple.

The rapid development of mass media over the past decade have created a new dynamic in the formal and informal processes of receiving information in parts of Latin America, concentrated in urban areas. Other spaces, such as the Canton *Baños* utilize the same means of communication that have been used since the seventies. Mainly, the media are limited in Canton. There are two local newspapers, 1. *Enlace* (Link), and 2. *Mi Ciudad* (My City), both of which are published weekly and only sold in the city of Baños, but not in rural parishes.

Most communication between citizens has been informal, between social intimate

groups. There are reliable sources / concrete to cite or clarify information in times of social crisis and political campaigns. Radio is the most widely used in the canton *Baños*, being the most popular channel in the Sanctuary Voice 98.7fm. Commercial broadcasters have their programs based programming religious, national news, and the pattern of trade. There are no programs specifically dedicated to the local population, much less directed at rural populations.

According to communicative Habermas's theory, the ability to express themes, speeches, issues, among others, is subject to reflexive action brought by the actors. The possibility to influence the political system, from participation in the public exercising the right of expression, also allows the social order is seen as a human creation, it is the individual creator himself.

The speeches are more demanding forms of communication communicative practice daily, to be governed by the principles of speech and the characteristics and features of a community (Cohen & Arato, 2000 [1992]). Everyday communicative practice arises from the interaction of cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization. It requires self-transformation of the political system structured in terms of rule of law. Moreover, influences the programming of the system "(Habermas, 2001). Jürgen Habermas characterizes civil society in its power to transform itself and, indirectly operate on what are the limits and powers are there in civil society to interact with the various actors involved in the transformation of the environment and in the adoption of new environmental parameters through politics.

This transformation is possible from the places where there is self-reflection and discussion: public space, and from there to influence the political system through use of voice, in the exercise of building a public opinion exercised by members civil society. According to Habermas, an action rule is valid if it comes from a consensus among all concerned, as participants in a practical discourse that facilitates the entry into force of the standard (Cohen & Arato, 2000). Thus, it is important to highlight the role of actors and mobilizing their own interests.

Habermas refers to public space as a social space, which is generated in the action-oriented understanding, not in the functions or content of communication (Habermas, 2001). This space is based on a social structure made in terms of fundamental rights (freedom of association, the formation of public opinion and systems of representation), and autonomous individuals and public (Andrade, 2009). The public sphere must allow the spontaneity of his audience, confirming the equal rights of citizenship. Citizens are an integral part of public space, and through its' contribution to public opinion is formed through deliberative processes.

Political and local environmental governance implications of the Recall of Mayor Hugo Pineda

According to Alain Bourdin (2000), local civil society appears as the center of everything and the local is defined then as "a social form that is a level of integration of actions and actors, groups and exchanges ", i.e. the level of formation of networks of actors in public policy. "This way," pursued Bourdin, "is characterized by its special relationship with a place, which varies in intensity and content." It is possible to speak of a "chosen place" as opposed to "the given place." The environment is something very special because it is built on a locally but in the current conception, "the territory is discussed in political science as a social construct, i.e. as the result of an attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence or govern a people, events or relationships, defining and controlling a geographic area, "and more policy instruments are elements of modernity policy.

Looking at some key components of the process of revoking the mandate of the Mayor of *Baños* happened during the period of investigation, we find the basis for much of this political modernity in *Baños* in the way how to communicate the municipality and have an understanding of how the image of the municipality in the matter of handling the cantonal environmental awareness. In the following segments, we will see that local environmental governance was more closely related to social realities and perceptions present in the population rather than in the existing municipal political system.

In late July 2011, the National Electoral Council (CNE) ended with the scrutiny of the minutes of the revocation of the mandate of 48 local authorities nationwide in Ecuador. After this voting exercise was confirmed at 37 authorities and 11 were revoked. One of them was Mayor *Hugo Pineda Baños de Agua Santa* in *Tungurahua*. In the referendum received support 5,251 inhabitants (42%), while 6 456 people (52%) demonstrated by the cessation of their functions[11].

Speaking of policy, according to the results of questionnaires aimed at residents in the city of *Baños* and *Río Verde's* two main reasons for not taking further action related to environmental management in the town of *Baños de Agua Santa*, are little information / interest and lack of administrative (organization, competition, planning). The people have mentioned issues, the lack of financial transparency in the administration of public works.

When asked about the reasons for the revocation of the mandate, however, most of the interviewees in the city of *Baños* and *Rio Verde* but expressed disappointment over Mayor *Hugo Pineda*, not made explicit his reasons and statements remained broadly negative.

> "The Mayor has to leave because there are a lot of politics in the middle of the entire situation and he doesn't want to take actions that could bring a political impact. I know that it could be the better to start over with a better candidate. For lack of leadership, lack of responsibility and within the town. Who can call *Baños, Rio Verde*, or *Rio Negro* as a united people? (Interviewed 7/10/2011 A9) "

Here is the important inclusion of the word "people":

> "They, like the mayor and councilors, support public works where there is pricing and corruption. If municipal planning is not adequate and it is not working with relevant issues and we must citizen "ize" more because this administration works like politicking. The Canton has been the victim of major disasters, such as the eruption of the Tungurahua volcano and political problems that occur in the country so if the eruption didn't destroy us, why should a corrupt politician who wastes valuable tourism money should? (A11 Interviewed 07/14/2011). "

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[11]The art. 25 Organic Law reformed citizen participation, published in the official record 445 of May 11, 2011 which states that "The voters and electors may revoke the mandate to democratically elected authorities for breach of its work plan of the laws relating to citizen participation and other functions and obligations under Constitution of the Republic and the law for each of the elective dignities

In general, the population also offers solutions for suitable municipal planning and this continues without clear guidelines. Despite the recall event, there was no increased interest from the public to become more active in political work; they have not done so for many years, especially in the past two years of this administration (before and after the recall). There has been much change in the municipal representatives, and no continuity or follow up on public policy. A kind of factor that is used repeatedly to justify the inertia of local government action has been the victimization in the face of natural disasters and come under a general style and image that the same situation exists with all local, provincial, and national politicians.

The citizens of Canton *Baños de Agua Santa* decided to overturn the mayor's duties for breach of its work plan based on the provisions of national legislation on the subject of the revocation of the mandate and the impeachment campaign focused on stating the list of "broken deals" (or economic promises to be more concise) in the 2009 election campaign. Within this list mentioned the installation of mega touristic complexes. Groups who led the recall showed their disapproval of the mayor's governance were primarily related to business stakeholders and private transport providers. The views of other *baneño* citizens were not as explicit or publically visible.

Addressing "the public" from public policy approach allows a framework to rethink the management of the public (...) in a stage of redefining state-society relations, community and society. The public should assume responsibility for the issue of rights to participate and use through mechanisms present in civil society such as voting, discuss, negotiate, and reflect. The motivations behind the vote are varied and do not come only from political interests. The political process and all aspects of daily life contain in your area, should be criticized at every turn. Of irregularities found by the authority is not challenged enough. The "power" citizen is not necessarily a sovereign who represents the whole image of the "people" who seeks to represent.

The mechanisms of democracy run from the feedback between rulers and ruled (state, civil society, private sector). If the recall of the *baneño* Mayor was part of a larger range of civil society's actions and how to choose their representatives, but also the ability to revoke the mandate would mean that citizens are positioned continuously as the required medium to position or revoke politicians. Yet, the actual level of public participation, property policies, common resources, how to manage them, what kind of management, is required to provide spaces of accountability in transparent management to the authorities. This as a deciding factor can legitimize local and national governmental action that are needed to build self-confidence levels set by dialogic relations that allow consensus to be reached.

"It is crazy to take a position because they (elected politicians) claim to think that we are not aware of things, even when we are directly affected when they make bad decisions. A good leader is one who acts as he thinks, and leaves ideologies aside to actually work and integrate individual and social transformation. A leader who maintains harmony and actions that promotes the quality of their community (Interviewee A4 06/18/ 2011). "

There can be questions like how much one can claim an act of government and the exercise thereof. According to the inhabitants of *Rio Verde*, the policy has been a missing mechanism, which is never directly to rural communities in the county. The pattern during the recall was to build bipolar opposites, create separation between the public and the political, truth or lie, and right or wrong.

A combination of contradictions, and performance against controversial issues were the mechanisms to demonstrate the main complaints of the *baneña* population: surcharges in certain works, excess staff in the municipality and resentment of many of his followers, so also generated controversy different media, compared to offers of "macro" works and unfulfilled tourism projects.

The main root of the debate was not in law but in the perception of how the constituents interpreted their role and the social construction of the image of the municipality. That perception was focused on governance as a process in which people express their demands (inputs) to the actors in charge of resolving, one state, into solutions (outputs). As a modern process through which multiple actors, organic and

nonorganic, assume the treatment of public issues, and give more to the achievement of targets dynamic and creative, which in a simple rigid orientation of existing resources in the environment of their own organizations.

Communicative acts present during the recall showed a weakened social fabric and the removal of the mayor was a controversial, polarizing, and little understood process in the population of the entire county. According to another interviewee, the social fabric of *Baños* had been damaged after the revocation:

> "A look into the soul of a people is how to govern. In its true dimension, which it has been set as one of the most direct and powerful mechanisms to be put in the hands of citizens, is called democracy. Unfortunately, individualism has become a disease in the consciousness of báneños and has made us weak, with poor social consciousness, and lack of solidarity, humanism, and other values that characterized the *baneño* spirit, many have moved into the background today. The perverse reality was evident more than ever in the raging political campaigns (Interviewee A4 06.18.2011). "

There is responsibility of every citizen to have led to the breakdown of collective order *baneño* and certainly also in the desire to assume a duty to participate actively and constructively with the political bodies. According to, the statements of the urban population *baneña* that civic responsibility is still in its infancy.

> "That so-called "Political Class" is what real politics is and has absolutely nothing to do with real life. The recall did not demonstrate citizen power, only social division in *Baños*. (A1 6/11/2011) "

With the recall, Hugo Pineda and shall not again be eligible to any dignity or public office. With the results, Councilman Mr. *José Luis Freire Yepez*, became the new mayor, without clarifying his party or political platform. Thus, the issue of referendum to mandate revocation was not accompanied communicative actions below to inform citizens, or to establish controls to ensure greater participation in decision-making of public policy.

One respondent states their views as follows:

> "The revocation makes it clear that future candidates will have to provide what is really going to be needed, hire qualified staff for the city and get some real departmental managers who simply do not work for wages. The most important is a transparent management of public affairs. "

Other comments in a similar way, were related to the popular discourse of citizen participation,

> "With the recall of the mayor, the citizens of *Baños* make an important precedent for future administrations to take into account the role of citizenship when it is meet and exercises its rights under the laws of the Republic."

In *Baños* Canton, governance is evidenced by a new distribution of power, the emergence of new social demands related to needs for greater transparency in governance. Also, it shows a loss of legitimacy by the authorities, and a gap between the demands of the population and how to process these requests and respond by municipal authorities. Governance and the resulting governance depend largely on how the demands of the population (civil society) are received, and how they are translated into appropriate action. This process involves advancing reflective capabilities that allow absorb and respond to the demands of citizenship.

We define governance as a specific mode of social interaction that distinguishes both the logic of the market, the government logic. Governance is an analytical tool to study the situations in which the place and nature of effective authorities and decision-making powers are unstable and uncertain (Kérébel, 2009). This system of relationships is the result of "negotiation" between governance models "designed" or "proposed" for each of the actors who converge in a region or locality.

The situation described in the canton *Baños* presents a kind of link between the municipality and undemocratic public processes of overall representation and participation based on an approach that does not fully utilize the potential of communication and dialogical relations. The situations described in this thesis demonstrate the need for a different type of management, one that further reflection on communication as an essential right of citizenship.

The right to communicate has an active and a passive component: the right to inform and be informed, that is, to be a transmitter and receiver. The right to communication is broader than the right to information, and includes (Servaes, 1998). In

this context, information, a constituent part of the communication, it becomes a participative, and must be guaranteed as a right and responsibility of each of the actors involved in the communication process. This approach demands a broader concept of participation, which will be incomplete if it does not represent or not intended to optimal communication. The communication rights are no different from those of participation. Operationalizing the concept of communication-participation, the municipality and the community can establish a way to connect. Governance and communication can have a new impact beyond conservation in a more equitable relationship between humans and their environment.

Communicative action should be an effective response mechanism to improve the environmental governance in the canton *Baños*. In doing so these responses can be gauged by assessing, analyzing and proposing strategies to rethink the management of the public sphere in the current context of institutional crisis. The need, to redefine "public" is present in Ecuador and state-society relations and this redefinition must think also from the local area.

The answer on a new form of environmental governance against delineated conservation policies, including the creation of protected areas, local governance means ensuring (or ability to make decisions) mixing rule as ways of local government (or affirmation of the primacy of the sovereign state) and local governance (or coordination of multiple stakeholders - social, productive, etc.).It is essential to seek the unity of the *baneña* population, which was quite split and fragmented after the revocation process concluded. It will be important that the population is united again before any activities can be directed in any direction, whether they are economic, social, political, or environmental.

Conclusions

There is no denying the power of citizen participation, only that there is an imbalance between the informed and effective use of that power, and the controversial use of the same mechanisms. The ideal situation would be that the population through accessible media, can make demands that are based on their needs and more proactively setting out their proposals.

In the *Baños* Canton, local environmental and political governance was evidenced by a new distribution of power and the emergence of new social demands related to needs for greater transparency in governance. Also, it shows a loss of legitimacy by the authorities, and a gap between the demands of the population and how to process these requests and respond by municipal authorities. Governance and the resulting governance capacities depend largely on how the demands of the population are received (civil society) and how they are translated into appropriate action. This process involves advancing reflective capabilities that allow absorb and respond to the demands of citizenship.

Local environmental governance was found to be hinged more on the capability of the local system's ability to absorb and respond to demands made upon it as opposed to specific regional politics and policies. The situation described in the canton *Baños* presents a kind of link between the municipality and political processes based on a mostly traditional and unilateral approach that does not fully utilize the potential of communication and dialogical relations. The situations described in this thesis demonstrate the need for a different type of management, one that further reflection on communication as an essential right of citizenship.

The right to communicate has an active and a passive component: the right to inform and be informed, that is, to be a transmitter and receiver. The right to communication is broader than the right to information, and includes multidirectional participation from a 360-degree angle. In this context, information, a constituent part of

the communication becomes a participative, and must be guaranteed as a right and responsibility of each of the actors involved in the communication process. This approach demands a broader concept of participation, which will be incomplete if it does not represent or not intended to optimal communication. The communication rights are no different from those of participation. Operationalizing the concept of communication-participation, the municipality and the community can establish a way to connect. Governance and communication can have a new impact beyond conservation in a more equitable relationship between humans and their environment.

Communicative action should be an effective response mechanism to improve the environmental governance in the canton *Baños*. Questions about what should be "public" are at the heart of current thinking on public administration and the State in Latin America and have to feed the re-thinking and re-orienting of public policy and management at different scales from national governments to regional and local. So, assessing, analyzing and proposing strategies to rethink the management of the public in the current context of institutional crisis is a necessity in the canton. I in Ecuador there is a need to redefine "public" and state-society relations and this redefinition must be structured from the local arenas.

The answer on a new form of environmental governance to delineate conservation policies, including the creation of protected areas. New configurations and conditions are now necessary for the success and future adaptability of environmental governance in Ecuador not only in terms of conservation but also in terms of natural resource management, national energy and extractive policies, traditional energy matrixes, and regional hydroelectric development.

Natural resource governance is a means to ensure not only conservation but also refers to regulatory frameworks and environmental policies that should respond to the needs of populations, the consolidation of democratic spaces and the conservation of biodiversity. Local governance means ensuring abilities for decision making, participation, rights exercising, accountability, negotiation, through dialogic processes

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that involve State, civil society and private social actors,. There can be processes that mix rules as ways of local government (or affirmation of the primacy of the sovereign state) and local governance (or coordination of multiple stakeholders - social, productive, etc.).

The classical concept of conservation has been based on the separation between man and nature, as seen in the creation of protected areas devoid of people and handled as if there were no human populations or within their areas of influence. It is necessary to understand the nature conservation as a management task, rather than absolute isolation. Moreover, the conservation objectives involve new spaces in the national discourse and local reality that can only be transformed if they involve social groups (civil society) actively in conservation from a different perspective, participatory and inclusive communication.

Conservation, to date, has been reactive to a development model, which degrades nature and unbalanced relationships between humans and the environment. This model, which has imposed unsustainable instruments and a strong ideological on the use of natural resources, has been overcome and the framework of international guidelines on conservation seen more as "management" and a legal and political framework of the country that recognizes the social, economic and environmental. The expansion of extractive/hydroenergetic frontiers as an integral part of a development model isn't currently based in governance relations in a more horizontal direction. What is observed is more of a hierarchical style of governance that doesn't receive nor process the demands and points of view of local communities in this case who are interested in maintaining their economies linked to touristic activities and in agriculture for certain populations.

The status of the local conservation dialogue trend has affected the rate and perception involving the physical and social conversion of natural landscapes into hydroenergetic frontiers. This power trend will continue to affect the canton especially within the country's contradictory oil exporting energy matrix focused on "sustainable" energy sources national dialogue. This can ultimately dominate and deter any organic cantonal interest to pursue and administer a municipal area of conservation in the future.

Consequently, the construction of participatory policies based on local and regional conditions should be sought. The major conservation organizations and protection systems of protected areas to national and global level, maintain the pattern of conservation without the social component, in order to generate geographical areas safe for development. While this is a necessary, sometimes as a first step of institutional action for biodiversity conservation in this thesis considers that this is not only insufficient and ineffective given the pressures and constraints of banks to assume mission alone, but this position tends to perpetuate a growth model rather than a difference in cultural attitudes.

Clearly, people need to have a stronger connection and visible attachment with the environment that is intended to be preserved, protected, and/or maintained. This process of connecting people to a physical space lies in the historical and cultural awareness of individuals and social groups in question.

This study has been reported that there is a lack of a leadership base in Rio Verde, as an expression of what happens in the rural parishes of the canton *Baños*, making it difficult to channel demands and likewise proposed to the municipal government.

Moreover, the municipal administration shows blindness and a fragmented vision of the social, economic, environmental realities of the canton as a whole, and as detailed more concentrated in the urban center of the city and certain interests of those sectors benefit from tourism, which as described is far from materialize as ecotourism or sustainable tourism. As such, the governance process that unfolded was not able to adequately meet social or environmental needs in play, facilitating the appearance of new conflicts of interest specifically as hydroenergetic frontiers sphere continues to gain momentum.

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Annexes

Annex 1

Population Figures

CANTON BAÑOS DE AGUA SANTA:

POBLACION INTERCENSAL	AÑOS		
CIUDAD	**1982**	**1990**	**2001**
Baños de Agua Santa	10.269	10.991	11.802
Llígua	483	431	312
Río Negro	942	1.047	1.086
Río Verde	948	1.040	1.057
Ulba	1.933	1.907	1.855
TOTAL CANTON	14.575	15.416	16.112

Source: National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC)

DISTRIBUCION DE LA POBLACION CANTON BAÑOS DE AGUA SANTA:

PARROQUIA	AÑOS (PORCENTAJES %)		
	1982	**1990**	**2001**
Baños de Agua Santa	70,46	71,30	73,25
LlIgua	3,31	2,80	1,94
Río Negro	6,46	6,79	6,74
Río Verde	6,50	6,75	6,56
Ulba	13,26	12,37	11,51
TOTAL CANTON	100	100	100

Source: National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC)

1982 - 1990 – 2001

Annex 2 List of Interviewees

Table No 1.*Listing and description of codified interviewees:* The following table codifies the people interviews keeping their identities anonymous. Some characteristics of each interviewee are presented that were considered relevant for the research topic.

Código	Fecha	Sexo	Descripción del entrevistado
A1 .	08-jun-11	Hombre	Dueño de unas de las agencias de servicios turísticos más populares en la ciudad de Baños
A2	13-jun-11	Hombre	Líder de la junta parroquial que ha establecido contactos y acuerdos de apoyo en la comunidad parroquial de Río Verde
A3	15-jul-11	Hombre	Líder de proyectos en la fundación Oscar Efrén Reyes, la cual trabaja en temas de conservación en el cantón Baños
A4	18 jun -11	Hombre	Ayudante en comunicaciones municipales en el cantón Baños
A5	20-jun-11	Hombre	Funcionario de la subsecretaria del ex–alcalde Hugo Pineda
A6	3-jul-11	Mujer	Líder opuesto al ingreso de mas hidroeléctricas en el cantón, especialmente en El Topo en la parroquia de Río Negro
A7	5-jul-11	Hombre	Biólogo norteamericano que ha trabajo en temas de biodiversidad y preservación en el cantón Baños por más que 15 años
A8	6-jul-11	Mujer	Funcionaria de la Cámara de Turismo. Ha colaborado en el Plan de Desarrollo Estratégico de 2005
A9	10-jul-11	Hombre	Residente de Río Verde que tiene su propia finca y vivía en El Topo
A 10	11-jul-11	Mujer	Dueña de un hostal en la ciudad de Baños, quien ha trabajo en la hostelería por más de 20 años
A11	14-jul-11	Mujer	Enfermera del Subcentro de Salud en Rio Negro pero vive en la ciudad de Baños
A12	18-jul-11	Hombre	Residente de la ciudad de Baños y dueño de un papelería. Está interesado en formar un grupo de ambientalistas en la ciudad

Anexo 3
Cuestionario -Opinión de actores clave

Fecha: _____ Ocupación: _____

1)¿Considera que el municipio de Baños se ha implicado lo suficiente en la
protección del ambiente en estos últimos cinco años?
( ) Si ( ) No

En caso afirmativo ¿Por qué considera que se han implicado lo suficiente?
_____
_____
_____

En caso negativo ¿Por qué considera no se han implicado lo suficiente?
_____
_____
_____

2)¿Ha participado con el municipio en algún proyecto de mejora ambiental, en los
últimos cinco años?
( ) Si ( ) No

En caso afirmativo ¿En que ha constituido su participación?

_____
_____
_____

En caso negativo ¿Por qué no ha participado?
_____
_____
_____

3)¿Cuáles las dos principales razones desde su punto de vista, para que no se tomen
nuevas acciones relacionadas con la gestión ambiental, en el municipio de Baños
de Agua Santa?
( ) Fiscales
 ( ) Administrativas (organización, competencia, planeación)
( ) Oposición de grupos de la comunidad
( ) Poca información
( ) Poco interés
( ) No esta permitido
( ) No son apropiadas o necesarias en relación a las metas y objetivos del gobierno

¿Por   qué?

_____

_____

_____

4) ¿Considera que la conservación de los recursos y lugares naturales se puede hacer a través del turismo?

( ) Si ( ) No

¿Porqué?

_____

_____

_____

5)¿En su opinión, existe y funciona un sistema integrado para el manejo de información ambiental del municipio?

( ) Si existen y funcionan adecuadamente
( ) Si pero no funcionan adecuadamente
( ) No

6.) ¿Cómo se ve el cantón de Baños en temas ambientales en los próximos 5 años?

( ) Mejorado
( ) Igual
( ) Peor

¿Por qué?

_____

_____

_____

Anexo 4
Cuestionario La Gestión Ambiental en el Municipio Baños de Agua Santa

Fecha Aplicación:_____ Municipio:_____
Alcalde:_____
Municipio_____
Partido político al que pertenece_____
Período de Gobierno_____
Responsable de contestar el cuestionario_____
Puesto que desempeña: _____ Teléfono_____

Sección 1. Relevancia y compromiso local

1) ¿Cuál ha sido el rol del municipal en el tema ambiental?
( ) Muy activo ( ) Activo ( ) Poco activo ( ) No es activo

2) ¿Existe un fondo ambiental municipal? ( ) Si   ( ) No

3) ¿El municipio ha solicitado financiamiento para proyectos de mejora ambiental?

( ) Si se ha solicitado financiamiento ( ) No se ha solicitado financiamiento

4) ¿Existe un documento rector o estudios que identifique los problemas ambientales prioritarios del municipio? ( ) Si existe   ( ) No existe

5) ¿Contiene el documento rector objetivos cuantificables en temas ambientales?
( ) Si ( ) No
6) ¿Existen proyectos de mejora ambiental concretos? ( ) Si   ( ) No

Sección 2. Organización

7) ¿Existe una unidad ambiental municipal que cuente con los recursos humanos y financieros adecuados para hacer frente a sus responsabilidades?
( ) Si existe y Si cuenta con los RH y RF adecuados
( ) Si existe y No cuenta con los RH y RF adecuados
( ) Si existe y No cuenta con los RF adecuados
( ) No existe una unidad ambiental municipal

8) ¿Qué estructura administrativa posee el municipio para la gestión ambiental?
( ) Hay un regidor de ecología y una Dirección de medio ambiente o ecología
( ) Hay un regidor de ecología y un departamento de medio ambiente o ecología
( ) Hay un regidor de ecología y un personal al que se le delega responsabilidades de gestión ambiental
( ) Hay un regidor de ecología y algunas atribuciones ambientales las tiene un depto o dirección
( ) No hay regidor de ecología y algunas atribuciones ambientales las tiene un depto o dirección

9) ¿A qué grado el municipio proporciona capacitación en temas ambientales al personal de la unidad ambiental?
Ninguna ( )
Un bajo grado ( )

Cierto grado Personal de la UAM   ( )
A un alto grado ( )

10) ¿A que grado el municipio proporciona capacitación en temas ambientales a otro personal?
Ninguna ( )
Un bajo grado ( )
Cierto grado Otro personal   ( )
A un alto grado ( )

11) A que grado se han involucrado las otras áreas administrativas (policía, servicios públicos, salud y otros) para atender la problemática ambiental

( ) A un alto grado ( ) A cierto grado ( ) A un bajo grado ( ) Ningún grado

12) ¿Existen mecanismos que aseguran los vínculos entre las áreas del municipio con respecto a temas ambientales?

Si   (   )   Por ejemplo_____
_____

No   (   )   Por que?_____
_____

13) Existe un comité de gestión ambiental municipal en donde participan todas las áreas
( ) Hay mecanismos diferentes al comité de gestión y solo participan algunas áreas
( ) Si hay mecanismos ( ) No hay mecanismos

Sección 3. Participación Ciudadana

14) ¿Existen y funcionan políticas para la inclusión de los ciudadanos en las decisiones públicas en materia ambiental?

( ) Si existen y funcionan adecuadamente   ( ) Si existen, pero no funcionan adecuadamente
      ( ) No existen

15) ¿En el municipio existe y funciona una estructura institucional preparada para la inclusión de los ciudadanos en las decisiones públicas en materia ambiental?

( ) Si existe y funciona adecuadamente ( ) Si y no funciona adecuadamente ( ) No existe una estructura institucional

16) ¿El municipio conoce el grado de participación ciudadana en torno a los problemas ambientales de su localidad?

( ) Si y se han realizado estudios actualizados ( ) Si pero no se han realizado estudios actualizados

17) ¿En que medida usted considera la participación ciudadana en torno a los problemas ambientales de su localidad?

( ) Participan ampliamente ( ) Participan muy poco ( ) No participan ( ) Se desconoce

18) ¿Existen y funcionan los canales de registro, seguimiento y resolución de quejas y demandas de los ciudanos sobre problemas ambientales? ( ) Si existen y funcionan adecuadamente ( ) Si existen pero no funcionan adecuadamente ( ) No existen canales

19) ¿Existen y funcionan los mecanismos (ej. cabildo abierto, mesa de concertación, planificación participativa) para fomentar la participación ciudadana en la gestión ambiental?
( ) Si existen y funcionan adecuadamente ( ) Si existen pero no funcionan adecuadamente ( ) No existen mecanismos

Sección 4. Alianzas con Agentes Externos

20) ¿A que grado se ha involucrado el sector empresarial (asociaciones comerciales, hoteleros, ganaderos, industrias, empresas) con el municipio en materia ambiental?
( ) A un alto grado ( ) A un cierto grado ( ) A un bajo grado ( ) Ningún grado

21) ¿En cuales de los siguientes procesos ha intervenido el sector empresarial?

( ) En los cinco procesos (Agua, Aire, Residuos, Recursos Naturales e Infra estructura Urbana)

( ) Solo en cuatro de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) Solo en tres de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) En menos de dos de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) Ninguno

22) ¿A que grado se ha involucrado las organizaciones no gubernamentales con el municipio en materia ambiental?

( ) A un alto grado
( ) A un cierto grado
( ) A un bajo grado
( ) Ningún grado

23) ¿En cuales de los siguientes procesos han intervenido las organizaciones?

( ) En los cinco procesos (Agua, Aire, Residuos, Recursos Naturales e Infra estructura Urbana)

( ) Solo en cuatro de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) Solo en tres de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) En menos de dos de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) Ninguno

24) ¿A que grado se ha involucrado las instituciones educativas con el municipio en materia ambiental?
( ) A un alto grado ( ) A un cierto grado ( ) A un bajo grado ( ) Ningún grado

25) ¿En cual de los siguientes procesos han intervenido las instituciones educativas y de investigación?

( ) En los cinco procesos (Agua, Aire, Residuos, Recursos Naturales e Infra estructura Urbana)
( ) Solo en cuatro de los cinco, especifique: _____

( ) Solo en tres de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) En menos de dos de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) Ninguno

Sección 5. Comunicación

26) ¿Existen y que tan efectivas han sido las estrategias que utiliza el municipio para que la comunidad tome conciencia de los problemas ambientales que padece el municipio?

( ) Si existen y han sido muy efectivas
( ) Si existen y han sido efectivas
( ) Si existen y han sido poco efectivas
( ) No existen estrategias

27) ¿El municipio conoce cuales son los aspectos ambientales con los que la ciudadanía se siente insatisfecho (ej. suministro de agua)?
( ) Si y se han realizado estudios actualizados
( ) Si pero no se han realizado estudios actualizados
( ) No

28) ¿El municipio conoce cuales son los aspectos ambientales con los que la ciudadanía esta preocupada (ej. contaminación del agua)?
( ) Si y se han realizado estudios actualizados
( ) Si pero no se han realizado estudios actualizados
( ) No

29) ¿El municipio conoce el grado de sensibilización de la ciudadanía respecto a las repercusiones de sus hábitos diarios al ambiente (ej. consumo de agua)?
( ) Si y se han realizado estudios actualizados
( ) Si pero no se han realizado estudios actualizados
( ) No

30) ¿El municipio conoce el grado de disposición de la ciudadanía para realizar prácticas ambientales más eficientes en el desempeño de las labores del hogar (ej. separación de la basura)?
( ) Si y se han realizado estudios actualizados
( ) Si pero no se han realizado estudios actualizados
( ) No

Sección 6. Regulación

31) ¿Existen reglamentos y normas de calidad ambiental?
( ) Si y están actualizados
( ) Si y no están actualizados
( ) No

32) ¿En los últimos cinco años, el municipio ha tomado nuevas acciones relacionadas con el Manejo Integral de Residuos y que tipo de acción se ha realizado?
( ) Si y ha sido Legislativa y Operativa /administrativa
( ) Si pero solo ha sido Legislativa o Operativa /administrativa
( ) No se ha tomado ninguna acción

33) ¿En los últimos cinco años, el municipio ha tomado nuevas acciones relacionadas con el manejo integral del agua y que tipo de acción se ha realizado?

( ) Si y ha sido Legislativa y Operativa /administrativa
( ) Si pero solo ha sido Legislativa o Operativa /administrativa
( ) No se ha tomado ninguna acción

34) ¿En los últimos cinco años, el municipio ha tomado nuevas acciones relacionadas con la calidad del aire y que tipo de acción se ha realizado?
( ) Si y ha sido Legislativa y Operativa /administrativa
( ) Si pero solo ha sido Legislativa o Operativa /administrativa
( ) No se ha tomado ninguna acción

35) ¿En los últimos cinco años, el municipio ha tomado nuevas acciones relacionadas con los Recursos Naturales y que tipo de acción se ha realizado?
( ) Si y ha sido Legislativa y Operativa /administrativa
( ) Si pero solo ha sido Legislativa o Operativa /administrativa
( ) No se ha tomado ninguna acción

36) ¿En los últimos cinco años, el municipio ha tomado nuevas acciones legislativas, administrativas, relacionadas con la Infraestructura Urbana y que tipo de acción se ha realizado?
( ) Si y ha sido Legislativa y Operativa /administrativa
( ) Si pero solo ha sido Legislativa o Operativa /administrativa
( ) No se ha tomado ninguna acción

Sección 7. Establecimiento de herramientas de gestión ambiental

37) ¿Existen y funcionan indicadores ambientales sobre los cuales monitorea y evalúa la gestión ambiental?
( ) Si existen y funcionan adecuadamente ( ) Si pero no funcionan adecuadamente ( ) No
38) ¿Existe y funciona un sistema integrado para el manejo de información ambiental del municipio?
( ) Si existen y funcionan adecuadamente
( ) Si pero no funcionan adecuadamente
()No

Sección 8. Colaboración con otras autoridades locales

39) ¿Se han creado acuerdos para la coordinación o alianzas intermunicipales para enfrentar los retos ambientales que sobrepasan las fronteras de responsabilidad municipal?
( ) Si y están vigentes ( ) Si pero no hay ninguno vigente ( ) No se ha realizado ninguno

40) ¿En cual de los siguientes procesos ha existido coordinación o alianzas intermunicipales? ( ) En los cinco procesos (Agua, Aire, Residuos, Recursos Naturales e Infra estructura Urbana)

( ) Solo en cuatro de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) Solo en tres de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) En menos de dos de los cinco, especifique: _____
( ) Ninguno

41) ¿La comunicación es continua entre los municipios?

( ) Si   ¿Cuáles? _____

( ) No

42) ¿Qué tipo de relación jerárquica se ha dado entre los municipios para enfrentar los problemas ambientales de la zona?

( ) Horizontal (entre gobiernos municipales)

( ) Vertical (si interviene otro orden superior de gobierno)

( ) Ningún tipo

Sección 9. Colaboración con el gobierno estatal y federal

43) ¿Se han creado acuerdos para la coordinación o alianzas con el gobierno estatal y federal para enfrentar los retos ambientales que sobrepasan las fronteras de responsabilidad municipal?

( ) Si y están vigentes ( ) Si pero no hay ninguno vigente ( ) No se ha realizado ninguno

44) ¿En cual de los siguientes procesos ha existido coordinación o alianzas con el gobierno estatal y federal?

 ( ) En los cinco procesos (Agua, Aire, Residuos, Recursos Naturales e Infra estructura Urbana)

( ) Solo en cuatro de los cinco, especifique: _____

( ) Solo en tres de los cinco, especifique: _____

( ) En menos de dos de los cinco, especifique: _____

( ) Ninguno

45) ¿Qué efectos produce la intervención del gobierno federal y estatal sobre la acción del municipio en temas ambientales?

( ) Favorece la acción del municipio

( ) No produce efectos

( ) Entorpece o sustituye la acción del municipio

46) ¿De quien ha sido la iniciativa de crear acuerdos en materia ambiental?

( ) Gobierno federal

( ) Gobierno estatal

( ) Gobierno municipal

( ) Ninguno