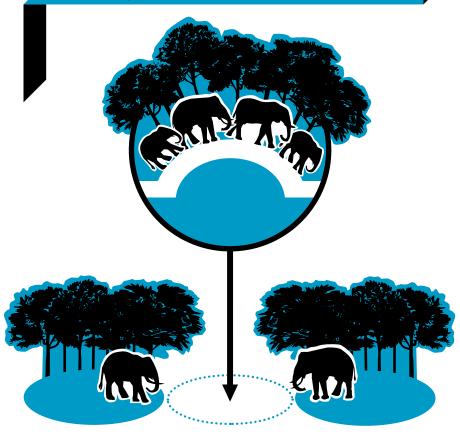


# Saving species by connecting habitats

**Small grants for the Purchase of Nature** 



# Connect forest fragments



Protect habitats



**Save species** 





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### COLOPHON

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### **OUR PROJECTS**

Latin America • Mexico • Guatemala • Honduras • Nicaragua • Dominican Republic • Panama • Costa Rica • Peru • Ecuador • Bolivia • Chile • Argentina • Brazil • Paraguay • Colombia • Africa • Kenya • Uganda • Tanzania • Madagascar • Asia • Vietnam • Myanmar • Malaysia • India • Indonesia • Iran • Armenia

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# Saving species by connecting habitats

### Acquire nature

The strategic acquisition of small patches of land is an extremely targeted and cost effective tool to protect nature. It takes only a few hectares of land to create a corridor between two isolated forests, thereby greatly increasing the living space for wide ranging species such as parrots, elephants, monkeys and jaquars.

All over the world, large scale logging of forests and conversion of the natural environment for agriculture results in fragmentation of habitats. Age-old animal migration routes are obstructed. making it hard for species to find food and a mate. With the help and expertise of our global network, the Small grants for the Purchase of Nature (SPN) program provides funds for specialist NGOs to acquire threatened patches of wilderness to create or expand safe reserves and connect wildlife habitats.

### Local ownership

The SPN approach places the ownership and management responsibility of natural resources in the hands of local. in-country organizations with a clear conservation objective and eve for the needs of local communities. Empowering these dedicated professionals working in the frontline is the best way of achieving long-term sustainable conservation. SPN's open window for funding applications from NGOs all over the world makes our grants unique in the conservation sector.

### Benefits for humans

The acquisition and protection of natural areas not only provides a lifeline to highly endangered species, it also benefits humans. Ecosystems such as forests are the lifeblood of sustainable development and human wellbeing, providing communities with food, fresh water, clean air, and many other assets that are generally referred to as ecosystem services.

The strategic acquisition of nature offers a threefold gain:
(1) connecting habitats, (2) creating safe reserves, and (3) safeguarding ecosystem services

1 connecting creating safe reserves safe guarding ecosystem services

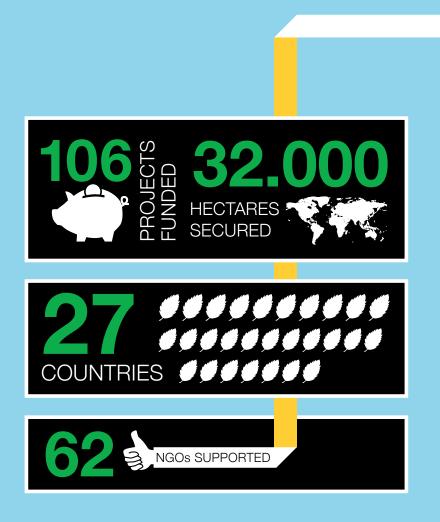
### Purchase or lease

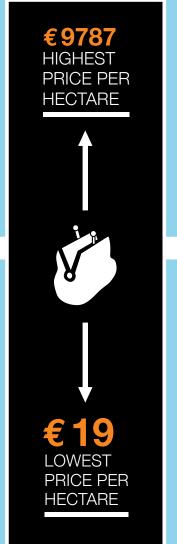
Land acquisition includes the actual purchase of ownership rights from private landowners, as well as long term lease agreements with local communities or authorities.

"We're talking just fifty acres, hundred acres, twenty acres. But this patch of land connects thousands and thousands of square kilometers of forest, and therefore it is critical to the wellbeing of several key biodiversity species."

Vivek Menon, Wildlife Trust of India

## Facts & figures







### Connecting habitats

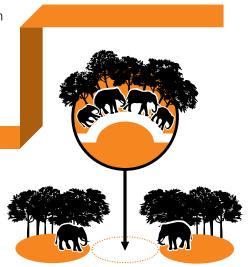
How a few hectares make a huge difference



Even a relatively small piece of land can be enough to maintain landscape 'connectivity', or the extent to which species are able to move from one area to another. This is the case if the piece of land forms a bridge between two or more larger fragments of forests or if it functions as a stepping stone for species to move from one forest to another.

Targeted, strategic acquisitions that maintain or enhance connectivity have a significantly greater impact than the acquisition of the same sized area if it is isolated.

A land acquisition of a few hundred hectares on its own, isolated in the middle of an agriculture area for instance, cannot sustain populations of large predators such as jaguars or large herbivores such as elephants. If however, the few hundred hectares provides a corridor between two large, but isolated protected areas, such as a national park or a forest reserve, the impact is significantly higher.









With support from IUCN NL, the Peruvian NGO Ucumari created a corridor between larger forest fragments that are crucial for the survival of the critically endangered yellow-tailed woolly monkey.

"It's all about location, location, location, location.
Acquiring a strategically chosen forest patch can very well mean the difference between survival and extinction."

**Marc Hoogeslag**, coordinator SPN program at IUCN NL



IUCN NL has supported Malaysian partner Hutan to secure contiguous areas of forest to create wildlife corridors in a landscape dominated by oil palm plantations. Safeguarding connectivity is crucial for the survival of Bornean pygmy elephant and the orang-utan.

 $\overline{\phantom{a}}$ 

# Golden lion tamarin makes a comeback

In the 1990s, golden lion tamarins were barely hanging on to a thread of survival with only 150 remaining in Brazil's Atlantic coastal rainforest. Thanks to the purchase and protection of their natural habitat, fuelling a tenfold increase in the population, the golden lion tamarin is now on the comeback trail.

### **Problem**

Brazil's Atlantic rainforest in the state of Rio de Janeiro is home to numerous exceptional species of animals and plants. But the area is under enormous pressure due to the rise in human population, urban sprawl and expanding agricultural areas. As a result, the rainforest has been reduced to 7.3 percent of its original forest cover. One of the most charismatic forest inhabitants is the golden lion tamarin. Population density and deforestation have led to enormous fragmentation of the primate's original habitat: a staggering 80 percent of the remaining forest consists of tiny fragments of less than 50 hectares, which is too small to support a healthy tamarin population.

### Approach

For the past 20 years, our local partner Associação Mico-Leão-Dourado (AMLD) has led efforts to conserve endangered golden lion tamarins. Supported by IUCN NL's land purchase programme and SavingSpecies, AMLD takes action towards restoring degraded forests and creating and protecting corridors between the remaining forest fragments.



NGO: Associação Mico-Leão

Dourado

Country: Brazil

**Hectares:** Acquisition of 113 ha of land to create a corridor **Partnership created:** 2007





### Result

Thanks to the efforts of AMLD, the protected forest areas currently cover a connected area of over 13,000 hectares. The expansion of the golden lion tamarin's habitat has allowed the primate to thrive. The wild population has risen to 1,500, a tenfold increase compared to the historic low of the 1990s. The first milestone was achieved in 2003: the status of the golden lion tamarin on the

IUCN Red List of Threatened Species changed from 'critically endangered' to 'endangered'. The long-term goal for 2025 is to establish a nature reserve of 25,000 hectares where 2,000 golden lion tamarins live freely. The SPN contribution added another 113 protected hectares to the golden lion tamarin's habitat and more importantly, created an important corridor between larger forest fragments.

 $\mathsf{S}$ 

# Making way for elephants in India

For generations, elephants in India have been using the same routes as they migrate. Yet more and more people are making settlements or creating farmland within these traditional migration paths. This is causing increased conflict between people and elephants. IUCN NL is working with the Wildlife Trust of India so that the elephants can once again move freely between the protected areas.

### **Problem**

The huge rise in India's population is causing more and more people to move to areas that were formerly the exclusive domain of the elephant, leopard and tiger. This is causing increased conflict between people and animals. Because the traditional migration paths of the elephant are no longer accessible, the animals are forced to move through residential areas, trampling crops and causing havoc and panic. Each year, people and elephants die as a result.

### Approach

The Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) has identified 88 elephant corridors across the country where human settlements block the passage between the protected elephant habitats. With support from WTI, the villagers are voluntarily relocated to an area with better amenities, better housing and better farmland where they can live without fear, away from elephants. The areas that become available are reforested with indigenous strains of trees which are grown, planted and maintained by the local people.



NGO: Wildlife Trust of India Country: India

Hectares: Acquisition of 8 hectares of land to secure an

elephant migration corridor **Partnership created:** 2006



"IUCN NL was absolutely critical, because it came in at the right moment with the right amount of money to ensure that this corridor is free of human pressure and can be rewarded back to elephants."

**Vivek Menon**, Wildlife Trust of India



#### Result

As early as two weeks after the Kerala villagers were relocated the elephants returned to the area. Other wild animals such as the tiger, leopard and primates also make use of the corridor to move from one forest area to another.

The corridor has also improved the livelihoods of rural communities: the relocated villagers now live under better circumstances, without fear, and no longer have to worry about nuisance caused by the elephants.

### Creating safe reserves

How purchasing land gives endangered species a boost



Habitat destruction and fragmentation are prominent causes of the growing list of threatened species worldwide. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species shows that out of a total of 73,686 species that have been assessed, 22,103 are threatened with extinction. By acquiring pieces of land strategically, safe

havens for endangered species can be created. Especially for species like frogs and birds, protecting small areas can provide a lifeline. What's more: saving one single species usually means saving many, since they all benefit from the improved habitat.



IUCN NL is supporting the Iranian Cheetah Society in the creation of a livestock-free national park for the benefit of the last 40-70 Asiatic cheetahs in the world. By providing shepherds with alternative grazing areas outside Turan National Park, potential conflicts for cheetahs are seriously reduced.



IUCN NL enabled Brazilian NGO Instituto UIRAÇU to extend their Serra Bonita reserve in southern Bahia with an extra 210 hectares. This reserve is a safe haven for many species like the colourful banded cotinga. The global population of this magnificent bird is estimated to number 250-1000 mature individuals.



# Refuge for newly discovered species in the Andes

The northwest Andes Mountains are one of the most biodiverse places on earth. To protect the abundance of species in this region against logging and mining, the Hummingbird Conservancy created the Mesenia-Paramillo Nature Reserve. Recent expeditions in this Reserve have resulted in many new discoveries, further underlining the need to secure these areas.

### **Problem**

Situated in the northwest Andes of Colombia, the Mesenia-Paramillo Nature Reserve shelters one of the most biodiverse habitats on the planet. Within the 2,500 hectare reserve, consisting of cloud forest and alpine tundra, no less than 302 bird species have been registered. Among these are 15 threatened species, including the dusky starfrontlet which is listed as critically endangered on the IUCN Red List. This makes this area one of the most important habitats for birds in all of the Americas. However, these plants and animals are threatened by

logging and mining companies, responsible for clearing trees and polluting the area.

### **Approach**

To prevent the deterioration of these important habitats, extension of the Mesenia-Paramillo Nature Reserve was urgently needed. In 2011, IUCN NL granted 85,000 euros to the Hummingbird Conservancy which was used to purchase 720 hectares of threatened forest on the fringes of the reserve and thus expand Mesenia–Paramillo substantially.



NGO: Hummingbird Conservancy Country: Colombia

**Hectares:** 720 hectares to extend the Mesenia-Paramillo

Nature Reserve

Partnership created: 2011







Recent discoveries at Mesenia-Paramillo

### Results

The land purchase added extra areas of cloud forest, humid montane forest and alpine tundra to the reserve, increasing the odds of survival for many species, both known and yet to be discovered. As it turned out, the reserve is an even richer biodiversity paradise than previously thought.

Recently several research projects have revealed new species of reptiles, amphibians, insects and orchids that are currently under study and description. These new discoveries have further confirmed the biodiversity value of the area and attracted the attention of more research groups that have chosen the reserve as a base to carry out their scientific research.

## 2 CASE STUDY • ARMENIA

## Safe haven for unique Armenian flora and fauna

Leasing a unique nature area in the Caucasus allows vulnerable species to be protected from hunters. With support from IUCN NL, the leopard and bear have a chance at survival.

### **Problem**

The unique Khosrov Reserve in Armenia is home to all kinds of waterfowl, birds of prey such as eagles and vultures, and no less than 40 mammal species, some of which can only be found in this part of the Caucasus. Unfortunately, many of these animals, including the Caucasian leopard, lynx, mouflon (wild sheep), bear and bezoar goat are faced with extinction. The greatest danger comes from hunters, but also from farmers in the area who let their cattle graze in the reserve, disrupting the habitat of the species that live there.

### **Approach**

Armenian partner organization FPWC (Foundation for the

Protection of Wildlife and Cultural Assets) received a grant to lease 839 hectares of land in the vulnerable boundary areas of the reserve. Some of the money has gone towards building a facility for the park rangers. The park rangers are in charge of enforcing park regulations. The work of FPWC is also supported by the British World Land Trust.

### Result

The Caucasus Wildlife Refuge is increasingly becoming a safe haven for flora and fauna, as became incontrovertably clear when in the end of 2013 a Caucasian leopard was captured on camera. It was eight years since one had been seen in



NGO: Foundation for the Protection of Wildlife and Cultural Assets

Country: Armenia

**Hectares:** 5 year lease on 839 hectares to create Caucasus

Wildlife Refuge

Partnership created: 2010







the vicinity of the park. Other animal populations are restoring themselves as well. The number of bezoar goats has increased and the animals are also less timid, which is a sign that they feel at ease there. Herds numbering up to 30 goats are now regularly seen

inside the reserve. In addition, the people living in the area benefit from the reserve, so it receives a lot of local support. Four park rangers have been hired, and in the future ecotourism is expected to create jobs for the people in the nearby village of Urtsadzor.

# Capturing wildlife on camera



Tamandua, Bolivia

Cameras that snap automatically provide an excellent opportunity to monitor animals without disturbing them.



Syrian brown bear, Armenia



Red shanked douc langur, Vietnam



Striped hyena, Iran



Maned wolf, Bolivia

## Signs of conservation













# Safeguarding ecosystem services

How protecting nature benefits people



The overwhelming majority of land acquisitions funded by SPN have the primary objective to preserve habitats that are important for wildlife. Many of the projects however have the parallel objective to secure ecosystem services for communities that live in the vicinity

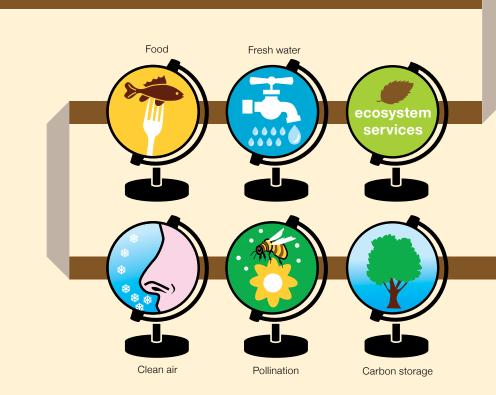
of the acquired areas. After all, protecting these forests also means protecting the services they provide, such as a constant supply of clean water. This way, our projects create a win-win for biodiversity and human well-being.



Creating a protected area in the 20,000 hectare Khe Nuoc Trong forest in Vietnam is essential if many, very rare species such as the red shanked douc langur are to survive. It also secures important hydrological functions. IUCN NL enabled local NGO VietNature Conservation Center to negotiate a 30 year lease on a 781 hectare area.



IUCN NL helped local NGO AESMO to secure crucial parts of the mountainous Güisayote reserve in Honduras. This reserve contains dozens of springs that supply water to many nearby communities. By acquiring 348 extra hectares, the home of the quetzal is safeguarded and water supply is protected.



# More trees for more water and more electricity

By protecting the forests around El Bote in Nicaragua, valuable biodiversity is protected and a steady supply of water is ensured. This enables the local villagers to operate a small hydropower plant.

### **Problem**

El Bote is located in a remote mountainous area of Central Northern Nicaragua. The area harbors unique flora and fauna, including several endangered species like jaguar, resplendent quetzal and the harpy eagle. The tropical mountain forests capture rainwater and consequently ensure clean drinking water and irrigation water for the farmland in the lower lying valleys.

The region is under increasing threat from commercial logging and population growth. Road construction has enabled settlers and logging companies to penetrate further into the forest and accelerate the rate of

deforestation. This has led to the destruction of wildlife habitat. Moreover, the loss of forest has disrupted water supply in the region.

### **Approach**

A strategy was needed to tackle the threats to biodiversity, but also to secure the hydrological functions of this important water basin. Local NGOs Green Empowerment and ATDER worked together to implement a community-based hydroelectric water basin conservation project in the community of El Bote. A 900kW hydroelectric plant was constructed to bring reliable electricity to homes, schools,



NGO: Association of Rural Development Workers & Green Empowerment Country: Nicaragua Hectares: Extension of the El Bote Forest Reserve with a land purchase of another 581

hectares

Partnership created: 2006



"The SPN program was critical for us in order to establish and expand the El Bote Forest Reserve, protecting the area's tremendous biodiversity and conserving critical water and soil resources."

### Anna Garwood

Green Empowerment



clinics and companies. To keep this hydropower plant in operation, sufficient water must be available. This was ensured by creating a 245 hectare reserve protecting the trees up in the mountains. Between 2006 and 2013, IUCN NL supported the extension of the reserve by another 581 hectares.

### Result

The El Bote community realized that conserving the water basin not only guarantees the long-term protection of the area's exceptional natural resources, but also supplies power to approximately 7,000 people. Local residents y now actively manage and protect their 956 hectare reserve. This is a win-win for biodiversity and human well-being.

# Saving tapirs and securing water through forest protection

Protection of the forests on the western slope of Podocarpus National Park in Ecuador simultaneously achieves two important goals: conserving vital habitat for tapirs and securing the reliable supply of clean drinking water to the city of Loja.

### **Problem**

The Podocarpus-El Condor National Park provides the last ecological connection between three of the world's most important forest areas: the Tumbesian Dry Forest, the Andean Forest, and the Upper Amazonian Forest in Ecuador. The park is one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, with an estimated 800 species, half of Ecuador's total. It is one of the last places on earth where the threatened bearded guan still occurs. The area is also home to the endangered Andean tapir, a large herbivore, and the spectacled bear.

Over the past few decades, the area surrounding the city of Loja has been seriously affected by human activity such as cutting down trees for wood and clearance of land to make way for cattle grazing and other agriculture. Forest fires intentionally set during the dry season have damaged the forest severely. As the trees are lost so the soil is unable to retain water, which affects Loja's water supply and water quality.

### **Approach**

The municipality of Loja realized that the lack of forest protection was costing them an estimated one million dollars every year, through increased costs in water treatment, damage to infrastructure and costs associated with forest fires. This has resulted in the municipality

NGO: Natura y Cultura Ecuador

Country: Ecuador

Hectares: Acquisition of 250 hectares of cloud forest in high.

biodiversity watershed **Partnership created:** 2008







signing an agreement with Natura y Cultura Ecuador (NCE) to stop further deforestation. With support from IUCN NL, NCE has purchased 250 hectares of forest on the slopes of the Podocarpus National Park. Additionally, together with the municipality, they agreed to spend part of the money from water taxes on the management of these forests.

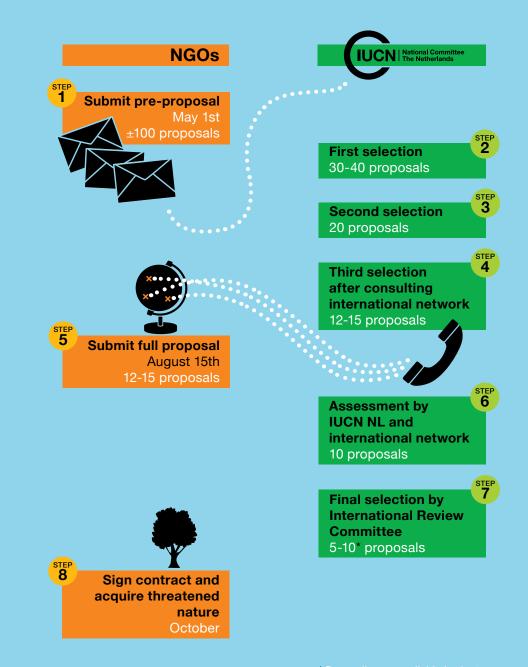
### Results

Acquiring these forests served two important goals. First it protects some of the last remaining forest in a biodiversity hotspot, crucial for the survival of many unique species. Secondly, protecting the forest also benefits the 160,000 inhabitants of Loja. Preserving the trees means that the hydrology in the region will improve, securing their supply of drinking water for the future.

# From project proposal to protected area

### Funding priority is given to:

- Areas with endangered species
- Ecosystems under represented in the public protected areas system
- Areas with a strategic importance for the protection of the hinterland (buffer zones) or which connect important areas (corridors)



<sup>\*</sup> Depending on available budget

# Snowball effect of small grants

### How SPN support creates leverage

The impact of land acquisition projects is not restricted to the purchase of pristine nature. Becoming a landowner enables local NGOs to establish a solid foothold in their region. It provides them a chance to show their competence and their long-term vision, which earns them the trust and respect of both local communities and authorities. This support, in turn, creates opportunities for developing joint projects with the local people, involving them closely in the creation of a sustainable future for their region.

The backing from IUCN NL provides added value on an institutional level. For many of our beneficiaries, having been selected to receive a grant from an international donor allows them to participate more actively in the debates concerning environmental issues. It improves their reputation and they gain credibility with authorities and decision makers.

In addition, the international support from IUCN NL is seen by many other donors as a 'quality stamp', which helps our partners to raise additional funding from other local and international donors contributing to the long term sustainability of the reserves.

"The SPN grant was crucial to catalyze the collaboration with other donors. Once we received SPN support, American Bird Conservancy was willing to offer a match of funds for the purchase price, whereby four other institutions then felt the project would succeed and offered their support."

Fundación Armonia, Bolivia

"For FPWC the SPN grant was a starting point for the implementation of a totally new model of protected areas management in Armenia. This had a tremendous impact on the development of our organization and its strategic position and perception in the country as well as in its international relations."

FPWC. Armenia

"(The grant) has been very important as it gave relevance and visibility to Fundaexpresión both at a national level, where we are advising in national programs for community sanitation, and international level, where we are participating in Rio+20 People's Summit."

Fundaexpresión, Colombia

"The support of IUCN NL has given greater visibility to our work and helped us get more donors to purchase areas."

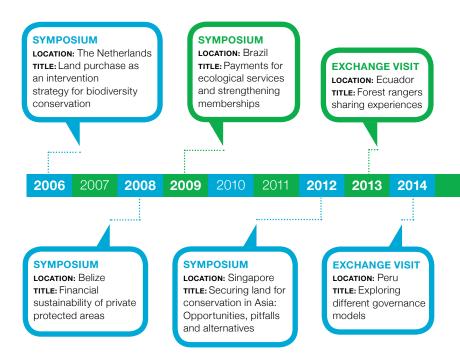
Instituto Ră-bugio para Conservação da Biodiversidade,
Brazil

## Sharing and inspiring

# How exchanging knowledge drives projects forward

The exchange of information is a crucial aspect in conservation. The partners of SPN harbor a wealth of experience and know-how as well as a great willingness to share their knowledge. Looking for ways to exploit this, IUCN NL regularly organizes seminars and exchange visits for and between partner organizations.

By visiting peer projects, our partners compare and share experiences for mutual benefit. During exchange visits, networks are created, ideas evolve and inspiration is found in observing and questioning the work of dedicated fellow-conservationists. Often, a visit turns out to be an eye-opening experience that fosters a feeling of camaraderie and companionship between fellow park rangers.



"The visit showed us that conservation is something that many different people are working toward, in many different places, and that we, two park rangers from the Jama-Coaque Reserve, are part of this more universal project to preserve tropical forests before they are lost."

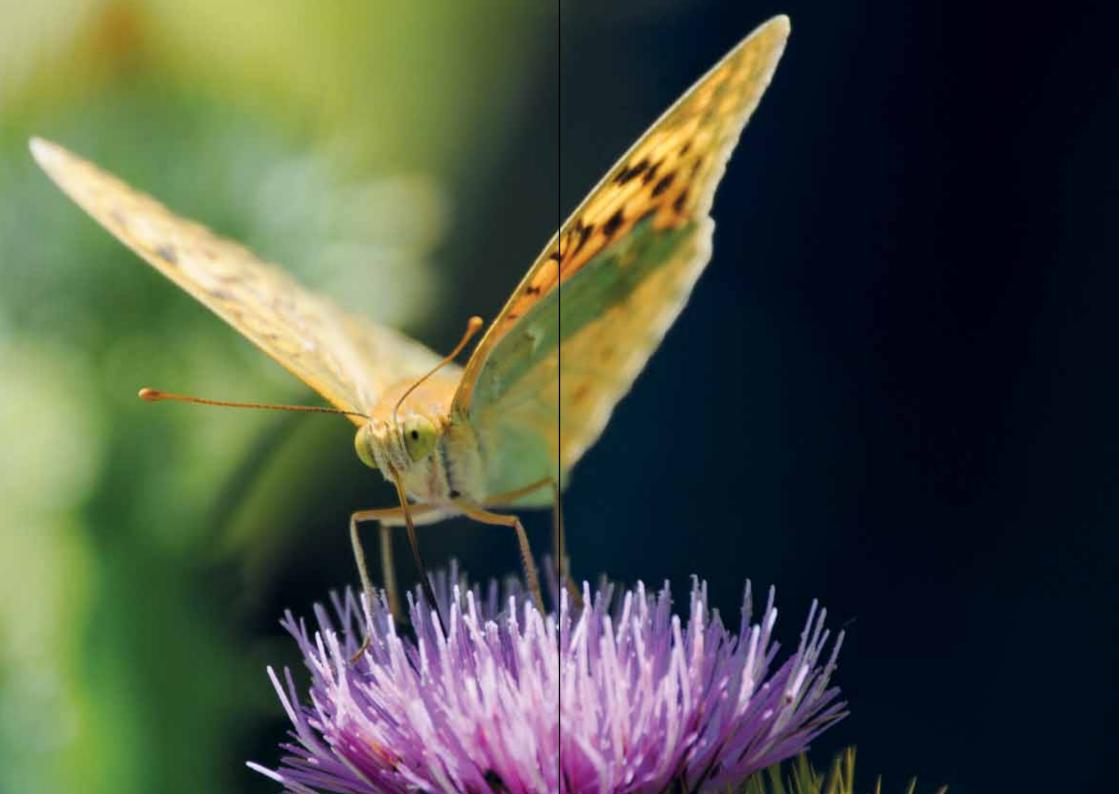
**Third Millenium Alliance park rangers Edilberto Marquez and Dany Murillo** after visiting three SPN funded reserves in other parts of Ecuador

"Our trip was highly educating not only for the ideas, but also for the methodologies that Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda is using. Using models learnt from them, we are now beginning to design our own conservation methodologies adapted to our conditions."

CREA Panama director Michael Roy  $\alpha fter\ visiting\ GESG$  in Mexico

"I greatly value the diversity of the participating organizations and the real life experience of several organizations which are already very successful in securing land. I am grateful for the opportunity given to me."

Pham Tuan Ahn from VietNature Conservation Center after visiting the 2010 symposium



### Voices from the field

"To me these mountains are so precious, so beautiful, so wise that I have dedicated my life to their conservation." **Pati Ruiz Corzo**, GESG



Grupo Ecologico Sierra Gorda, founded by Pati, protects a precious area in the heart of Mexico. • vimeo.com/jucnnl/mexico

"It's more than just an area for conservation, it's emotionally in my heart."

Ruben Khachatryan, FPWC

Ruben and his team at FPWC are committed to safeguarding Armenia's unique natural heritage with the help of IUCN NL. • vimeo.com/iucnnl/armenia





"We are securing the future of this animal for perhaps another hundred years at least. It gives me great peace."

Vivek Menon, WTI

In India, IUCN NL supports Vivek and his team at WTI in securing elephant corridors.

vimeo.com/jucnnl/india

### Ingredients for success

Making an acquisition project a success is a joint effort. From the NGO's end, the crucial factor is the capacity, passion, commitment and permanent presence of local staff. Without this, projects will fail. From IUCN NL's end, three ingredients are key:

### **✓** Expertise

Local intelligence is key in the selection process, to verify NGO capacities, land prices and how the proposed land purchase intervention 'fits' in with other conservation strategies. IUCN NL therefore invests time in expanding and maintaining its network of local experts and NGOs.

### **✓** Patience

Land acquisition can be a very time-consuming process. NGOs need time to negotiate the right price: not too high, to prevent frustrating future acquisition projects, and not too low, making sellers feel they are 'squeezed out' and giving them a negative attitude to conservation. That's why IUCN NL doesn't rush.

### ✓ Trust

IUCN NL's role is to facilitate partner NGOs to work as efficiently as possible. This means first of all being flexible, accepting that for the most part the NGO has superior knowledge about what is best in a given situation.

"Though we have funded a wide variety of organizations, in many parts of the world, they all share one thing in common: they all feel a strong connection to the project area and truly care about its future."

Maas Goote, Director IUCN NL

## Looking forward

The SPN program has undoubtedly accomplished its mission of connecting and protecting key nature reserves. Thanks to support from IUCN NL. these valuable habitats are preserved, not just for now, but also for future generations. In addition, we can rely on capable NGOs who have taken on the responsibility of caring for their land – a task they take extremely seriously. These people, with their amazing passion and commitment, are the foundation for our work and it is these dedicated people who guarantee the long-term sustainability of our projects.

Our fourteen year track record of successful projects proves that our concept of strategic nature acquisition works. Even the acquisition of a small patch of land can deliver visible and long-lasting results. You can help make a difference.

Take action today and contact us to explore opportunities.

mail@iucn.nl www.iucn.nl







### **Dutch Postcode Lottery**

The Small grants for the Purchase of Nature program could not exist without the support of the Dutch Postcode Lottery. The Dutch Postcode Lottery has been raising funds for organizations that work for a greener and fairer world since 1989. Fifty percent of the proceeds from the lottery tickets are distributed to charitable organizations. Over 2013, the lottery donated a record €302 million to 90 good causes. IUCN NL has been beneficiary of the Dutch Postcode Lottery since 2001 and receives a yearly contribution of €900,000. www.postcodeloterij.nl

Creating wildlife corridors is an extremely targeted and cost effective tool to protect nature. With the financial support of the IUCN NL program Small grants for the Purchase of Nature (SPN), local NGOs are able to acquire strategically important parcels of land to connect isolated forests, thereby greatly increasing the living space for wild animals such as birds, jaguars and monkeys. The pioneering approach by SPN can make all the difference to the chances of survival of many unique and endangered species.



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