

Project Update: July 2022

Over this time period the second phase of data collection was completed. During this time:

- A survey informed by the previous focus groups was completed.
- 298 surveys were carried out in five communities bordering the Montes Azules Biosphere reserve.
- Data entry was completed, and analysis begun on the results from the surveys.

A survey informed by the previous focus groups was completed.

Based on the types of wildlife caused damages commonly identified as important to local people in the focus groups, it was decided that the surveys would ask about losses to livestock and maize caused by wildlife. It was also decided that the choice experiment questions in the surveys would investigate the relative preferences people have between the conservation of jaguars, preventing the loss of maize and livestock, and having access to income from ecotourism. The aim of this is to understand the monetary value people would place on jaguar conservation and preventing damages caused by jaguars and their prey. This helps us understand the magnitude of existence and bequest values people living near jaguar's place on them, as well as the monetary value of some of the regulatory services they provide. Sections on people's value orientation towards wildlife, attitude and beliefs about jaguars and beliefs about the amount of damage animals cause people's households were also included in the survey. The language of the survey questions was then tested and refined with people of similar economic and educational backgrounds as residents of the survey site.

Almost 300 surveys were carried out in five communities bordering the Montes Azules Biosphere reserve.

An intense period of carrying out surveys followed the survey design was completed. The assistants from the prior period of research, Griselda Esteban and Jose Marroquin, were rehired. An additional student from UNICACH was also hired and trained to speed up survey collection, Alonso Romero Garcia. Surveys were initially carried out in the ejidos of Zamora Pico de Oro, Quiringuicharo and Playon de Gloria which all border the biosphere reserve and have the continual presence of conservation organisations. When it became clear that these communities had been thoroughly sampled and there was time remaining, permission was obtained to work in two other communities. These are El Ixcán and Loma Bonita, which also border the reserve but have less of a presence from conservationists. Ultimately, 298 surveys were collected from a representative and randomised sample of households in the five communities, an about average sample size to perform discrete choice experiments. During the process of data collection, I also had the opportunity to talk to a wide variety of local residents and learn more about some of the attitudes and ideas regarding conservation present in the area.

Data entry was completed, and analysis begun on the results from the surveys.

The surveys were collected with pen and paper in person. The results then had to be transferred into a spreadsheet for data analysis to begin, and the transfer double checked to ensure an accurate transfer. This has been completed and data analysis is

now underway. The notes taken about conversations with local people were also typed up to have a backup of this unplanned for information.



