

Project Update: August 2011

During the six visits to San Juan Teponaxtla so far, we carried out the following activities:

At this stage we have 360 vouchers of plants collected counting 166 species. The most important species so far, is *Aristolochia tricaudata*, a shrub with very restricted distribution, only found in the Oaxaca and Chiapas states in Mexico and with very small populations. We published a scientific paper about this species, titled: *Where has the Aristolochia tricaudata (ARISTOLOCHIACEAE) gone? New record of critically endangered species in Oaxaca, Mexico* (Rivera-Hernández and Samain, 2011). We collected seven amphibian and 19 reptiles recorded within the area, with three potential new records in Oaxaca State. All the information and new publications are currently in process.

The Environmental Education Programme is running workshops and talks periodically to promote environmental awareness among the community. Thanks to these activities the community is gradually changing their daily habits mainly on waste disposal. The village has one battery bin for recycling, making sure that all the contents are taking out from the village. Since this country has not any governmental programme for recycling (out of Mexico City), we are still looking for the suitable recyclable centre for their delivery, as transportation costs, periodically amounts of waste, and other logistic aspects are still an important issues to deal with.

Ecotourism complementary activities as embroidery and liana baskets are in progress. Wild liana populations are under estimation to make a sustainable use of them. Additional handicrafts and ideas such as communitarian performances, traditional dress recovery, dolls wearing traditional dress and others ideas are being discussed by the community.

Sixty-six Cuicatec speakers have been detected as suitable teachers to run Cuicatec lessons within the community to basic, medium and advance levels. The main task currently running is elderly people encouraging their grandsons to speak Cuicatec as much as possible in their daily activities. We currently have linguistic support by Maribel Alvarado García, a researcher from the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH); her main research interests are the morphological systems on Otomanguen languages such as Cuicatec and Mixtec. An additional activity was the assistance to the SEVILEM (*Semana de vida y Lengua Mixe; Life and Mixe Language's Week*) from 25th to 28th July 2011. A week on live and Mixe Language in Santa María Matamoros Cotzocón, Mixe, Oaxaca. During this event four Cuicatec people assisted, taking the chance for ideas and experiences interchange according Mixe experiences as Mixes have been working hardly with all the language study and recovery. Currently, they have almost all the phonological and grammatical study of all the Mixe variants in their region. Mixes have and strong identity and the vast majority are really proud of their language.

Finally, we are constructing a feasibility study about the ecotourism programme. In this part, we have got the biophysical and communitarian description of the territory ready and also, have worked with people in workshop to know their main interest sites in order to develop ecotourism, the right organisation to manage the project, etc. Generally speaking the

ecotourism project is growing step by step involving the most of the people within the village.



Left: Texas alligator Lizard (*Gerrhonotus liocephalus*). Right: Embroidering for conservation in Teponaxtla.