

El Salvador- El Imposible

El Imposible National Park -watershed warden sponsoring

SUMMARY

Water users in two communities of the San Francisco Menendez Municipality are contributing a share of their water charges to cover the salary of two additional park rangers of the El Imposible National Park, the primary water source for both communities.

MATURITY OF THE INITIATIVE

Pilot, ongoing since 2001 and active as of 2008.

DRIVER

Demand driven - water users initiated payments.

STAKEHOLDERS

Supply

Government, as park owner. SalvaNaturA, the NGO in charge of managing the park (through a co-management agreement with the government) works with the communities around the park to provide alternatives for the forest resources that are now off-limits. Its funding originates from international donors and corporations, as well as membership of national individuals and businesses.

Activities developed by SalvaNaturA in El Imposible

- Set up support for micro-enterprise
- Promotion of soil conservation techniques (using live hedges and planting fruit and forest trees on their properties)
- Environmentally friendly certified products, among many other initiatives.

<http://www.nps.gov/centralamerica/salvador/>

Demand

Domestic water users in (the local communities of Conacastes and Cara Sucia) agree to pay 54 colones (US\$6.05) monthly to cover the costs of administration, operation and maintenance of the improved water supply system - this fee also covers the salary of two wardens of the National Park.

Intermediary

Local government (municipal water utility company): collects the water use fees transferred to the El Imposible National Park.

Facilitator

The drinking water systems and organization of community water boards were set up by the local communities, the Health Promotion through Water and Sanitation Project (PROSAGUAS), the Action, Management and Rational Use of Water Resources Project (AGUA) and support agencies. These water systems were then transferred to the communities under the agreement that the community's water use fees would also cover the salary of a "watershed warden" in El Imposible National Park "in recognition of the environmental service of 'water protection' provided by the park" (Rosa et al., 2003).

MARKET DESIGN

Service

Water flow and quality.

Commodity

Conservation and protection of existing ecosystems through the support of the park's conservation measures, by sponsoring additional monitoring and enforcement.

Payment mechanism

User fees & pooled transaction - payments made to cover the operation, maintenance and administration of the water supply system, including the salary of two park guards to act as watershed wardens.

Terms of payment

Water users make cash payments: 54 colones (US\$6.05) monthly per user, a part of which is invested in the park's surveillance system, in order to support its effective protection (the park has one warden for each 150 hectares).

Funds involved

Each water user pays approximately US\$6 per month, providing US\$612,000 per year in funding. Water users (8,500) agree to pay 54 colones (US\$6.05) monthly (US\$6 x 12months x 8,500 users = US\$612,000), a share of which is to cover the salaries of the park wardens - unclear what share this constitutes. An estimation may be drawn from a parallel scheme, run by Salvanatura, through which the public can sponsor a park ranger (or one hectare of the park) for a year, at a cost of US\$3,000 per year (<http://www.salvanatura.org/Guarda.html>).

ANALYSIS OF COSTS AND BENEFITS

Economic

No information available.

Environmental

Expected: increased protection of water resources, through the additional work by the two extra park rangers. However, it is difficult to determine whether this is a significant benefit in terms of water supply received by these two communities.

Social

Equity: "From the perspective of equity, the case is controversial because poor rural communities are paying for environmental services generated in a national park" (Rosa et al., 2003).

LEGISLATION ISSUES

Payments support government national park system; there is a Forest Use Decree that prohibits cutting any vegetation, hunting any species and establishing or developing physical infrastructure.

MONITORING

The PES contribution aims particularly at strengthening the park's surveillance capacity.

MAIN CONSTRAINTS

Herrador 2002 (cited in Rosa et al., 2003) states that most water users are not aware that the wage of the warden comes from their water use fees "because only the projects' representatives and members of both systems' governing boards participated in the negotiation of the agreement."

MAIN POLICY LESSONS

No information available.

OTHER INFORMATION

No information available.

CONTACT

<http://www.salvanatura.org/contactenos.html>.

REFERENCES

Rosa, H. Kandel S. Dimas L. with contributions from Cuellar N. and Mendez E. 2003. Compensation for environmental services and rural communities: Lessons from the Americas and key issues for strengthening community strategies. San Salvador, El Salvador, Fundacion PRISMA – The Salvadoran Research Programme on Development and Environment. CSA- compensation por servicios ambientales.
http://www.prisma.org.sv/pubs/CES_RC_En.pdf.

LINKS

<http://www.nps.gov/centralamerica/salvador>

SalvaNatura website: <http://www.salvanatura.org>