

Poster, Main Conference

LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN VICUÑA MANAGEMENT IN ARGENTINA

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Many populations of vicuña (*Vicugna vicugna*) have been recently reclassified from CITES App. I to App.II, allowing controlled commercial exploitation. This poster shows the steps taken to implement such a system based on sustainable management principles. A management plan identifies costs, benefits and risks of the activity before it starts, and, in addition to practicality and economics, should give importance to natural resource use rights, cultural attitudes, historical background, ethnicity and environmental impacts. The economic return must be sustainable in the long term and have a low impact on the wider environment. Our objective in Argentina is to develop science-based management plans for the wild management of vicuña, implement participatory management tools, enhancing the cooperation between scientists and local communities in the design phase. The traditional Andean “chaku” consists in a drive, capture, shearing and release of wild vicuñas that minimizes the short and long-term effects on individuals and populations. Our first experimental capture with a community was undertaken in November 2003. Seventy vicuñas were shorn, providing 16.5 kg of fibre. In the second (November 2004), 129 were shorn, producing 27.4 kg of fibre. The aim has been to balance income generation with ecological sustainability and equitable sharing of benefits.

Indigenous knowledge and conservation, Economic and social context of biological conservation, other: wildlife management and local development.

Student presentation (Candidate for a student award)

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