



# What's Wrong--and Right--with Global Carbon Markets?

A case study of two REDD+ projects in Perú and Colombia

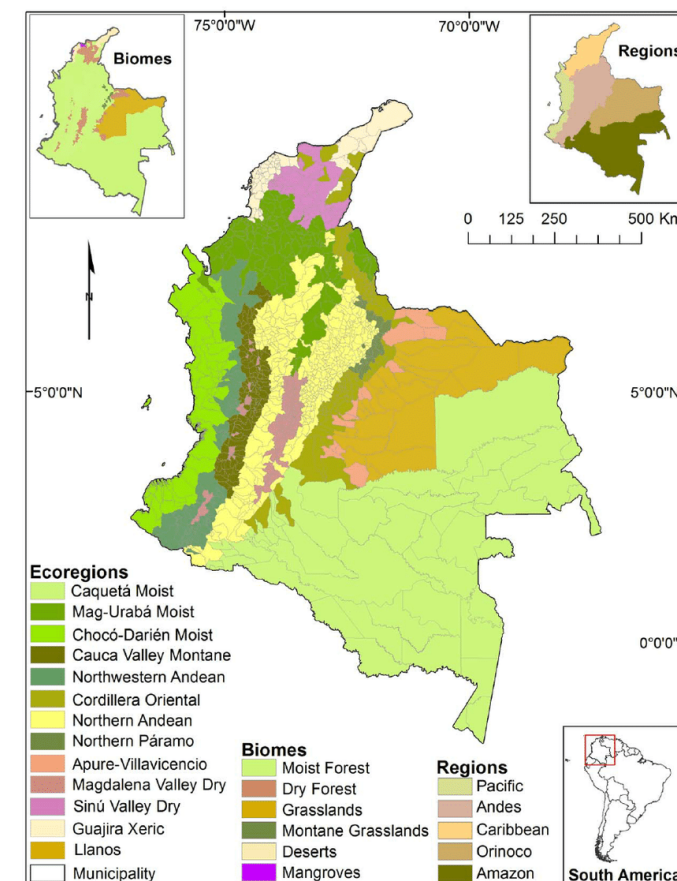
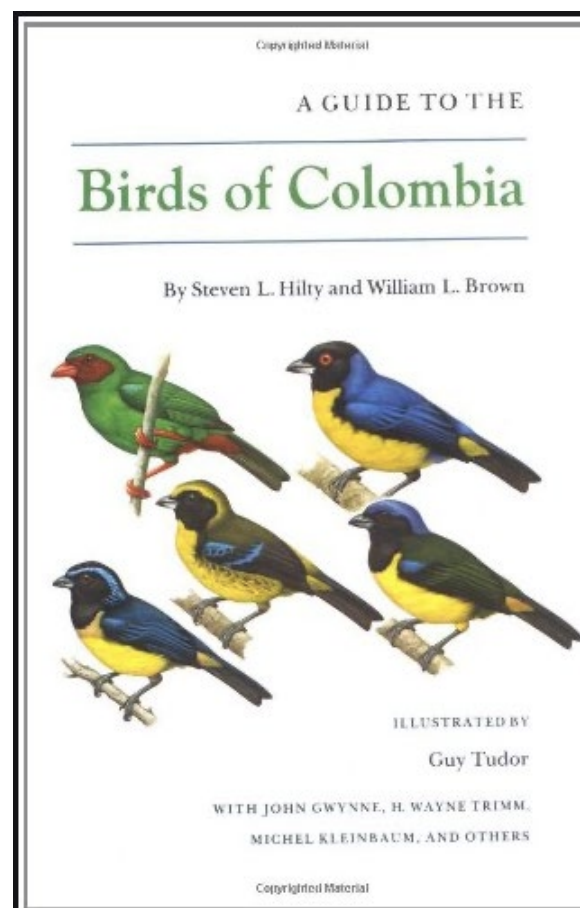
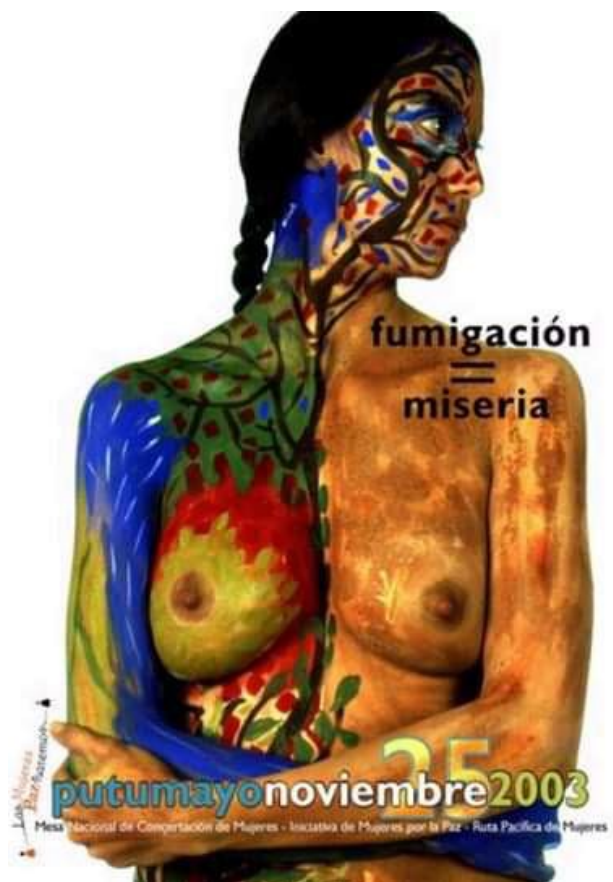
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Map: A. Etter

# Illicit Crops and Bird Conservation Priorities in Colombia

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**Abstract:** Over the last 5 years the amount of land in Colombia planted in illicit crops, such as coca and poppy, has grown an average of 21% per year and may account for half the total area deforested in 1998. I conducted a geographic analysis of the distribution of illicit crops relative to standing forests and areas of conservation priority for birds. Municipalities where illicit crops have been detected were overlaid on a forest-cover map of Colombia and two types of conservation priorities for birds were plotted: distributions of threatened species and minimum-area sets for conservation of all species. The sites of the highest conservation priority affected by illicit crops were in the southern Andes, the northern West Andes and adjacent Darién lowlands, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Serranía del Perijá, and the Serranía de San Lucas. The largest forested areas threatened by illicit crops were in Amazonia and the Amazonian foothills of the East Andes, sites of low conservation priority. Given current trends in the expansion of illicit crops and the narrow endemism of some bird species, the conversion of forests for illicit-crop cultivation may result in the extirpation of several bird species from affected regions. To impede this, those involved in illicit-crop eradication and alternative development should give high priority to the protection of existing forest reserves and parks from the planting of illicit crops. Such efforts should also extend to areas proposed for conservation based on the diversity of threatened and endemic birds that are currently unprotected. The conservation of threatened and endemic birds in Colombian forests may hinge on successfully curbing incentives for deforestation, including the international trade in illicit drugs.

Cultivos Ilícitos y Prioridades de Conservación de Aves en Colombia

**Resumen:** En Colombia la tierra sembrada con cultivos ilícitos, como la coca y la amapola, ha crecido un 21% anual en los últimos 5 años y podría dar cuenta de la mitad del área deforestada en 1998. Realicé un análisis geográfico de la distribución de cultivos ilícitos en relación a bosques restantes y áreas de prioridad para la conservación de aves. Los municipios donde los cultivos ilícitos fueron detectados han sido superpuestos en un mapa de cobertura forestal de Colombia, sumados a dos tipos de prioridades de conservación de aves: las distribuciones de aves amenazadas y los conjuntos de áreas mínimas para la conservación de todas las especies. Los sitios de más alta prioridad para la conservación afectados por cultivos ilícitos estuvieron en el sur de los Andes, la parte norte de la Cordillera Occidental y las tierras bajas adyacentes al Darién, la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, la Serranía del Perijá y la Serranía de San Lucas. Los bosques de mayor área amenazada por cultivos ilícitos se encuentran en la Amazonia y en el piedemonte amazónico de la Cordillera Oriental, sitios con baja prioridad de conservación. Dadas las tendencias actuales de expansión de estos cultivos y el alto endemismo de algunas especies de aves, la conversión de bosques a cultivos ilícitos podría provocar varias extinciones locales. Para impedir esto, los involucrados en la erradicación de cultivos ilícitos y programas de desarrollo alternativo deberán dar alta prioridad a la protección de reservas forestales y parques contra la siembra de cultivos ilícitos. Estos esfuerzos también deberán extenderse a las áreas de conservación propuestas con base en la diversidad de aves amenazadas y endémicas que actualmente no

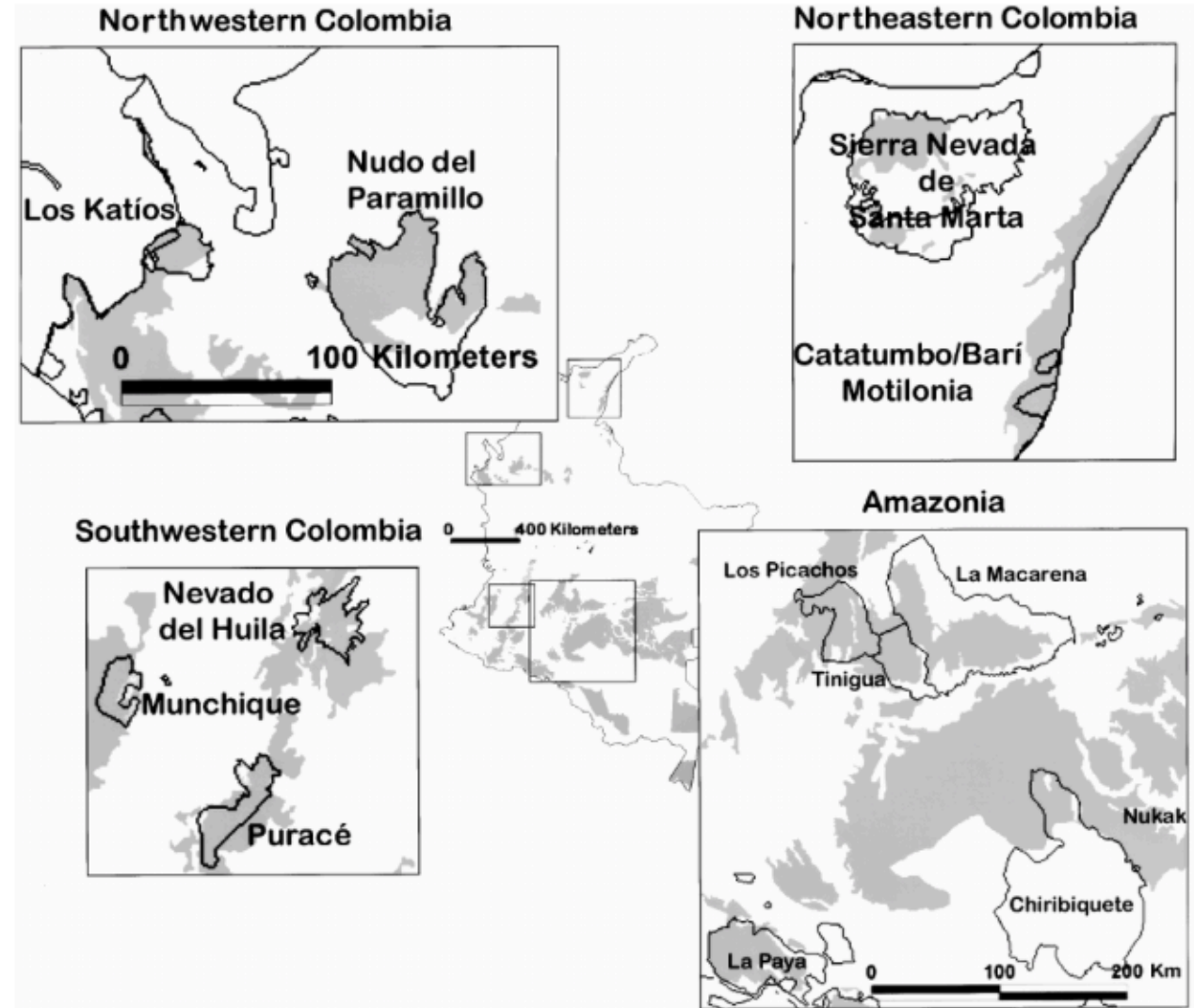


Figure 3. Main protected areas in priority areas for conservation of threatened and endemic birds significantly affected by illicit crops (World Conservation Monitoring Centre 2000; United Nations Drug Control Programme 2000). Forests (gray) in municipalities where illicit crops have been detected.







# **Two Shades of Green:**

HOW HOT AIR FOREST CREDITS ARE BEING USED  
TO AVOID CARBON TAXES IN COLOMBIA

*Policy briefing, June 2021*



# Carbon offsetting is not warding off environmental collapse – it's accelerating it

*George Monbiot*



Wealthy companies are using the facade of 'nature-based solutions' to enact a great carbon land grab



📷 'Last year, forests being used as corporate offsets were incinerated by the wildfires raging across North America.' Photograph: Noah Berger/EPA

In Scotland, Shell is spending £5m **extending the Glengarry forest**. While Scotland needs more trees, it also needs a much better distribution of land. As big corporations and financiers **pile into this market**, land prices are **rising** so fast that local people, some of whom would like to run their own rewilding and reforestation projects, are being shut out.

A better strategy would be to spend money on strengthening the land rights of indigenous people, who **tend to be the most effective guardians** of ecosystems and the carbon they contain. Where communities don't own land, they should be funded to buy it back and restore its missing habitats. But none of these projects should be counted against the fossil fuels we should leave in the ground.

Yes, we need to restore life on Earth. Yes, we need to draw down as much carbon as we can. But we cannot let this crucial tool be turned against us.

● George Monbiot is a Guardian columnist

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Map: Andrea León



# SELVA de MATAVÉN





Standards for a  
Sustainable Future

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ID

PROPONENT

NAME

Madre de Dios

▶ PROJECT TYPE

▶ METHODOLOGY

▶ STATUS

▼ COUNTRY

Paraguay

Peru

Philippines

Romania

Russian Federation

▶ REGION

▶ CREDITING PERIOD

Search

Clear Search

ID ▾	Name ▾	Propone... ▾	Project Type ▾	AFOLU Activities ▾	Method
1799	Forest management to mitigate climate change in Bélgica native community, Madre de Dios region – Peru	Multiple Proponents	Agriculture Forestry and Other Land Use	REDD	VM0019
1218	Evio Kuiñaji Ese´Eja Cuana, To Mitigate Climate Change, Madre de Dios – Perú	Multiple Proponents	Agriculture Forestry and Other Land Use	REDD	VM000
868	REDD project in Brazil nut concessions in Madre de Dios, Peru	Bosques Amazónicos	Agriculture Forestry and Other Land Use	REDD	VM000
844	Madre de Dios Amazon REDD+ Project	Multiple Proponents	Agriculture Forestry and Other Land Use	REDD	VM000
1067	Reduction of deforestation and degradation in Tambopata National Reserve and Bahuaja-Sonene National Park within	AIDER	Agriculture Forestry and Other Land Use	REDD	VM000





PERÚ

## *Los mineros ilegales destruyen una reserva natural en Perú*

Un grupo de militares y guardaparques intenta proteger de la explotación minera ilegal a la reserva peruana Tambopata, uno de los lugares con mayor diversidad biológica del planeta. Algunos expertos dicen que es demasiado tarde.























## **What did we learn?**

When it comes to the carbon offset debate, be specific. Don't generalize.

Be open to changing your mind.

Well designed, properly implemented, effectively regulated REDD+ projects are reducing deforestation in the tropics.

REDD+ projects can be especially effective on indigenous lands, ancestral territories (like Afro-Colombian territories in the Colombian Pacific) and buffer/multiple use zones of protected areas.

Think critically but do your homework before criticizing.

Listen to the people on the ground, in the tropics, being affected by the projects.

Don't cherry pick worst case scenarios and then say they represent the norm.

Don't be naive. Be on the lookout for carbon cowboys, government corruption, and propaganda.

Beware of assuming that nesting, jurisdictional REDD, and "results-based" frameworks are improvements

Call for co-authors for article about Visión Amazonia and REDD analyst for Brazil.

## How I evaluate REDD+ projects for Carbon Growth Partners

- Organize and evaluate project documents
- Identify and interview stakeholders
- Identify and analyze threats to permanence (EJA and Mongabay)
- Hone in on red flags (especially any related to project developer, governance and corruption)
- Identify and test critical assumptions
- Pay special attention to FREE and PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT ISSUES
- Make recommendations
- **Visit projects**
- Help develop attractive proposals that benefit partners and communities (down payments, profit sharing, legal and admin assistance, help with media, knowledge sharing, other)



We are a leading investment manager in  
global carbon markets





THANKS!