

Indigenous Collaborative Research for Wildlife Management in Amazonia: The Case of the Kaxinawá, Acre, Brazil

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Wildlife is a critical food resource throughout Amazonia. Consequently, adaptive management based on continued resource evaluation is essential to ensure long-term sustainable use of Amazonian wildlife. Since 1996, the Kaxinawá people of Western Amazonia have participated in a capacity-building program focused on natural resource management leading to the development of a territorial management plan that includes monitoring of wildlife use. In this study, we report the results of collaborative management-oriented research based on the analysis of self-monitoring hunting data collected through a methodology designed in collaboration with conservation biologists. Results support Kaxinawá hypotheses about game availability within their territory that state 1) there is variation of game availability among villages in Kaxinawá territory; 2) preferred game species are more available to those villages closest to the isolated headwaters; and 3) previous land and wildlife use, present density of villages, and human population density are the main factors causing observed variations of game availability. The results of this study demonstrate the relevance and value of long-term participatory studies to complement short-term academic studies of biodiversity and natural resource use and management.

Keywords: community based conservation, self-monitoring, indigenous empowerment, capacity-building, hunting

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