

Developing Scientific Research through Collaboration in Community-based Projects among two Indigenous Peoples in the Brazilian Amazon

Simone F. Athayde^{1,2}, Paulo J. P. Junqueira², Katia Y. Ono², Joana S. C. Rodrigues³, Alexander Brust⁴

1 School of Natural Resources and the Environment (SNRE)/Tropical Conservation and Development Program (TCD)/Center for Latin American Studies, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA. Support: CNPq (Brazil) and ACLI-Moore (UF).

2 Instituto Socioambiental (ISA), Xingu Program, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

3 University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent, United Kingdom

4 Museum of Cultures, Basel, Switzerland

This paper describes two experiences of collaboration between scientists, practitioners and indigenous peoples, in which scientific research was carried out in conjunction with the design and implementation of community-based projects for cultural revitalization and natural resource management. The projects were developed with the Kaiabi and the Yudja peoples within the Xingu Indigenous Park in the Brazilian Amazon through their local organizations ATIX and Yarikayu, and with the support of the NGO Instituto Socioambiental. The Kaiabi's project focused on the revitalization of weaving knowledge among men and women at Xingu Park and in another area along the Teles Pires River. The Yudja project's objective was to promote the revitalization of musical knowledge among four communities in Xingu Park, with financial support from the Brazilian Ministry of Culture and the Museum of Cultures (Switzerland). The project involved the promotion of workshops organized by the communities for teaching weaving and musical instruments; expeditions for collecting natural resources; and educational activities carried out in indigenous schools. Scientific research was carried out through the conduction of individual, semi-structured interviews within selected communities to contribute to the understanding of processes and mechanisms involved in indigenous knowledge distribution, transmission, erosion and innovation. Both projects earned awards from the Brazilian Ministry of Culture. The research has resulted in two MS theses and one (current) PhD dissertation, and in the development of educational books and catalogues. We conclude that collaboration and knowledge exchange might be effective platforms to achieve both indigenous' and western science's interests and expectations.

Keywords: community-based conservation and development, indigenous cultural revitalization, indigenous and western knowledge, indigenous education, collaboration.

Contact Information: Simone Athayde, Tropical Conservation and Development Program, Att: Patrícia Sampaio, 358 Grinter Hall, PO Box 115531, Gainesville, FL, US, 32611-5531; Phone: +1(352) 392-0375 Ext. 806; Fax: +1 (352) 392-7682; Email: simonea@ufl.edu.