# Discourses on certification of community forest enterprises: Bolivian Lowlands



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**Acknowledgement**

I really would like to thank first of all my supervisors: Freerk Wiersum for his patience and guidance during the whole thesis process, and Charlotte Benneker for giving me the possibility of making this study in Bolivia, for all the contacts facilitated and for all the chats in Spanish that helped me a lot.

I really would like to thank with all my heart Bismarck Gijena, Juan Carlos Rivero and Rivera's family for all the facilities and affection given in Santa Cruz. Without them my stay there wouldn't have been so pleasant.

Thank you very much to SNV Santa Cruz for the welcome and treatment received in this institution, and all the good advice and information provided. They made me feel like a member.

I am very grateful to Severine Van Bommel for her time and help offered in order to build my theoretical framework.

All my friends there in Santa Cruz, specially Christian and Manuel, that made me feel like at home and with whom I shared my best times in Bolivia. They will be always remembered.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents for their ever-lasting support, love and understanding to carry out this MSc-thesis in a developing country.

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**Acronyms**

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| APCOB | Apoyo para el Campesino-Indígena del Oriente Boliviano |
| BOLFOR | Proyecto Bolivia Forestal |
| CADEFOR | Centro Amazónico de Desarrollo Forestal |
| CETEFOR | Fundación Centro Técnico Forestal |
| CFE | Community Forest Enterprise |
| CFV | Consejo Boliviano para la Certificación Forestal Voluntaria |
| CICC | Central Indígena de las Comunidades de Concepción |
| CICOL | Central Intercomunal Campesina del Oriente de Lomerío |
| CIDOB | Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia |
| ESFOR | Escuela de Formación Forestal |
| FSC | Forest Stewardship Council |
| FUNDFORMA | Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Formación Forestal y Medio Ambiente |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| PEFC | Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes |
| POAF | Plan Operativo Anual Forestal |
| SNV | Netherlands Development Organization |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| TCO | Tierra comunitaria de origen |
| WWF | World Wildlife Fund |

**Summary**

After long history of contestation over ownership of forest lands in Bolivia, recently forest ownership has partly been decentralized and indigenous groups are benefiting from the legal recognition of common property forests in which they have historically lived. These indigenous people can be characterized as forest dependent people, and several initiatives have been undertaken to stimulate and facilitate them to further conserve their forests and protect them from the high rates of deforestation caused by shifting cultivation and agro industry development. These initiatives such as community-based forest management and timber certification do not focus only on ecological conservation, but also on social and economic development of the indigenous communities, e.g. in the form of improving income-earning possibilities.

During the last decade forest certification has been promoted in Bolivia as a contribution to such conservation and development objectives. These activities were sponsored by different organizations for different reasons. In the early stage of development NGOs and developing organizations were actively stimulating forest certification as a conservation and development tool, but more recently private timber companies are increasingly using this process as a marketing tool. These different reasons for stimulating certification and different perceptions on the aim of certification of community forest enterprises have resulted in different discourses on certification of community forestry enterprises in Bolivia. These discourses partly reflect the past experiences with certification. This process has proved not to be a panacea, and in some cases certification was even abolished.

The general objective of this research is to gain insight in the different discourses about certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivian lowlands, and try to explain changes in discourses throughout time.

The study was based on the theoretical consideration that discourses are influenced by convictions, norms, values, knowledge and interests, and therefore perceptions of actors about the topic are dependent on these five factors. In the case of discourses on certification of community forest enterprises, knowledge and interest factors are considered as being of specific relevance.

On the basis of these theoretical assumptions, the study addressed the following three research questions:
   (a) What are the main features of discourses on community forestry certification in the Bolivian Amazon?
   (b) Did any change in the discourses occur during the implementation of the certification schemes?
   (c) What conclusions can be drawn from this discourse information about the scope for certification of community forest enterprises?
In answering these questions, attention was given to the opinions and arguments of local communities, governmental and non-governmental development organizations, timber companies and certification bodies.

The methodology of the research was based on an comparative case study in the five communities, Santa Mónica, Palestina, Lomerío and Cururú in the department Santa Cruz, and Yuki-Ciri in the department Cochabamba. In all communities various forestry

development organizations have stimulated certification; in two the initially started certification schemes were abolished; in another two certification was recently started. Open semi-structured interviews were held with representatives of 25 organizations, including forest development organizations, governmental organizations, certification bodies and private companies to obtain their arguments on the role of certification. Also 30 community members were interviewed in order to collect both their opinions and arguments on certification itself and on their opinions on the arguments used by stimulating organizations.

The study shows that there are three major factors impacting on the perceptions about certification of community forest enterprises; i.e. specific arguments of different stakeholder groups on certification, knowledge from experiences and information given.
The discourses on community forest certification are diverse. They are constituted by several arguments, which can be sorted by economic, technical, social and ecological aspects of certification. Three ideal-typical discourses have been identified: certification emphasizing forest conservation and local benefits, certification as a development tool, and as opportunity for commercial timber enterprises. These ideal-typical discourses sometimes share common arguments. The discourses on community forest certification are also dynamic. The discourses effectively change as a result of certification experiences. The number of arguments used by different actors decreased as a result of actual experience with certification. These changes are related to modifications in and interactions between both knowledge and interests.

The dynamics in forest certification is partly the result from the increasing role of private timber companies cooperating with community forestry enterprises. As a result the discourses on forest certification have gradually been extended from NGOs and developing organizations to private companies. Theoretically NGOs might be expected to be more focused on the social dimensions in the discourse of certification and enterprises more on the business opportunity dimension, but this distinction was not found to be very prominent. Overall, the social and economic dimensions of certification were found to be most critical for sustaining the certification schemes indicating that more attention needs to be given to proper identification of social and economic issues of community forest certification.

# 1.    Introduction

Due to timber extraction and agricultural colonization tropical forest areas are declining at high rates. According to FAO (2001), 9.0 million hectares have been deforested annually over the past decade, and 3.6 million hectares in South America alone. Thus, the loss of tropical rain forest has become an international concern, and more recently the debate has accelerated in the tropical countries themselves. A number of programmes reflect increasing interest in conservation and management of tropical forest resources (Fredericksen et al, 2000).

In recent decades community-based forest management has been a popular strategy in programs aimed at helping local populations conserve forests and improve their livelihoods (Amaral and Amaral Neto, 2005; Bray et al., 2005). Nearly one-fourth of the forests in developing countries is currently owned and/or controlled by low-income forest communities (White and Martin, 2002).

Roughly half Bolivia's land area (53.1 million hectares) is covered by natural tropical forests, and more than 2.000 tree and shrub species have been identified. The forests are mostly tropical and deciduous, although the climate and hence the types of forest vary considerably depending on altitude. Bolivia's diverse landscapes have given rise to a corresponding diversity of cultural responses on land-use.  The climate, topography, soils, and natural resources of each region have been utilized by both highland and lowland cultures for thousands of years, as the basis for some of the world's most advanced indigenous livelihood strategies (Riverstone, 2005).

There are 32 indigenous groups living in Bolivia representing nearly the 50% of its population, which encompasses a total of 8, 2 millions of inhabitants (INE 2003). Although most of that population belongs to the indigenous groups located in the plateau and valleys, such as the *Aymaras* and *Quechuas*, at least 40% of the indigenous population is located in Bolivia's lowlands. A higher number of the indigenous populations of Bolivia's lowlands are managing multiple forest resources as an important source of livelihood (Pacheco, 2006). It has been estimated that nearly 60% of the people uses forest in their daily subsistence, making Bolivia's indigenous population as effectively forest-dependent people (Pacheco, 2006). In addition, Bolivia has been designated the country where forest use transition is most promisingly taking place, which means that a shift from the traditional use of the forests into a more commercial use is taking place (White and Martin 2002). It has been observed that indigenous areas approved for commercial forest management have rapidly increased since policy changes took place in the mid-1990s (Cronkleton and Albornoz 2004).

According to Pacheco (2006) Bolivia is included among the most successful cases of forestry decentralization in the world and indigenous groups are benefiting from the legal recognition of common property forests in which they have lived for past centuries. This legal recognition has made communities to feel safe in their territories and has allowed them to take over their lands and develop some strategies to manage their resources. In most of the cases these strategies imply interaction with external actors and market. Since 1998, various indigenous communities from the lowlands have established forest enterprises oriented towards commercial timber production. For the communities, these ventures provide "a concrete and technically, economically and organizationally well-known way of improving income possibilities" (Nebel *et al.*, 2003: 3). One step further within commercial timber production is certification, also in the scope of some communities.

Forest certification arises as one initiative coming from outside of local communities and besides bringing a needed spark to community forestry it has gained a strong following as one of the greatest hopes for slowing environmental degradation in tropical areas (Viana et al. 1996, Kiker and Putz 1997). However, there are some levels where it still has to be developed. In Bolivia, a new forestry law mandates the development of forest management plans that aim at sustainable timber harvest (Fredericksen and Mostacedo, 2000). These management plans are not far from certification requirements so that once actors obtain a management plan approval the steps towards certification are being seriously considered by forest actors due to so-called possibilities it can bring. Indigenous forest enterprises are among these actors and in the last years initiatives are increasing.

## 1.1. General background of the study

Most of half of Bolivia's territory is composed of a tropical area covered by sub humid and humid forests. Bolivia is a country that comprises an area of 1,098,581 square kilometers, of which about 70% is located in areas below 500 meters above the sea level, which correspond to what is called the Bolivian lowlands. The two other natural regions in Bolivia are the plateau and the valleys. Total forest area in Bolivia has been estimated in around 53 million hectares according the Ministry of Sustainable Development map (1995) and in 60 million hectares by the Agrarian Superintendence (2001). The Agrarian Superintendence also estimated that 112, 7 million hectares were areas of extensive pasture and that 3, 7 million hectares correspond to agricultural areas. According to Forest Superintendence (2006), more than 36 million hectares of Bolivia's forest cover was delimited in 2005 as lands of permanent forest production; from these, 28 millions hectares are devoted to forest management, 11 are protected areas and 9 millions are under sustainable forest management (government approved forest management plan). According to Price and Pinell (2007), Bolivia's forests contain over 2000 tree species. Historically, the industry has evolved in strong dependence on just a few species, namely Mahogany, Rubber, and Brazil nut. Today, 70 tree species are harvested commercially and efforts to promote lesser known species are ongoing. Currently 10 tree species account for 75% of wood product exports (Price, 2007).

Deforestation is a threat to forest conservation because of shifting cultivation and agro industry: the national rate of deforestation is about 270,000 hectares per year (Rojas et al. 2003); Santa Cruz Department is most affected by human activities, with 203,400 hectares deforested each year (Camacho et al. 2001). This department has 13 millions hectares for forest use out of 36, 5 millions total hectares (Prefecture of Santa Cruz, 2006).

Community-based management of natural resources such as forests and fisheries has been promoted as the most viable means to integrate local people at the grass-roots into efforts in conservation and economic development (Western et al. 1994, Tenenbaum 19996). However, natural resource management initiatives often originate outside local communities, and create new levels of decision-making and socio-political arrangements within the communities the projects are targeted to benefit (Mac Donald 1995, Smith 1995). They often require local people to restructure land tenure, create new political institutions, shift economic decision-making from the household to the collective level, and begin a much deeper participation in the market economy (Mc Daniel 2002). On the other hand, community-based approaches to natural resource management have played a strong role in building local institutions for resource management, and for empowering rural and indigenous people throughout the tropics (Stocks and Hartshorn 1993, Vitug 1997, Becker 1999, Wily 1999).

There have been efforts from national and international governments, NGOs and forest enterprises to tackle these problems indicated before: promoting lesser known species, reducing deforestation and integrating local people at the grass-roots into efforts in conservation and economic development.

Forest Stewardship Council certification is being promoted in Southern countries by NGOs, governments, and donors as a way to encourage and recognize sustainable community-based forest enterprises (CFEs), and improve market access for their products (Carrera et al., 2006). Most of the impressive growth in certification has occurred in the North rather than the threatened Southern tropical and natural forests that certification was originally established to protect (Taylor, 2005). Today most forest certification occurs in the temperate and boreal forests of the North and in large-scale industrial forestry rather than in the South and in enterprises operated by communities and indigenous peoples. According to FSC (2007), 4,01% of its certified areas is communally owned or administered. The communal share of certification raises concern given the fact communities in 2004 owned or administered 5%, and in 2002 was 11% of the global forest. The rate has diminished in the last years.

Bolivia is nowadays the tropical country which has the biggest surface of certified natural forests, all of them under FSC system. This system does not only focus on sustainable forest management in an ecological sense, but also on economic and social issues. It means that also considerations to indigenous are accounted and therefore criteria and indicators addressed to strengthen and protect their rights are considered. Regarding economic aspects, it focuses principally on the conditions and impact of forest production. With respect to social issues, one of the principles ensures that local communities benefit from forestry through employment, services and training and requires adequate conflict resolution when tenure disputes arise (Kruedener, 2000).

Like most developing countries, the Bolivian forestry sector faced a lot of difficulties with respect to forest certification, many of which were associated with the country's economic and social issues. Certification of community forest enterprises has been so far one of the sub-sectors which more difficulties.


## 1.2. Problem identification

As stated in the general background, Bolivia is nowadays the tropical country which has the biggest surface of certified natural forests. Certification is not concentrated mainly on the largest, most capable and better organized forest companies, which have used their capacities to benefit from certification (Quevedo, 2004). Currently, there is only one community forest enterprise certified plan in Bolivia (Smartwood, 2007), and previously there were two outstanding and unsuccessful experiences of community forest certification. Despite the nation's certification achievement it is clear that community initiatives need to be improved.

There are some starting points towards certification in the given Bolivia's context. A demanding national normative framework is one of these starting points; when forest managers in Bolivia fulfill national forest management regulations they meet several certification requirements (Nevel *et al.* 2003, Contreras-Hermosilla and Vargas Ríos 2001). This can be stimulating as many analysts think certification is indeed a result of a process promoted by the new Forestry Law (Prisma, 2000). However, fulfilling Forestry Law requirements does not necessarily mean the successful completion of a certification evaluation (Quevedo, 2004), and community enterprises are a clear example of this; most of them have access to work on their management plans but find a lot of difficulties to go into certification.

Besides the advantage of having a demanding forestry normative in order to reach certification, national and international projects and non-governmental organizations have taken up Bolivian forestry scene during the last decade and have stimulated certification of community forest enterprises, putting on it great amounts of money and big efforts. Those CFEs that were certified and those that are already certified, benefited from several measures to spread the associated costs and risks. In most cases donors, NGOs and, to much lesser extent, private companies have financed the certification process and borne much of the risks themselves. In spite of this support and investment, certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivia did not turn sustainable so far and does not seem to be sustainable in the short term.

Certification of community forest enterprises has given rise to lots of arguments in favor and support for international community. In most of the cases discourses on certification and its so-called advantages have prevailed in the forestry scene. Generally, some arguments and discourses about certification are taken for granted and spread indistinctly to other cases, without actually assessing real practices and market reality in each case (community). Several benefits are theoretically apparent from certification: improved forest management practices in the field, reduction of social conflicts among timber companies and local communities, maintenance of existing markets or access to new ones, reduced forestry oversight costs for state agencies, and support of the new Forestry Law and its norms (Quevedo, 2004).

According to some authors (Markopoulos, 2003) the experience to date with certification of CFE highlights the uncertain nature of any associated benefits. As a market-based mechanism for improving forestry management, certification originally promised incentives such as a price premium, access to new markets and improved market stability (de Camino & Alforos, 2000, p. 25). For the most part, forest certification has not delivered on premises of improved direct income for producers or access to new markets.

After unsuccessful attempts to introduce certification in the past mainly by NGOs, the promotion of community participation in Bolivia's forest management and certification processes is needed (Quevedo, 2004), as well as shedding light on the obstacles that prevent Bolivian communities from getting certified. The first experiences of communities' certification in this country had the NGOs as promoters, and discourses and arguments of different natures were used in order to convince and lead communities to certification. Nowadays are mainly forests enterprises that are stimulating certification of community forest enterprises and some discourses seem to be different. What are being now forest certification discourses and what were they in previous experiences? Did those discourses match real practices then? and how have they changed throughout the time and between actors? Our thesis research is founded on these questions and aims to assess the results of forest certification at community level through a discourse analysis.


## 1.3. Structure of thesis

This project aims to analyze the impact of the institutional environment on the strategies of community forest enterprises in indigenous communities in the lowlands of Bolivia. As certification involves an important new institutional development, this study will focus on this development. The main elements that will be investigated during this research are the discourses by stakeholders in the certification of Bolivian lowlands indigenous' community forests.

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. In the next chapter the history of the research context in relation to the actual situation with regard land tenure in Bolivian lowlands and indigenous lands, cultural and social background of the indigenous people, forest legislation and sustainability that influence forest certification in Bolivia will be described. The third chapter will describe the theory and concepts that have been used as a foundation for this research. In the fourth chapter the research objectives will be stated and the specific research questions will be elaborated on. In the fifth the research methodology will be discussed and a short characterisation of the studied cases will be presented in the sixth. Chapter seven will be dedicated to the research results and eight will present a discussion in which empirical relevance and a reflection on the theoretical approach and the research methodology will be presented. This is followed by the conclusion in the final chapter.

## 2. Context of research

### 2.1. Indigenous land tenure in Bolivian lowlands

As soon as the new Republic of Bolivia was constituted in 1825, national governments began a process of confiscation of indigenous people's forestlands to the domain of the nation-state, because these areas were considered uninhabited (Fawcett 1910). Forestlands previously occupied *de facto* by non-indigenous populations were distributed to individuals as private property or concessions. In the absence of the Bolivian government the "law of the jungle" governed a large part of the lowlands and the strongest progressively gained the control of the natural resources (Pacheco, 2006). At the end of the Nineteenth century, indigenous groups that were able to go about their lives relatively undisturbed by centuries were suddenly disturbed and indigenous groups were forced to reduce in size the areas they use to live in because cattle ranchers, rubber producers, and agricultural enterprises invaded their territories (Pacheco, 2006).

Consequently, most of the indigenous populations were silent witnesses of the curtailing of the forestlands that they used to live for centuries (Pacheco, 2006). Other populations faced a struggle for surviving against butcheries organized by rubber tappers, while in other regions indigenous people were captured in order to work in livestock and agricultural ranches (Langer, 1994). As a result, indigenous groups composed by thousands and hundreds of people were reduced to small tribes of not a dozen souls in each (Fawcett, 1915). Indigenous groups remained in places where there were no rubber attraction and timber exploitation (Fawcett 1915), until the newest commercial forces of Bolivian western society, during the 1960s and 1970s, reached these areas (Pacheco, 2006).

The conditions for indigenous forest users to enjoy secure forest tenure since the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries could not have been more inadequate, as neither mutually recognized boundaries nor legally empowered indigenous resource users existed at the time (Pacheco, 2006). Moreover, the intentions of government authorities and local users with regard to the allocation of property rights were at odds, making any mutually beneficial enforcement of rights impossible (Pacheco, 2006). According to Pacheco (2006) the Agrarian Reform of 1953 gave lands to indigenous and peasants living in the western side of the country but indigenous people located in the tropical area were outside of the scope of this reform. Instead, they were considered as tribal people incapable of managing by themselves their forestlands, and therefore they were designated to remain under the protectorate of both Catholic and Evangelist Churches, who were titled with forestlands in the name of indigenous people.

Later, indigenous people faced an aggressive entry of forest concessionaries in their territories in their selective search of valuable tree species, which triggered indigenous people's unrest (Pacheco, 2006). In the early 1990s, indigenous people developed an historical march requesting the titling of the indigenous territories that they were able to control in spite of all the invasions. The indigenous march that began in the tropical region was headed to the political capital of the country–La Paz, a city located in the plateau. This march began the process for the legal recognition in favor of the ethnic groups as common-property of the forestlands they use to occupy and of those that were despoiled (Pacheco, 2006). This process occurred in parallel with the increasing acknowledgment of indigenous people's rights in the international arena, such as the Covenant No. 169 of the International Labor Organization, related to the recognition of the cultural, social, and economic rights of the "Indigenous and Tribal People in Independent Countries", which was put in force by Bolivia's government in 1991.

From nineties onward a group of national laws set some aspects in favor of indigenous rights. The Popular Participation Law (1994) granted rights and responsibilities to municipal governments for promoting local development. The Forest Law (1996) and the Land Law (1996) established the mechanisms for the forestlands distribution and redistribution through a process of title regularization to be executed in a ten-year period (through 2006), and recognized indigenous territories as common-properties for indigenous people (Quevedo, 2004).

Indigenous lands belong to the so-called *Tierras Comunitarias de Origen* (TCO, Originally Community Lands), and were legally granted to indigenous peoples by the Bolivian government with the 1996 Law. These lands are considered private lands, and are legally equivalent to other forms of land tenure recognized by the Bolivian constitution (Quevedo, 2004). Although most Bolivian people are indigenous, all lands originally belong to the Bolivian State and it is the government who grants land rights to indigenous and non-indigenous people. To constitute a TCO, i.e. for land to be recognized as "indigenous land", the community must demonstrate its traditional right to that land. The process generally takes years and is characterized by conflicts with other private rights or land interests, and overlapping ownership rights (Quevedo, 2004).
Most TCOs hold large areas and it is difficult for them to protect their lands or simply to be free of conflicts because of previous land settlements. In 2004 there was 51 indigenous land claims for 17,495,677 hectares, but since July 2003 only 3,330,493 hectares have been legally defined as TCO lands (Cronkleton and Albornoz 2004).

According to information from Information Systems Unity of the Forest Superintendence the area under indigenous community management in Bolivia is around 876966'42 hectares in theory. In practice they are probably more than one million because some of them only take into account the annual exploitation area or they don't have well defined their territories yet.


## 2.2. Cultural and social background

Bolivia's lowlands population consists mostly of indigenous groups who were locally rooted in a combination of subsistence and local market production, and largely disconnected from central government interventions and international markets (Pacheco, 2006). In ancient times these societies formed extended families living in domestic units and developing highly mobile patterns over large areas of forestlands to ensure their daily livelihoods (Pacheco, 2006).
Bolivia with Guatemala is the country of Latin America with biggest indigenous population (APCOB-CICOL, 2000). Indigenous people make up around the 70% of the total population. In particular, in the lowlands (the interest area of our study) currently live 36 indigenous groups with a population varying from 50 to 60000 individuals, reaching around 220000 people in total (APCOB-CICOL, 2000). All of these communities do an economy of subsistence based on a combination of agriculture, hunting and fishing. (APCOB -CICOL, 2000). There are soft livelihoods differences and subsistence practices between indigenous communities due to differences in population size, religious beliefs, languages and other factors but they are not important to neither differentiate nor specify in the set of our framework. In general they do cultivation shifting, hunting, fishing and fruits collecting.
Shifting cultivation, the practice from which most of the indigenous communities in Bolivia derive subsistence (APCOB-CICOL, 2000) is an agricultural system in which plots of land are cultivated temporarily and afterwards abandoned. This system often involves clearing of a

piece of land followed by several years of wood harvesting or farming until the soil loses fertility. Once the land becomes inadequate for crop production, it is left to be reclaimed by natural vegetation, or sometimes converted to a different long term cyclical farming practice. This system of agriculture is often practiced at the level of an individual or family, but sometimes may involve an entire village.

Regarding forest activities and forestry tradition in communities, we only mention in this subsection that in general till mid-nineties forest activities were not a priority for indigenous people from Bolivia that have given priority to agriculture and cultural events and what made few people working in the forest and low commercial activity. During the last decades forest commercial activities are gaining in importance but the fact there is not a settled tradition may cause problems or incompatibilities when following forest certification cares or forest management plan cares that demand a huge concentration of means and efforts. Moreover not all members agree as regards producing in order to sell, so they make use of the forest resources to construction building, tools, utensils, etc (Olarte Zapata).

Anyway it will be further developed the background about forest activities in communities in the subsection about OFCs.

## 2.3. Forest legislation in Bolivia

In the early-1990s, diverse countries around the world initiated a process of decentralization. In Latin America, issues of distribution of economic benefits from forest resource use, social participation in decision-making, and efforts to secure forestlands property rights were all at the bottom line of decentralization, though the pace and characteristics of decentralization have varied significantly between countries (Ferroukhi 2003). Decentralization of forest resources management in Bolivia is well known because an aggressive model was adopted in this country in comparison to other ongoing initiatives in Latin America (Quevedo, 2004).

In Bolivia, decentralization of forest management was strongly linked to three ongoing processes that were formally launched in separate legislations, which are the consolidation of the municipal governments and the decentralization of the Bolivian government, the development of technical regulations for sustainable forest management, and the devolution of natural resources to local people (Quevedo, 2004). A new legal-administrative framework was introduced in Bolivia in the mid 1990s, which permitted the formalization of community forestry.

The Forestry Law (1996) created the organizational framework of the forestry sector and delegated powers to lower political-administrative entities to coordinate the planning and development of the Bolivian forests (Pacheco, 2006). The allocation of land to indigenous communities was established by the National Service of Agrarian Reform Law of 1996 (*Ley del Servicio Nacional de Reforma Agraria, INRA, No. 1715*), the main purpose of which was to clarify the land ownership rights through a process of titling and title regularization. As a consequence of land rights recognition, indigenous people acquired the rights to use and manage the forest resources within their territories, including timber and non-timber products (Pacheco, 2001).

The forest policy's explicit goal is that sustainability of forest management can be achieved through a progressive incorporation of less valuable timber species and the application of extraction techniques allowing the natural regeneration of the forest. Furthermore, it seeks to define clear rights over forest resources in part to encourage increasing investments in forest management, to eliminate forest crime and illegal logging, and to define rules for forest management according to certain technical criteria (Pacheco, 2006).

Also, the Forest Law created the Local Forest Associations tending to formalize the people that were harvesting illegally the forests. It was planned that the municipal governments should provide planning support to the Local Forest Associations in order to increase their managerial capabilities for timber harvesting (Pacheco, 2006).

The new Forestry Law discourages selective harvesting and forces forest managers to seek new species and markets. According to Jack (1999), here is where we can find one of the connections between the new forestry regime and certification: the search for green markets for non-traditional species. Firms must pay by area instead of by harvested volume and are forced to intensify land use and capital (Bojanic, 2001). Recently this payment system was modified further: firms now pay only for the area that effectively intervenes each year, i.e. the annual cut area. This new payment system has reduced the amount of fees paid for the Forest Superintendence and municipalities, but it appears to have economically revitalized forest industries, many of which are in crisis.

When proceeding to forest practices in Bolivia there are some requirements or steps to follow in order to match the normative framework. Once lands for forestry activities are defined, it is the responsibility of the forestry user to present and get the approval from the Forest Department (FS) a General Forest Management Plan (GFMP) which in summary is a long term planning tool that allows through inventory techniques the estimation of the potential harvesting volumes. Prior to the harvesting of an annual area, the forest user needs to have approved an Annual Operating Plan in which includes a complete census of the area, determining with precision which tress will be harvested, which roads will be constructed, were the logged trees will be warehoused, where bridges will be constructed, etc (TDF Background paper, 2007). With this Operating Plan the FS has the instrument to control afterwards if forestry operations are according to the annual and approved plan.
Every year, forest operators present an annual report explaining the execution of the annual plan. According to this report the FS exerts *in situ* inspections and determines whether or not the plan has been completed according to regulations. With this monitoring instrument the FS may cancel harvesting permissions in case it finds irregularities.

According to Quevedo (2004) the main objectives of the community forestry policies were aimed to promote local people's secure rights to the forests, to democratize the access to the forests, to levy fewer taxes in community user groups regarding private forest enterprises as an incentive for timber management, to develop technical regulations and oversight to illegal logging, and to support forestry planning.

## 2.4.  Sustainable forestry in Bolivia

Globally, over the past couple of decades, the pressure on governments to demonstrate that forests are being managed in a more sustainable manner and delivering more social benefits has been steadily growing (Segura, 2004; preface by Michael Jenkins *president of Forest Trends*).
In the past two decades, the establishment of community-based forest enterprises has been recognized as a promising approach to forest conservation and rural development in the tropics (Rodriguez et al, 1993; Ascher 1995). Support for this approach is based on two main assumptions. The first is that unless people living in or near the forest can obtain a satisfactory livelihood from it, and so value it above other uses, the agricultural frontier will continue to encroach into opened-up forest. The second is that community forest enterprises, compared

with their industrial counterparts, can generate proportionately greater social and economic benefits for rural communities.

According to authors like Pacheco (2006) community forestry in Bolivia in the context of the decentralized forestry policy was merely aimed to promote the commercial management of the forests and particularly of the development of timber harvesting. Other community forestry practices were ignored such as the traditional management of the forests for multiple uses, the enforcement of forest plantations, the development of agro-ecological systems, and other general activities for the conservation and protection of the forests.

At mid-90's forest certification was introduced in Bolivia as a way for sustainable forest management and rural development, considering the great number of communities and forest-dependent people present in the country. As community-based forest enterprise approach forest certification pursues economic, social and environmental sustainability, and gives the possibility to communities to open into an international market.

The new Forestry Law prepared companies and landowners for certification standards by building a solid legal, technical, and administrative forestry platform, but leaving out communities' interest and possibilities. According to the general manager of La Chonta Concession "certification is not difficult to reach if managers fulfill the new Forestry Law norms" (Antelo 2000). With a Forest Law quite compatible with forest certification schemes, there exists only a relatively minor additional investment between the cost of a legally compliant forest operation and a certified operation. Although this is basically only concerned to private enterprises, it can give an idea of how seriously is the government putting their hopes on sustainability and how strict the Forestry Law is. The main difference between both norms is the social component, which is not included in government regulations - this is probably why this sector became very interested in certification since the beginning (Quevedo, 2004). Some other key requirements of the certification standard and possible conflicts, compared to the governmental norms, are: wildlife protection, forest damage reduction, road construction planning and maintenance, conflict management, forest protection, training, waste management, and accounting.

According to Forest Superintendence's regulations, an efficient timber harvesting should take also into account the following issues: (a) the construction of landing places and the delimitation of roads must take into account the topographic limitations of the soils and forest conditions to avoid unnecessary removal of tress; (b) the processes of removal and pulling out of the trees must avoid the unnecessary construction of roads, execution of activities in wet soils, and inappropriate use of machinery; and (c) after the timber harvesting process roads that were open for this purpose must be closed and others that would cause soil erosion must be maintained (Pacheco, 2006).

### 2.4.1. Forest certification

Certification, particularly through FSC, provides communities and indigenous groups as well as private companies with defense against criticism for their alleged role in forest degradation and sometimes has been a key resource in communities and indigenous groups' struggle for more secure land and resource tenure. FSC's explicit emphasis on stakeholder involvement in evaluation and standard setting has created new spaces for community and indigenous group

participation in policy debates (Robinson, 2000; Gerez Fernández & Alatorre Guzman, 2003; Madrid & Chapela, 2003; Molnar, 2003).

Certification independently verifies that the wood (and other products) is a product originated from a forest (or forests) managed in accordance with certain standards. It has the potential to act as a market incentive for better forest management. In so far as certification relies on financial incentives to improve forest management, it may be characterized as a market-based instrument (MBI) (Markopoulos, 2003).

Although certification is nominally an MBI, the environmental objectives it encapsulates are determined not within a closed market system, but by open and participatory public debate (Markopoulos, 2003). The underlying standards of forest management are determined by multiple independent stakeholder groups (including groups which may not participate formally in the market, or which may be isolated from the political mainstream). This contribution to the 'democratization' of forest policy processes is often portrayed as one of certification's main non-market benefits (Markopoulos, 2003).

Before 2003 FSC used to have monopoly on certification programs in South America (Stegeman, 2003); nowadays PEFC system is expanding. Under FSC principles and standards *Consejo boliviano para la certification Forestal Voluntaria* (CFV) was founded. CFV was endorsed by FSC in January 1998 as a national initiative, being the first FSC national initiative in Latin America (Quevedo, 2004).

The Forest Stewardship Council is an independent, nonprofit organization of representatives from environmental, social, forest industry, indigenous peoples, community forestry and forest certification organizations. FSC sets guidelines for sustainable forest management, accredits and audits third party certification agencies (FSC, 2003; Gerez Fernández & Alatorre Guzman, 2003, p.5). Established in 1993 in the wake of mass consumer movements against tropical deforestation (Counsell & Loraas, 2002, p.12), FSC represented an unprecedented alliance between environmental organizations, the wood industry and forest product. Since FSC's founding, numerous other forest certification programs have been developed (see Bass et al, 2001, p.7), but FSC is widely considered the most rigorous.

FSC's performance based system requires third party verification of forest management in the field. FSC's global standards provide a framework for more specific standards for distinct regions, countries or ecosystems (Counsell & Loraas, 2002, p. 31; Freris & Laschefesky, 2001, p.9). In Bolivia, CFV is the responsible for the development of Bolivia's national forest certification standards.

Though it is widely viewed as an environmental conservation instrument, according to some authors FSC certification emphasizes the social and economic foundations of sustainable forest management (Rametsteiner & Simula, 2002, p. 97; Bass et al, 2001; Molnar, 2003, p.1). Certification has mostly afforded greater market stability to producers already enjoying market access as certification increasingly because a requirement for entry (Rametsteiner & Simula, 2002, p.97).

Yet forest certification overall appears to benefit most directly the best managed and powerful participants (Kruedener, 2000, p.12). Despite the role public concern over tropical forest degradation played in establishing certification, temperate and boreal forests in state and industrial hands now represent the vast majority of FSC- certified forests (Simula & Eba'a Atyi,2002).

## 2.5. Main actors involved in the certification process

Forest certification is a multi-stakeholder process, especially in Bolivia where it has become an international concern. Stakeholders groups identified in certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivia are: Community forest enterprises (CFEs), private companies related to the forest sector, certification bodies, governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations.

### a) Community Forest Enterprises: CFEs

Local communities are the owners of the forest object of certification.

According to certain authors (Stearman, 1992) indigenous peoples are not monolithic entities. Many, but not all, are cutely aware of their close cultural ties to the tropical forest and the necessity of conserving this resource for their continued well-being. Most of the indigenous peoples from Bolivian lowlands belong to this group, they are very aware of the necessity of conservation of their forests (Stearman, 2006), although this awareness is recent.

Other indigenous groups may not show such awareness or concern for the natural environment. Small groups in particular seem especially vulnerable to internal as well as external pressures to exploit their resources in ways that may not promote conservation (Stearman 1990).

Authors like Quevedo (2004) consider that despite the traditional knowledge of indigenous people regarding natural forests, today this sector probably has the most difficulty in implementing long-term commercial forest management plans.

In Bolivia a lot of communities, in spite of problems they find with their management plan in the consolidation stage, consider that forest management is an attractive and feasible activity and think that going into the timber market requires learning processes. These learning processes have been recently initiated and remarkable progresses have been found (Benneker 2005a).

According to Benneker (2005a) there are remarkable differences between CFEs. Some consider the forest management as a temporal activity that allows them harvest remaining wood of the forest and then generate incomes. Others aspire to develop as forest enterprise having under its control at least part of the wood transformation and in some cases, even bring services to others communities.

Most of the communities are now in process of consolidating their forest management organization. Their idea is to gain autonomy in a couple of years and execute harvesting themselves. Within their objectives are commercializing wood at good prizes, improving economic resources administration, enlarging management areas and training in forest management. Even they also yearn for having their own machines and technology that would allow them to create added value and then generate more employment within the community and avoid young ones migration.

There exists a smaller group of CFEs where their management plans are stopped, recess or in approval process. They want to continue with it but they need external support to reactivate forest activities (Benneker, 2005a).

The minority of CFEs consider not having too much perspectives in the future in forest management. They do not have too many commercial forest resources in their areas and make their annual operative forestal plan (POAF) get approved without intention of convert it into management plans (Benneker, 2005a).

## b) Private companies related to forest sector

Private entities are always present where there is a market possibility. This is the case of certification, characterized as a market-based instrument (MBI) (Markopoulos, 2003).

According to Quevedo (2004) at the onset of certification in Bolivia was necessary to address a lack of interest among the industrial forest companies, which saw certification as a maneuver of NGOs, ecologists and northern conservationists and a roadblock to their commercial interests. Despite industry concerns, the certification process continued its course in Bolivia, along with the international process which convinced some markets to give preference to certified products. According to this author, although the timber industry did not initially trust certification, it did not boycott the effort. Time passed and as the benefits of certification became apparent – specifically that it was not a "trap" and that it was a feasible goal that did not necessitate tremendous efforts - more firms engaged in the process.

## c) Certification bodies

In the case of Bolivia, and throughout the whole country, FSC is the only one certification program. Furthermore, Bolivia has one of the first FSC national initiatives (CFV) in South America, with adapted standards to Bolivia ratified by International FSC. FSC's performance based system requires third party verification of forest management in the field. This is done by certification bodies that certify to others that things are being done correctly according to some standards. Certifiers in the FSC system are directly accredited by the FSC.

## d) Governmental organizations

Although not directly concerned to certification government organizations can indirectly affect certification processes. In Bolivia, all natural forest belongs to the government; the government grants commercial harvesting rights to four main groups in accordance with the Forestry Law (Forest concessionaries, Local Social Associations, private and communal lands and indigenous lands (TCO)). All groups are required to have a forest management plan that is formulated and approved by the Forest Superintendence (Forest Superintendence, 2003).

## e) Non-governmental organizations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are organizations that represent the interest of a certain group or theme, for example indigenous people, nature protection or scientific organizations that provide information about specific developments in the region. This is a non-homogenous group of national or international origin, sometimes with good relationships and credibility in the media and sometimes very much protesting against groups in power and business (Fischer, Petersen and Huppert, 2004).
The role of NGOs active in forest management is very valuable in this respect as they can facilitate change at the village level by the transfer of technology, promotion of public awareness and enhancement of stakeholders' ability to negotiate on forest resource management issues (Arnold, 1997). Furthermore, NGOs can play an intermediary role between state and forest users as many of these organizations have become effective political players at different governance levels: local, regional, national and international (Arts, 2004). In this forest sector, NGOs often implement programs and projects based on responsibilities

and tasks that the state is not capable of following up, such as technical assistance, training of smallholders and promotion of forest management and legal forest activities. They are often involved in influencing the government decisions that affect the forest sector.

In Bolivia, especially in Santa Cruz, several NGOs are working with indigenous people and forest sector because of the importance it plays on their livelihood, the richness and biodiversity of Bolivian natural resources at a global level and the richness of indigenous groups.

To better understand the role of so many NGOs in Bolivia it is important to introduce a little in which have been the relationships between indigenous forest enterprises and the timber companies before certification. In Bolivia, the communities have been traditionally related to timber exploiters, extractors and merchants even before the establishment of the new Forestry Law (Benneker, personal comment). Indigenous communities have dealt with the timber business (private concessions, illegal smugglers, etc) since they have been operating in the indigenous (though not formally recognized) territories. The extraction of timber was then realized without any or little compensation for the local populations. This is something that NGOs are fighting against and want to eliminate.

According to Benneker (2005b), nowadays, all Bolivian CFEs manage to find a niche in the market, having 82% of them signed and legalized contracts with the timber buyers. 72% of these contracts last for one year, while 19% are signed for between 2 and 10 years. The main buyers are local sawmills, concessionaries, middlemen and some industrial processing companies

Examples of NGOs active in Bolivian lowlands are SNV (Dutch Development organization), APCOB (Apoyo Para el Campesino-Indígena del Oriente Boliviano), WWF, CADEFOR (Centro Amazónico de Desarrollo Forestal) and CFV (Consejo boliviano para la certificación Forestal Voluntaria).


## 2.6. Conclusion on research context

The information provided in this chapter gave a brief overview of the historical and recent developments that have influenced the environment that actors on forest certification in Bolivian lowlands are facing today.

As we have seen above and in the line of Riverstone (2005), throughout the colonial and republican periods, Bolivia's legal recognition of indigenous land rights has oscillated frequently. While during the colonial period indigenous communities enjoyed at least a measure of protection from the Crown, these rights eroded following Bolivian independence. During periods when the threat of indigenous rebellion grew laws were often passed granting small concessions to indigenous demands. Yet in general the power of large Mestizo landowners was favored. While the 1953 Agrarian Reform brought the legal dissolution of the *hacienda*, in practice the benefits for indigenous communities were largely ambiguous. In the 1990s a series of laws including the Law of Popular Participation, a new Forestry Law, and a new Agrarian Reform Law all brought some benefits for Bolivia's indigenous people.

Despite improvements on indigenous rights over their forests and strategies to support community-based forestry, still some problems exist related to illegal logging and land invasion, uncontrolled because of the weakness of the Forest Service, the existence of corruption, and a lack of authority.

As forest certification, especially through FSC, contemplates economic, ecologic and social aspects it is important to consider the cultural, organizational and technical ones, among other handicaps, which face indigenous people when carrying out certification. Lots of national and

international NGOs are giving all kinds of support (institutional, economic, technical, etc.) to indigenous communities for community based forestry and certification. Sometimes even with constant presence in the field. Finally, it is essential to point out the role these institutions and their discourses can play when convincing communities in decision-making processes, especially going into certification, which is an external tool and entails very complicated adaptations.

## 3. Theoretical framework

### 3.1. Discourse Theory

As indicated in Chapter 1.2 the aim of this study is to assess the dynamics of community forestry certification by considering the nature and possible change in the discourses of different stakeholder groups.

According to Wetherell's work (2001) the kind of discourse research which is favored for any particular project involves a complex balancing act between the type of data one wants to collect, the topic, the academic discipline in which one is working and the discourse tradition which seems most appropriate.

#### 3.1.1. Definition of discourse

The definition of discourse we are going to use in this study is the one given by Lessa (2006) concerning to Foucault. Lessa (2006) summarizes Foucault's definition of discourse as "systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak. He traces the role of discourses in wider social processes of legitimating and power, emphasizing the construction of current truths, how they are maintained and what power relations they carry with them."

After explaining different discourse traditions or approaches we will explain why we have used this definition as the most appropriate.

#### 3.1.2. Discourse theories

According to Wetherell´s work (2001), which has given foundation for the descrption of different discourses theories throughout this research, in discourse theory there are few nodes of research activity which seem most relevant to social scientists: Conversation analysis (Heritage, Sacks, Silverman, Kitzinger and Frith, Edwards, Mehan, Schegloff…), Discourse psychology (Potter on Wittgenstein), Foucauldian research (Hall on Foucault, Hoolway, Shapiro, Hall on racism, Miller and Rose, Laclau…), Critical discourse analysis and critical linguistics (Kress, Van Dijk, Hodge and Kress), Interactional sociolinguistics and the ethnography of speaking (Fitch, Gumperz, Tannen) and Bakhtinian research (Maybin, Wertsch…) (Wetherell, 2001). Among these in discourses theory the most outspoken are conversation analysis, Foucauldian research and critical discourse analysis.

These traditions (not quite schools) typically include some epistemological claims, a set of concepts and procedures for substantive work and clearly marked out theoretical domain. They also typically include a distinctive understanding of 'discourse'. But according to Wetherell (2001) when analyzing differences between discourse traditions we should better focus on certain aspects like political engagement, context, discourse and social practices, relationships between discourses and real world and status of the analyst's findings.

From now on in this chapter, throughout the coming exposition and comparison of theories, we are going to use mainly the article of Wetherell (2001), except for an indication.

Political engagement

If we focus on political engagement, we observe big differences between conversation analysts, on one side, and critical discourse analysts and Foucauldians, on the other.

Normally critical discourse analysts take an explicit socio-political stance: they spell out their point of view, perspective, principles and aims, both within their discipline and within society at large. In the opinion of analysts as Van Dijk (1993) and Fairclough (1995), the discourse analyst should be a social critic rather than a neutral observer. They would reject any simple notion of ideology as false ideas contrasted to the real knowledge of revolutionary science. They take from Marxism a powerful and engaging vision of political commitment and the notion that the intellectuals in a society are always on some side or other so the choice should not automatically or unconsciously reproduce the ruling political climate.

Critical perspectives on discourse can also be fuelled by postmodern and poststructuralist ideas as Butler (1992), mentioned by Wetherell (*debates in discourse research*, 2001). Postmodernism argues that truth is always relative to the discourse or language game of the moment. From this perspective there can be no universal truths or absolute ethical positions.

A completely different stance is taken by conversation analysts. They reject the view that critique should be built into the analytic process. In Schegloff's words (1991): "Critical discourse analysis allow students, investigators, or external observers to deploy the terms which preoccupy them in describing, explaining, critiquing, etc. the events and texts to which they turn their attention. There is no guaranteed place for the endogenous orientations of the participants in those events; there is no principled method for establishing those orientations; there is no commitment to be constrained by those orientations…". Schegloff argues that a critical stance in discourse research is not just bad scholarship, it is also bad politics. He is accusing critical discourse analysts of potential and actual bias, at risk of not seeing clearly what is in front of them.

The ideal researcher for conversation analysts is one who discovers actual patterns, not invented patterns, or patterns which can't be replicated and found again by another researcher. A researcher focused on how the participants organize their own activities may be more likely than critical researchers, with their prior agenda, to fulfill these ideals.

Conversation analysts make a plea for the autonomy of the data as an object of study in its own right and this plea is tied to their theory of social action. The world has already been interpreted by the participants; it is not for the critical discourse analyst to ride roughshod over these interpretations and impose their own but simply to clarify what is already there.

Conversation analysts and ethno methodologists would claim to take an even-handed and non-judgemental perspective. They are not interested in evaluating the truth or falsity of what people say but in the organization of their talk. The aim is to focus entirely on describing how people do what they do at the local level of the immediate interaction.


Context

In respect to the context or context restrictions, different theories of discourse are at stake here along with contrasting theories of social context.

Schegloff (1991) and the conversation analysts claim that the only context we need to understand these activities is what is evident and relevant to the participants as revealed by their talk. Schegloff's methodological principle is that analysts should only include as relevant the things as can be shown to be consequential for this particular conversation. He makes (1992) a distinction between two kinds of context; distal context which includes things like

social class, the ethnic composition of the participants, the institutions or sites where discourse occurs and the ecological, emotional and cultural settings; and the proximate context, which includes the immediate features of the interaction. Schegloff's argument is that discourse analysts should focus always on the proximate context. The distal context is irrelevant except as it is brought into the proximate context though the participants' activities. Foucauldian researchers and poststructuralists as Laclau who focus on representation and meaning in discourse as opposed to conversational activities find that they can't make this distinction so easily. Laclau's notion of society as argumentative texture collapses any easy distinction between discursive and extra discursive, talk and things external to talk. What things mean and what identities, versions and narratives signify depends on the broader discursive context. Foucauldians and poststructuralists define the discursive broadly so there are no clear demarcations where discourse stops and the rest of social life begins.

Discourse and social practices

Observing how discourse practices are connected with other social practices those influenced by Foucault tend to take an all-embracing definition of discourse as human meaning-making processes in general. No ontological distinctions can be made between different kinds of social practices. Post Marxists as Laclau and Mouffe (1985) claim neither activity lies outside the horizon of human meaning-making. Each activity is imbued with culture and thus with discourse in the broadest sense.

In contrast, critical discourse analysts prefer keeping distinction between different kinds of practices. Thus, Hodge and Kress and Van Dijk see discourse (language in use) as only one element in the social relations which produce power and dominance. They find in theoretically and analytically useful to distinguish more clearly and strongly between the discourse and extra discursive. Similarly Fairclough (2001), while arguing that every social practice has linguistic or discursive elements, wishes to make distinctions between the various elements making up a practice such as manufacturing, for instance, or child rearing. Such practices, he argues, might divide into the productive activity, the means of production, social relations, social identities, cultural values, forms of consciousness involved and semiosis (meaning-making). Fairclough sees these practices as in dialectical relationship with each other and the task of analysis is to describe all of these elements and their inter-relationship. This difference between critical discourse analysis and Foucauldian research reflects, in part, the importance of Marxism in the development of critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysts tend to take a more materialist position indicating that they have an interest in a real material world independent of talk and discourse. And, if ontological separations are made between different words of social practices (discursive and non-discursive), then it is also possible to know about the determination of one by the other. In general, critical discourse analysts take a realist position .

Relationships between discourses and real world

What is the relationship between discourse and the real world? The claim that discourse constitutes reality is most evident in Foucauldian work which studies the material and the cultural together. This claim is part of the constructionist theory of meaning Hall finds in Foucault's work. But this doesn't answer all the questions we might have. Does it mean that the real (whatever that might be) has no presence in discourse?

Status of the analyst's findings

Paying attention to the status of the analyst's findings we find differences between the schools. In general, conversation analysts have limited interest in broad philosophical debates. Their position tends to be skeptical of abstract theory and in favor of 'looking and seeing'. Conversation analysts tend to take an empiricist line and bracket off the larger epistemological issues (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998). The working assumption is that the close study of conversation reveals empirical regularities in turn taking, for example, which can be objectively described. Ideally, these are robust regularities. They could be identified by any competent researcher looking at the same material and this is part of what is meant by objective truth. Although conversation analysis is guided by previous findings, the goal is to describe what is there and find the pattern. Pattern is not created, it is identified and then its existence is validated through demonstrating that participants in the conversation also orient to this regularity. This way is called inductivist approach.

Other discourse analysts, however, are critical of this inductivist approach (the request to look and see with no preconceptions) and the empiricist style of conversational analysis. They argue that the identification of patterns always depends on theory and prior assumptions. It is never a neutral exercise. Much better, in their view, to reflexively acknowledge the theories, values and politics which guide research so these can be taken into account when evaluating the analyst's claims.

The fact we do not use Foucauldian research is not an obstacle to use the definition given by Foucault (mentioned at the beginning of this section) for our conception of discourse. According to Foucault (1971) there is no a priori thinking subject trying to express or transcribe his or her preconceived ideas in language. The subject operates in the context of a whole group of regulated practices according to which his or her own ideas are formed. Foucault shares the view of post-positivist political science that suggests that discourse is not to be seen as a medium through which individuals can manipulate the world as conventional social science suggests. It is itself part of reality, and constitutes the discoursing subject. So each different actor in certification process is considered as discoursing subject.

As we have seen above there are different theoretical stances. As these theoretical orientations do not directly relate to the operationalisation of the concept of discourse, for such operationalisation we may turn to other theoretical approaches that exist such as framing.

According to Dewulf (2005) there are two main traditions at the origin of the concept of framing. One is interaction framing, linked to the work of Bateson (1954) and Goffman (1974,1981) on metacomunication and the other one is cognitive frame theory explicitly formulated by Minsky (1975). The former considers that framing is about exchanging cues that indicate how ongoing interaction should be understood; the latter focuses on cognitive frames as mental structures that facilitate organizing and interpreting incoming perceptual information by fitting it into already learned schemas or frames about reality.
Interaction framing tradition centers on the communication itself and how parties make sense of the interaction. This approach to framing looks for alignments about issues, relationships and interaction that are negotiated in the talk. The statements of the participants are treated as communicative acts within an interaction sequence in a specific context. Due to this and that literature on the concept of framing covers a wide range of different research domains, interaction framing can be sometimes very close to discourse analysis although they emanate from different disciplines (Dewulf, 2005).

On the basis of the previous statement and considering that discourse analysis mainly has been carried in a macro level of analysis (e.g., Hajer's study about acid rain ) and framing in a micro level (case study level), it is possible to lean on framing theory for building the operationalisation of our research's theoretical framework.

Next, a brief description of framing theory is following in order to place the reader into this research discipline.

The attraction of framing research for many scholars is its potential to link news texts to production and reception processes. Ideally, framing research examines how frames are sponsored by political actors, how journalists employ frames in the construction of news stories, how these stories articulate frames, and how audience members interpret these frames (Entman, 1991, 1993; Gamson, 1992; Reese, 2001). In a representative definition of this approach, Pan and Kosicki (1993, p.57) concluded that "framing, therefore, may be studied as a strategy of constructing and processing news discourse or as a characteristic of the discourse itself."

Sensitive definitions of the framing process stress the role of frames in the social construction of meaning, a construction shaped by both produces and consumers of media frames (Carragee et al, 2004).

Although specific characterizations of frames differ, meaningful definitions emphasize the ways in which frames organize news stories and others discourses by the patterns of selection, emphasis, interpretation, and exclusion (Carragee et al, 2004).

The concepts of "framing" and "reframing" are important instruments in conflict research. They allow, for example, to conceptualize the observation that stakeholders often have a radically different understanding of what a conflict is about, its history, what exactly is involved, what the decisive questions are, and how a conflict could be resolved (Dewulf et al. 2005; Lewicki et al. 2003, Gray 2005). However, in spite of its prominence in scientific discourses, the concept of "framing" and its derivatives are used in very different ways. There is no shared understanding of what "framing" exactly means, and what kind of activities can count as "framing" and which cannot (Hoffman, 2006).

In media studies, sociology and psychology, the term *framing* refers to an inevitable process of selective influence over the individual's *perception* of the meanings attributed to words or phrases. Framing defines the packaging of an element of rhetoric in such a way as to encourage certain interpretations and to discourage others.

We are going to use the issues identified in the article of Wetherell.

## 3.2. Operationalisation of discourse

### 3.2.1. Framing theory

On the basis of previous explanations and assuming that different discourse analysts do not say anything clear about operationalisation of the discourse's concept we operationalise discourse from framing theory. In using the framing approach we will follow the specific methodology as developed by Te Velde, Aarts and van Woerkum (2001).

These authors say that people construct perceptions according to their frames of reference (Rein and Schön, 1986; Kickert et al., 1997). Frames of reference are influenced by the following factors:

- Convictions (opinions about "the way things are," assumptions that are taken for granted).
- Values (opinions about the way things should be).

- Norms (the translations of these values into rules of conduct).
- Knowledge (constructed from experiences, facts, stories, and impressions).
- Interests (economic, social, and moral interests) (Te Velde et al., 2001).

People's perceptions are the result of an (unconscious) process of tuning these aspects of the frame of reference (Te Velde et al, 2001).

We consider perceptions as discourses, matching our idea of discourses as established in the theoretical framework

Then, our study starts from the theoretical assumption that people construct discourses according to their frames of reference. These frames of reference are influenced by convictions, values, norms, knowledge and interests.

Within these five aspects when operationalizing discourses we have focused more on knowledge (considered as understanding) and interests, and in less degree in convictions, norms and values. In order to carry out the research considering the analysis of norms, values and convictions of all the actors involved, it would take us a very complex and huge work when going into detail of ethical, moral, religious and cultural issues from different actors and it requires much deep research than it can be done in a Master thesis. This values, norms and convictions will be traced very lightly, just drawing few distinctions, between indigenous and external actors, that have been considered important in researcher's view for the study of certification discourses.

First of all, two considerations are taken into account regarding actors' convictions that has to be considered in their discourses:

- According to Vazquez (2005) the relationship between indigenous people and nature is horizontal; because they consider themselves part of it, they belong to it, and they are constantly searching for the balance that builds a harmony where every voice is heard. There is no more control from one of the parts over the others as occidental people think (where nature is at human's disposal). Therefore nature is not an existing resource for one species to survive; there is not a dichotomy between human and nature. This is different from what is thought by western-European civilization that basically look for the control over nature; its use understood as an input to produce.

- According to an expert anthropologist (Riester, J.; personal communication), in general indigenous people from Bolivia are not averse to external actors and they do not have norms to distrust them. In fact, he commented that these indigenous are easy to influence because of their openness to external actors. They especially recognize certain people among external groups with whom they feel identified. So that these persons are reliable for them and then could easily influence their decisions regarding rather unknown activities as can be certification.

Secondly we treat the knowledge factor that affects discourses. For us knowledge is constructed from experiences, stories, impressions…, it can be seen as understanding. Therefore, it is important for our study to observe what is understood by forest certification by different actors. In another researches (Stearman and Redford, 1993) it has been demonstrated that quite different actors that interact frequently, as can be indigenous and conservationist groups, have different ideas of the same concept. An example of this could be the mentioned experience of Stearman and Redford (1993): when indigenous peoples referred to biodiversity they used a definition substantially different than the one used by conservation biologists.

Finally, the interest factor that influences discourse is considered in the study as the benefit (social, political, economical, etc.) that actors expect of certification. According to Wiersum (2004), in the late 1970s, different interest groups stimulated community forest management for different reasons:

- As a component of strategies to enhance rural livelihoods, in particular the livelihoods of the poor, and/or to maintain the cultural integrity of tribal people
- As a means to manage forest resources sustainably so as to conserve both forests and their biodiversity
- As a component of government strategies to devolve and decentralize responsibilities, and to reduce the budgetary costs of state governments for forest management.

Also others actors' interests not mentioned above as can be economic reasons for private enterprises, land consolidation, institutional short-term targets in the case of NGOs, etc. are considered.

## 3.3. Conceptual framework
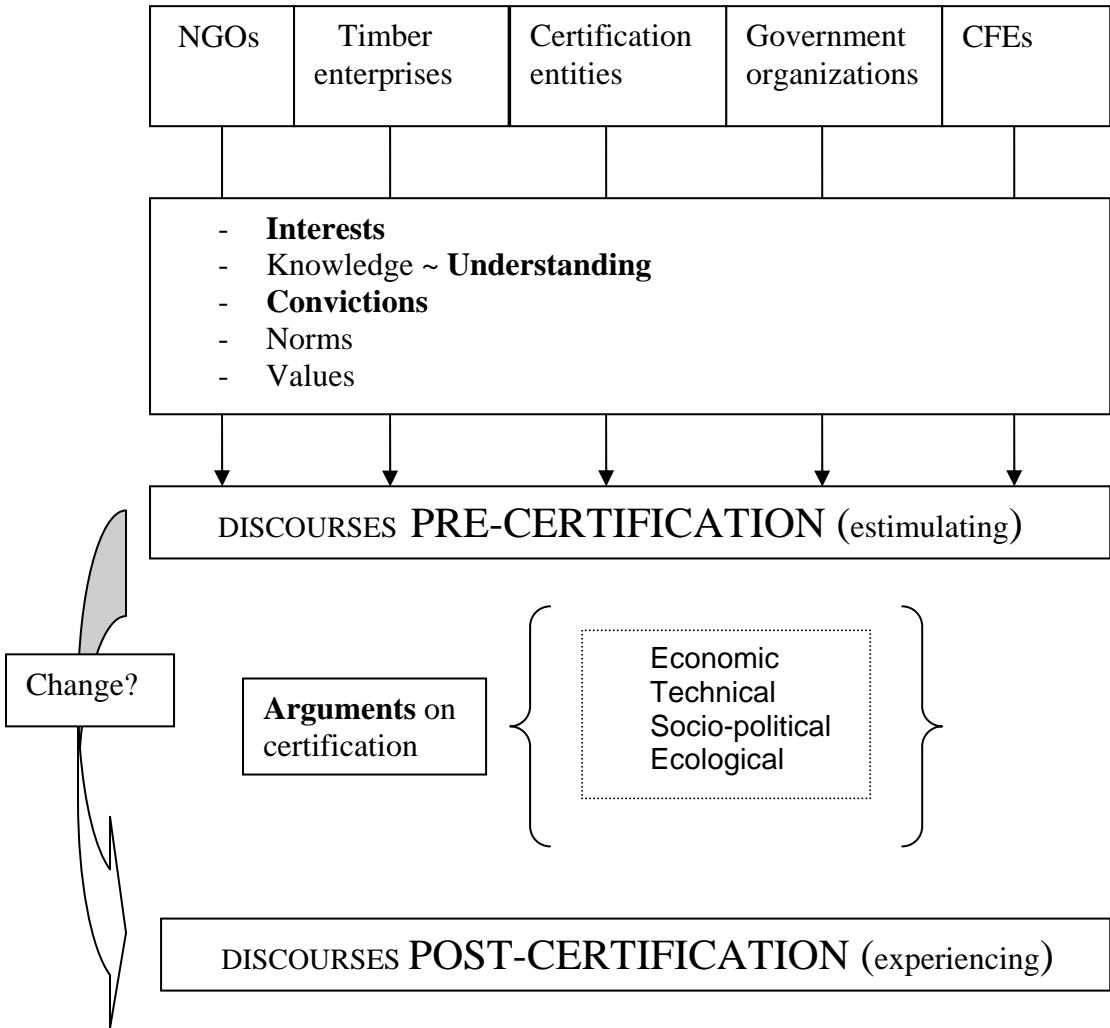


**Figure 3.1 : Conceptual framework; Actors and forest certification discourses, before and after certification, in Bolivian lowlands**

To develop operational concepts in the theoretical framework first it is important to determine actors involved. Then, we proceed to research what they do understand by certification and recognize their expected interest in certification; norms, values and convictions are more complicate to research. Later on, we proceed to collect and arrange different arguments, and try to identify ideal-typical discourses. Lately, a comparison between arguments before and after certification (in the methodology chapter we explained why we have decided to divide certification in two periods) can be done and then explain those logical changes according to the five aspects that comprise frames of reference.

In the study, arguments are seen in categories relating to different dimensions of forest certification.

1. Actors:

   1.1. To identify external actors in the certification process of community forest enterprises:

   - Certification entities
   - NGOs (national and international), international agencies and projects
   - Private enterprises
   - Forest Department (government) and other governmental bodies

   1.2. To differentiate actors within community forest enterprises:

   - Communities that belong to TCO
   - Community leaders
   - Forest managers or technical team members
   - Different levels of local people

2. Discourses before and after certification

   2.1. Interest (basic assumption behind discourse):

   - Economic interest
   - Community forestry development
   - Forest Conservation and biodiversity
   - Maintain the cultural integrity of tribal people
   - Enhance rural livelihoods
   - Another kind of policy pressure or policy interest
   - Commercialization of new species (broaden the market)

   2.2. Knowledge (understanding)

   - Certification understanding
   - Criteria and standards of certification
   - Background meaning of certification

2.3. Convictions

2.4. Norms

2.5. Values

3. Aspects of arguments used by actors.

   3.1. Economical

   - Arguments regarding economic benefits
   - Arguments about high cost of forest certification
   - Arguments about new market
   - New species

   3.2. Technical

   - Incompetence to manage their forest in a sustainable way
   - Indigenous incapacities
   - Lack of training
   - Lack of knowledge

   3.3. Socio-Political

   - Conservation of traditions
   - Cultural incompatibility (religion, other priorities…)
   - Cultural conflicts
   - Internal conflicts
   - Maintenance of cultural integrity of tribal people
   - Improving relationships between parts
   - Devolution process
   - Empowerment
   - Institutional aims; strategies

   3.4. Ecological

   - Sustainability
   - Biodiversity
   - Forest conservation

### 3.3.1. Arguments on forest certification

On the basis of the operationalisation made for discourse concept and the five critical aspects of discourses mentioned above (from framing theory) for the purpose of this study the following specific topic-related categories of arguments on forest certification may be distinguish:

Economic: This refers to all arguments related to economic issues of certification. E.g., possible benefits, costs, markets, etc.

Technical: Arguments related to technical aspects, such as technical implementation, requirements, conditions, implementation of forest management plans, forest certification preconditions, pre-scoping, etc.

Socio-political: issues about social relations and cultural features that play a role in forest certification process (e.g., cultural incompatibilities, power relations, social adaptation, etc.); issues related to decisions of institutions, pressures, decision-making processes, politics, institutional aims, etc.

Environmental: Arguments on environmental issues of certification. These can be the ones mentioning ecological benefits, biodiversity, environmental sustainability, etc.

Regardless of these categories each discourse has its five aspects mentioned before although emphasis is placed on knowledge, interest and convictions.

## 4. Research objective and main research questions

### 4.1. Research objective

Considering the problem statement presented in chapter 1.2 and the theoretical issues discussed in chapter 3, the aim of this study is to better understand the dynamic perceptions on certification of community forest enterprises as framed in discourses of the main stakeholders. This general aim was further specified in two specific objectives.

The first main objective of this research study is to figure out the various discourses of different stakeholders regarding community forests certification in the Bolivian lowlands. The second objective is to gain insight into the use and dynamics of these discourses in the actual process of certification including planning, implementing, assessing, etc. It is expected that by obtaining a better insight of the nature of the discourses as employed by organizations stimulating certification and of the possible changes that occurred during the actual application of those discourses when stimulating indigenous communities to get certified, will assist in improving understanding about the scope for certification of indigenous forest enterprises and improved certification practices. Specific attention will be given to the comparison of the discourses and opinions of stakeholders with different cultural backgrounds, notably local community organizations and organizations stimulating community forest certification.

### 4.2. Main research questions

From these research objectives the following main research questions of this study have been derived:

1. *What are the main features of discourses on community forestry certification in the Bolivian Amazon?*
   a. *Who are the actors in the certification of indigenous communities' forests in Bolivian lowlands?*
   b. *What is the understanding of different actors on the nature and objective of certification?*
   c. *What are the main features of discourses on certification?*

2. *Did any change in discourse occur during the implementation of certification schemes?*
   a. *What discursive arguments were used in stimulating certification schemes?*
   b. *What changes in discourses of different stakeholders occurred during the process of implementation of certification schemes?*
   c. *What were the reasons for such changes?*

3. *What conclusions can be drawn from the discourse information about the scope for certification of community forest enterprises?*

**5. Research methodology**

**5.1. Research design**

There are different types of research methodologies, which can be applied depending on the nature of a study and on particular research circumstances. At present, still little understanding exists about the nature and dynamics of discourses and opinions of different actors about the scope for certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivian lowlands. Consequently, the research method of an exploratory case-study was selected as it can provide good insight in a real world phenomenon. This is a qualitative type of research which focuses on describing the complexity of relationships among variables, and provides an understanding of the how and why. This implies that its findings may not be representative for the whole population. The basic level of analysis in this study concerns certification schemes for indigenous forestry enterprises and the actors involved in the certification process. The study focused on indigenous people in one specific region of the Bolivian lowlands, and the organizations and projects involved in the development of certification schemes in this region.

**5.2. Selection of research area**

The research was carried out in the eastern part of the Bolivian Amazon in the departments of Santa Cruz and Cochabamba. Within this region five cases were initially selected; these cases are actually the only examples of efforts to develop certification of indigenous forest enterprises in the region, and demonstrate the innovative nature of these certification efforts. The following cases were selected (see Figure 5.1):

Department of Santa Cruz:　the TCO Lomerío consisting of 15 communities  
　　　　　　　　　　　　　the indigenous communities of Cururú, Palestina and Santa  
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Monica  
Department of Cochabamba: the TCO Yuqui-Ciri.

The cases showed different characteristics in respect to the status of the certification process. In the case of Lomerío and Yuqui-Ciri the forests were certified under the FSC label several years ago, but do not hold the certification label any more. So in these communities we can get information of discourses both before certification (pre-certification) and after certification (post-certification). The indigenous community Cururú has been certified in 2007; this case provides information on pre-certification discourses and its current experience with certification. The cases of the indigenous communities of Santa Monica and Palestina communities are in the process of solicitation for certification, and hence provide information on pre-certification discourses. The actors involved in the stimulation of certification in both cases are the same (Inpa Parket enterprise and NGO's: SNV and APCOB) and the process is following the same patterns. Thus, as discourses in these two cases do not really differ, we will treat them as one case.
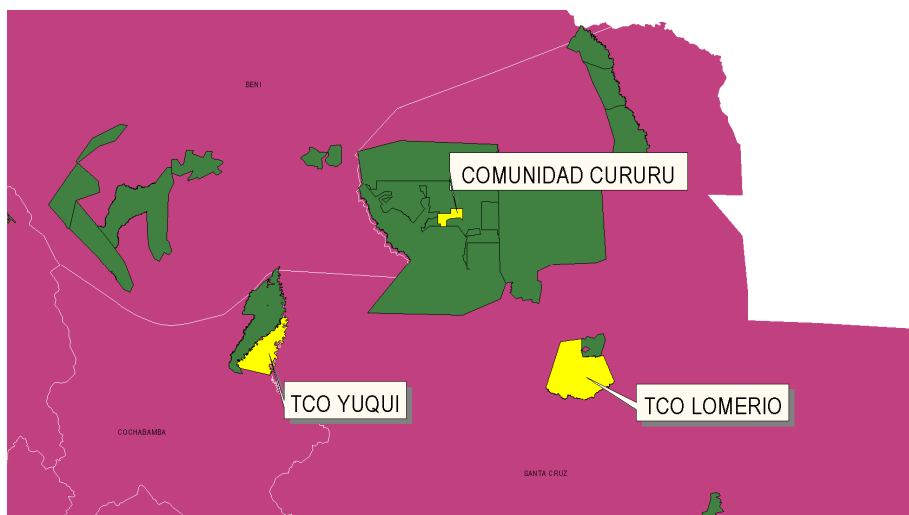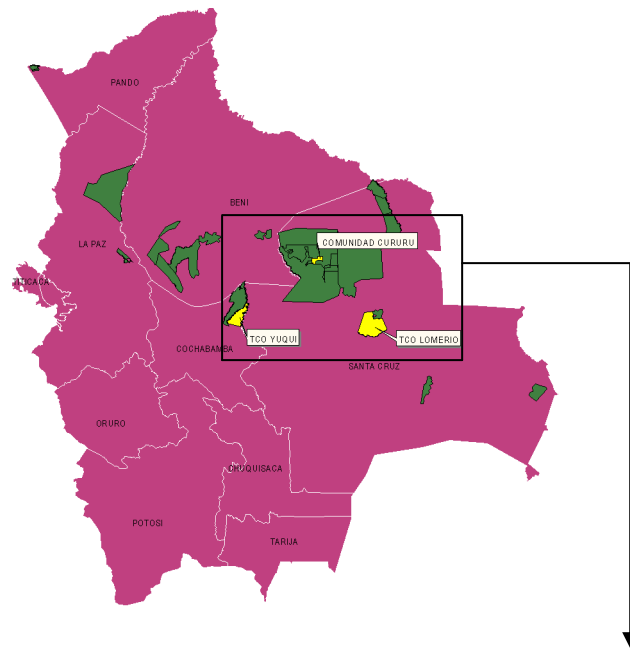
**Figure 5.1: Map of research area**

### 5.3. Selection of respondents

Within each case, the respondents were selected purposely because we do not need a representation of a whole population but rather a representation of key informants with specific knowledge and expertise on the process of certification. Three different categories of respondents were identified: indigenous people, external policy organizations involved in the certification process and external non-policy organizations. The following specific respondents were selected:

- Indigenous people
  - o Representatives of indigenous communities
  - o Representatives of the indigenous forest enterprises
  - o Common members

- External policy organizations
  - Members of the Certifier organisms (Smartwood Bolivia)
  - Former and current members of the Forest Department.
  - Technical staff of NGOs and projects related to the certification process
- External non- policy organizations
  - Forest/timber companies involved in the harvesting and trade of timber from the indigenous forest enterprises.

Considering the time available for the research, 26 respondents belonging to external organizations were selected. In principle, per case the following respondents were selected: two representatives of certification organization, two representatives of the main different support organizations (NGOs), one representative of the main timber company involved, one representative from the forest department, and three/four representatives of indigenous people (at least the community leader, one forest team member and one from the regular people). As certification entity and forest department are the same for all the cases, a couple of interviews with members of each institution were carried out covering the five cases. The actual selection of respondents varied according to local circumstances and availability of actors. Appendix one shows the actual list of respondents for each case.

## 5.4. Methods of data collection

In order to gather the necessary information, both primary and secondary data were collected. To collect the secondary data, documents and archival records from the Forest Department, NGOs and development agencies or projects involved have been consulted and analyzed. In this case, technical reports of Smartwood when assessing certification process are interesting in order to observe technical requirements not achieved, and may use as a source of discourses. As well, previous and ongoing research projects will contribute with their findings. The qualitative data were collected mainly through semi-structured interviews to the three categories of respondents identified in the previous section (indigenous people, external policy organizations involved in the certification process and external non-policy) and through direct observation. Most of the information collected through these techniques relies on people's knowledge, perceptions and also memories, since it will help to understand the discourses interaction studied in a more comprehensive way.

In discourse research, interviews have been used extensively because they allow a relatively standard range of themes to be addressed with different participants; something hard to achieve when collecting naturalistic materials. Billig (1992) and Wetherell (1992) provide extended discourse based studies which work principally from interview material and illustrate some of the analytic possibilities they provide. Interviews are conceptualized as an arena for identifying and exploring participants' interpretative practices rather than an instrument for accessing a veridical account of something that happened elsewhere, or a set of attitudes and beliefs (Mischler, 1986; Potter and Mulkay, 1985). An interview can be a particularly effective way of getting at the range of interpretative repertoires that a participant has available as well as some of the uses to which those repertoires are put.

The semi-structured interviewing technique consists of informal interviews (not informal in the sense that the interviewer and the informant know that it is an interview and the answers are written down in the presence of the informant) with a written list of questions and topics

(interview guide) that need to be covered by each informant, which is not pre-coded and which permits probing and following up on the unexpected (Chambers, 1991). According to Southwold (2002) the advantages of this type of interviewing are fourfold: a) the informant can express himself in his own terms; b) the interviewer can follow up any leads that arise during the interview; c) the data from the interviews is comparable because the same topics have been covered with each informant; and d) the data can be analyzed statistically if those interviewed have been selected using the principles of probability sampling.  Most of the information has been collected through this method.

The questionnaire used for the interviews was not limited too much because the more open and flexible the questions are bigger is the richness of the data analyzing discourses. The questions were formulated in a way that they were understandable for the interviewees and without intermediaries as they were Spanish speakers (research questions are shown in annex II and parameters used as indicators in annex III).
Considering that Lomerío and Yuqui communities were under certification time ago, especially Lomerío, it was important to select respondents that were directly implicated at that time and to try to lead interviews in order to make people remember as much as possible important facts in the past, changes , words, storylines used then, etc.

Direct observation permit to obtain some sort of intuitive understanding of what is happening, permitting, at the same time, judgment of other data and findings. The direct observation consisted of discourses observed in the field, watching what NGOs and institutions said and did in the communities and also consisted of participating at workshops and seminars organized by institutions.
Direct observation mainly occurred at the communities of Cururú, Palestina and Santa Monica, where currently forest certification is in process so that direct observation was a good way to appreciate directly discourses used and current trends in discourses. It was good for the research to have the opportunity to go to these communities with people involved as were timber companies (INPA parquet) and NGOs (SNV and APCOB). Then discourses used by these institutions were observed directly by the researcher. It also applies to workshops and seminars about forestry related direct or indirectly to forest certification (annex IV shows workshops and seminars attended by this researcher).

The use of determined research methodologies and the selection of respondents were open and flexible to new directions and constraints that arose during the fieldwork. That was the case when arriving at certain communities or NGOs headquarters and the proper persons to be interviewed were not available in that precise moment. It just happen a couple of times e. g., former community leaders were away because a matter of interest or a forest engineer from an NGO was in another country doing a project for his company. This was solved interviewing the secondly involved person assessed by people related to the topic.

Type of data collected

To facilitate collection data were classified into two blocks: precertification and post certification. "Precertification" data comprises discourses about all the processes from the beginning (when NGOs and agencies come to indigenous people and the original expectations are created) to the official certification evaluation. "Post certification" data are discourses used after certification has been granted, and also include decertification experience (see table 5.1).

| Before certification (precertification) | After certification (post certification) |
|---|---|
| Since certification of community forest enterprises starts to be promoted. Includes the processes of scoping, subsequent amendments and all activities before receiving certification label. | Since certification is granted. May include decertification. |

**Table 5.1: Difference between precertification and post-certification discourses**

The conceptual and theoretical background, the objectives and main research questions described in the previous chapters build the foundation for the specific research questions in the questionnaire (see annex II). A formulation of the background of each of these questions is given in annex III. To facilitate the analysis of the questions, a number of variables and indicators that are considered relevant for studying different discourses of actors, were selected. These variables and indicators can be investigated and compared between different actors and formed the basis for the questionnaire and questions that were used during the interviews with indigenous people and organizations that played and play a role in the forest certification process in the Bolivian lowlands.

The following table provides a summary of the relation between research questions in questionnaire and methods of data collection:

**Table 5.2: Relation between research questions in questionnaires and data collection methods**

| Research question | Data collection method |
|---|---|
| 1. Who are the actors in the forest certification process in Bolivian lowlands? | - Academic literature<br>- Studies and reports of international and national organizations |
| 2. What is understood by forest certification? | - Interviews with indigenous people<br>- Interviews with governmental and non-governmental institutions<br>- Interviews with private companies<br>- Studies and reports of international and national organizations |
| 3. What are the basic assumptions of different stakeholders behind their discourses? | - Interviews with indigenous<br>- Interviews with non-governmental institutions<br>- Studies and reports of international and national organizations<br>- Academic literature |
| 4. What do actors say about forest certification before having experienced it? | - Interviews with indigenous people<br>- Interviews with governmental and non-governmental institutions<br>- Interviews with forest sector companies<br>- Interviews with certifier entities<br>- Studies and reports of international and national organizations<br>- Direct observation in workshops, field, etc. |

| 5. What do actors say after forest certification ? | - Interviews with indigenous people<br>- Interviews with governmental and non-governmental institutions<br>- Interviews with forest sector companies<br>- Interviews with certifier entities<br>- Studies and reports of international and national organizations<br>- Verification reports, audits and evaluations by certifiers<br>- Workshops summaries and reports |
|---|---|
| 6. Have discourses changed after experience? | - Interviews with indigenous people<br>- Interviews with governmental and non-governmental institutions<br>- Interviews with forest sector companies<br>- Interviews with certifier entities |
| 7. Do precertification discourses differ throughout time? | - Interviews with indigenous people<br>- Interviews with governmental and non-governmental institutions<br>- Interviews with forest sector companies<br>- Interviews with certifier entities<br>- Academic literature<br>- Studies and reports of international and national organizations |
| 8. How much repeated are some discourses? | - Interviews with indigenous people<br>- Interviews with governmental and non-governmental institutions<br>- Interviews with forest sector companies |
| 9. Do actors share discourses? | - Interviews with indigenous people<br>- Interviews with governmental and non-governmental institutions<br>- Interviews with forest sector companies<br>- Interviews with certifier entities |

## 5.5. Methods for data analysis

Data analysis was carried out by coding and using memos to assist the researcher throughout the analysis phase (to record observations, reflections, discoveries, etc.). Attention was paid to whether the information given by the respondents about their opinion and vision was matching their perception of reality. It can be the case that respondents are reluctant to give information to a person who is a complete stranger from another country or that indigenous do not speak good Spanish because their own native language is different. In order to deal with the first problem, data were checked by triangulation of information from informants. The second problem is worse, as discourses are the main part of our research and if some informants do not speak Spanish well the words they use are in most of the cases similar. Nothing is made to avoid this, because using an interpreter would have ended up with the research biased because of the interpreter preconceptions and words. On the other hand, the

information taken is good because we can observe if there exists learning or repetition of discourses.

Another constraint was the problem related to the capacity of indigenous to measure time. As in some cases questions were made regarding moments far in the past, some of them had some doubts when answering, so we sometimes found contradictory information. In order to deal with this, these critical questions were repeated frequently in different ways and during different moments of the interview to contrast the answers and data were checked by triangulation of information from informants.

For data analysis, manual content analysis of interview data was used. Interviews were recorded and fully transcribed by hand. Codes were ordered in different categories according to their nature and according to the moment (before/after certification). Once arranged they were compared.

## 6.   Characterization of studied cases

Before going into results a short characterization of the cases is provided in this chapter in order to understand the evolution of certified indigenous communities in Bolivian lowlands and the different time periods of forest activities involvement; e.g., time of experience in management plans, elaboration of the different cases before going into certification and the period they have been under certification. In table 6.0 is indicated also the size of the operations.

**Table 6.1: Study cases**

| Community | Ha | First management plan elaborated | Beginning of process | Year of certification | Loss of certification |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | years | | | |
| Lomerío | 60,799 | 1985 | 1994 | 1996 | 2001 |
| Yuqui - CIRI | 55,987 | 1999 | 2002 | 2004 | 2006 |
| Cururú | 26,000 | 2001 | 2005 | 2007 | - |
| Palestina | 4000 | 2002 | 2007 | - | - |
| Santa Monica | 7000 | 1999 | 2007 | - | - |

As table 6.1 shows, these communities initiated certification after some years of experience working on forest management activities, which is considered of great importance by actors as a starting point before certification. The majority of the workers from NGOs and institutions like certification bodies and superintendence think it is necessary to have some years of experience working on management plans before going into certification. Some actors consider that the time that indigenous communities in Bolivia have been working on forest activities before initiate certification mechanisms is still relatively short and not enough to accomplish all the requirements it implies (Stearman, 2008; personal communication).
Contradictory to the opinion of the majority of the respondents, the empirical results of a study carried out by Fonseca (2008) about forest certification in Brazil, did not reveal a significant relationship between having a management plan before going into certification process and having to make fewer required changes to achieve the certificate.

In any case, considering the indigenous communities from Lomerío, they have had experience in forest management for at least ten years before being certified. In 1985 they started to manage their natural resources as a part of a project coordinated by APCOB, a local NGO.

The first TCO Yuqui-CIRI management plan was approved in 1999, five years before receiving certification in 2004. This project was carried out by the USAID-funded forestry project BOLFOR (Bolivia Sustainable Forest Management Project).

Cururú started to work on its first management plan in 2001, with the technical support of BOLFOR. It means they went into certification after six years of experience working on forest activities.

Santa Monica and Palestina are not certified yet, but they have done the first step launching voluntarily the process. They have different degree of experience regarding forest management activities and doing forest management plans. Both were technically supported by the local NGO APCOB; Santa Monica began in 1999 and Palestina later in 2002.

## 7.    Discourses on certification

In this chapter the information collected in relation to the main research questions as formulated in chapter four will be provided.
From now on and along the whole presentation of the results, discourses are put forward in chronological order. As it is possible to observe in the table 6.1, experiences in forest certification in Bolivia lowlands are clearly differentiated and detached through time and space. This leads the researcher to follow a chronological exposition of discourses from the first case, Lomerío, to the last one, Santa Mónica and Palestina. It will be indicated in each case.

### 7.1.    Actors involved in certification

According to literature and experience on Bolivian forestry and on the basis of the indicators set up in the methodology chapter, we have found three essential categories of actors.

**Table 7.1: Key actors on forest certification in Bolivian lowlands**

| Key actors | Explanation |
|---|---|
| Indigenous people | Representatives of indigenous communities, representatives of the indigenous forest enterprises |
| External policy organizations | Members of certifier organisms, NGOs, Forest Department, etc. |
| External non-policy organizations | Forestry companies, timber trade companies |

Although in several cases one organization has been involved in more than one case, as the case of some NGOs and timber companies, in this set of actors we have included those that have been involved in community forest enterprises' certification in Bolivia at least once.
Each group has its own discourse about forest certification associated to their different interests, understandings and convictions; although in some cases discourses between actors do not differ sometimes they do and frequently actors change their discourse during experience. We will get into it in next sections. In this section a collection of actors identified is provided.

### 7.1.1. Indigenous people

Bolivian community forest enterprises are collectively owned private entities oriented towards the production of marketable goods, notably timber.

Five community forest enterprises in Bolivian lowlands have had experience or connection with forest certification: Lomerío, Cururú, Yuqui-Ciri, Santa Monica y Palestina.
In these five cases, the pattern is the same regarding organization: although the forest enterprise is owned by the community as a whole, the managerial decisions are taken by a group of people elected or appointed by the community. The directive group usually includes a President, a Vice-president, a Secretary and an Administrator, which make decisions and represent the CFE. The other group consists of the persons in charge of the technical aspects

of the enterprise: a commercialization manager, an inventory manager, and a timber use (*aprovechamiento*) manager. Table 7.2 shows the five cases to be interviewed.

**Table 7.2: List of indigenous communities involved in forest certification in Bolivia**

| Indigenous Community | TCO belonging to | Indigenous group | Location (department) | Certified Ha |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 communities group | Lomerío | Chiquitanos | Santa Cruz | 60800 |
| Cururú | Cururú | Guarayos | Santa Cruz | 26000 |
| Yuki- Yuracaré | Yuqui-Ciri | Yuki- Yuracaré | Cochabamba | 56000 |
| Santa Mónica | Monteverde | Guarayos | Santa Cruz | 7000 |
| Palestina | Monteverde | Guarayos | Santa Cruz | 4000 |

### 7.1.2. External policy organizations

Within this group a subdivision is made according to the nature, interest and purpose of the organization. Three main actors have been differentiated: NGOs, governmental organization and certification bodies.

#### a) Non-Governmental Organizations and community associations

It is worth mentioning that for the frame of this study, all the NGOs, regional and local associations, that have been directly involved in the processes during a relatively long period are reflected.
Table 7.3 shows, in alphabetic order: NGOs, associations, projects and foundations that have supported communities towards certification in Bolivian lowlands. They have been identified according to literature and files belonging to NGOs working in the field. It is possible to observe how some NGOs have been involved in several cases, providing support in very different ways.

**Table 7.3: List of NGOs directly related to community forest enterprises' certification in Bolivian lowlands**

| Organization | Origin | Kind of support | Community |
|---|---|---|---|
| APCOB (Apoyo para el Campesino-Indígena del Oriente Boliviano) | Bolivian | Administrative Institutional Financial Technical Training | Lomerío Santa Monica Palestina |
| Arco( SCZ) | - | - | Yuki- Yuracaré |
| BOLFOR  I – II (Bolivian Sustainable Forestry ) | International forest management project | Administrative Financial Technical Training | Lomerío Yuki-Yuracaré Cururú |
| CADEFOR (Centro Amazónico de Desarrollo Forestal) | Bolivian | Administrative Technical Training | Cururú |

| CETEFOR (Fundación Centro Técnico Forestal) | Bolivian | Technical Training | Yuki- Yuracaré |
|---|---|---|---|
| CFV (Consejo Boliviano para la Certificación Forestal Voluntaria) | Bolivian | Administrative Informative | Yuqui-Yuracaré Santa Mónica Palestina |
| CICC (Central Indígena de las Comunidades de Concepción) | Bolivian | - | Lomerío |
| CICOL (Central Intercomunal Campesina del Oriente de Lomerío) | Bolivian | Administrative Representative | Lomerío |
| CIDOB (Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia) | Bolivian | Administrative Institutional Representative | Lomerío |
| ESFOR (Escuela de Formación Forestal) | Bolivian | Technical | Yuki- Yuracaré |
| FUNDFORMA (Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Formación Forestal y Medio Ambiente) | Bolivian | - | Yuki- Yuracaré |
| SNV (Netherlands Development Organization) | Dutch | Financial Technical | Lomerío Santa Mónica Palestina |
| WWF Bolivia (World Wildlife Fund) | International | Financial Technical Training | Yuki-Yuracaré Cururú |

Among all these institutions and projects, some of them are considered principal because of their size (funding and influence) and/or level of participation in the different indigenous enterprises' certification processes. This is the case of BOLFOR project, APCOB, SNV and WWF Bolivia.
The bulk of the interviews were carried out to members of these organizations.

### b) Governmental Organizations

The Forestry Department (*Superintendencia Forestal*) is the Government's body in charge of regulating and controlling the national forestry regime. Although certification concerns non-governmental activity, government organizations are considered in this section because Forestry Department plays a central role in the legal system, since it is the organism in charge of granting forest concessions, approving logging permits and authorizing management plans. Its decisions and regulations may affect indirectly certification processes.

The public institutional system is made up of the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Planning (MDSP) as the normative entity, the Forestry Superintendence (SF) as the regulatory entity, and the Forest Development Fund (FONABOSQUE).
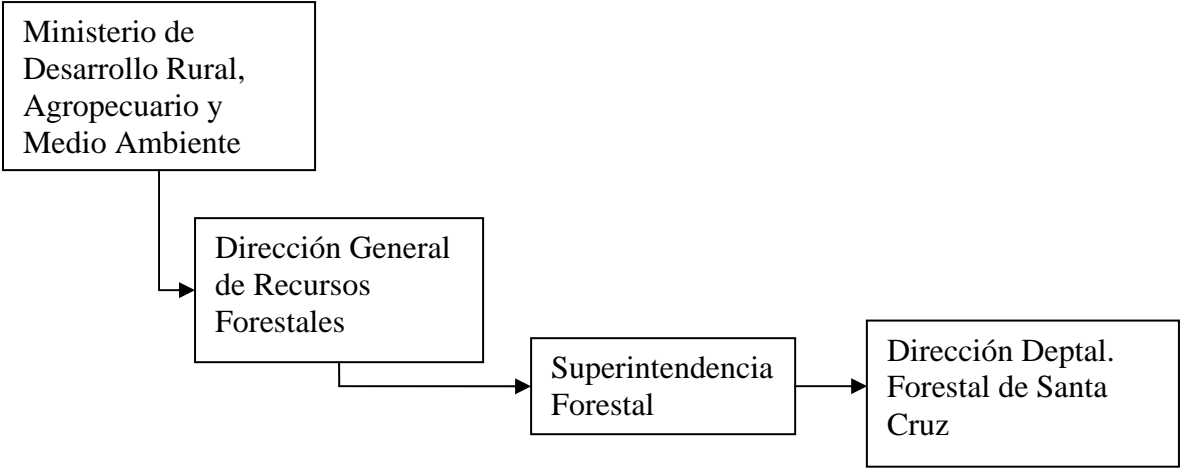


**Figure 7.1: Adapted scheme of the corresponding governmental sector's organization chart**

### c) Certification bodies

In spite of competition, in Latin America up to now FSC has a hundred per cent market quota. There are no certified forests under another initiatives or programs in the whole continent (Stegeman, 2003). The Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood program is accredited by FSC to certify Bolivian forests under this label.

**Table 7.4: Certification entities in Bolivia**

| Organization | Certification program |
|---|---|
| SmartWood Bolivia | FSC |

### 7.1.3. External non-policy organizations

Forest enterprises and timber companies are included in this group.

Only those directly involved in certification processes during a relatively long time are considered here. It means those that have shown interest in buying certified wood from indigenous forests, those that have supported financially or technically indigenous communities toward certification and/or those that have promoted certification of indigenous forest enterprises.

These private enterprises related to certification and others related to forest sector are represented by the *Cámara Forestal Boliviana* (CFB, Bolivian Forestal Chamber), body in charge of watching over forestry industry's interests.

**Table 7.5: List of forest companies directly related to community forests' certification in Bolivian lowlands**

| Communities | Organizations | Origin | Market |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lomerío | Jolyka Bolivia S.R.L. | Bolivia | National |
| | La Chonta Ltd. | Bolivia | International |
| | Sylvania Woods | U.S.A | International |
| Yuqui- Yuracaré | Jolyka Bolivia S.R.L. | Bolivia | National |
| Cururú | CIMAL IMR S.A. | Bolivia | International |
| | La Chonta Ltd. | Bolivia | International |
| | INPA Parket S.L. | The Netherlands | International |
| Palestina | INPA Parket S.L. | The Netherlands | International |
| Santa Monica | INPA Parket S.L. | The Netherlands | International |

All these enterprises are certified (forest management, custody chain or both). Most of them are national enterprises but the majority has access to international market. In most of the cases the role these enterprises have played has been in buying and commercializing timber from those communities, although other companies like INPA Parquet S.L have gone further and besides buying timber and financing audits fees and other costs, have played a role as promoters.

Former members from the Bolivian Forestry Chamber were selected for interviews for being representatives of the private sector. Company INPA Parquet was selected for interviews because of its current relevance in certification processes in Bolivia. CIMAL IMR S.A. was also selected for being the biggest forest enterprise in Bolivia.

## 7.2. General understanding on the meaning of certification

During the interviews all actors were asked to define the forest certification concept. They were also asked to explain what they did understand to be the purpose of forest certification and what they expected to be the benefits of certification.

### 7.2.1. Indigenous people

In order to improve the richness of information taken about indigenous' understanding (and as a way of triangulation checking) besides indigenous people also members of NGOs, privates companies and certification bodies were asked about what they think that indigenous understand by certification.

As 3 out of 5 communities are currently applying for certification it is important to differentiate further between different communities in terms of time. If we ask now directly indigenous of Lomerío (that were under certification ten years ago) we notice that after such a period of time they already have a better idea of what certification means. As it is also interesting to know what they understood by certification in the past, several years ago when they were in the beginning of the process, we considered that this information could be well complemented by NGO members that were working directly with them.

An overwhelming majority of organization representatives (including NGOs and private companies) that worked and work in the field with indigenous indicated that, almost all of the indigenous people they work/worked with do/did not have a clear opinion about the meaning of certification. They agree about saying that just those few indigenous from communities belonging to the forestry technical teams that are directly involved to forestry operations have a certain familiarity with the concept, but not a complete comprehension. This does not happen just with certification concept, with 'sustainability' and 'transparency' too (as these concepts were arising during interviews the researcher was asking about what they understood by them).

Two persons from NGOs said that, although basically indigenous do not know what forest certification is, they know the use of it and what they can obtain of it.

Just one of the interviewees, belonging to a national NGO, stated that indigenous people know what certification is but argued that they do not want to tell the people that do ask it to them.

In general, analyzing interviews data, regular indigenous do neither define the certification concept clearly nor really know what it does consist of. They do not know the final purpose of it, but think that reaching certification is something good for them. In the five communities visited it was observed that there were different quality levels of Spanish speakers. Those that are used to treat more with foreigners and stakeholders as the community leaders or technical team coordinators presented a fluent Spanish so that communication was better and richer with them. It was observed that phrases like "manejo sostenible del bosque", "manejo forestal sostenible" and above all "sostenibilidad" (sustainability) were constant and repeatedly by the majority of indigenous.

Most regular population, indigenous whose activities are not directly related to forestry sector, not only do not know what certification means but they mix up forest certification concept and forest management plan one. They speak about both things as being the same.

The researcher´s global impression after directly asking indigenous people about what they understand by certification is that they do not understand certification as we conceive it, as FSC do; they see certification as something that can bring benefits to them, basically because they have been told this. Among communities currently experiencing certification, just one communal leader from one of them, and the community's management plan coordinator, could explain certification in the same way as staff from NGOs did. Some indigenous people who were directly involved in certification and some leaders from Lomerío case, ten years ago, can define what certification is too. But not at the moment of doing certification, as it is explained by technicians and workers from NGOs, government and private companies that were working on those projects along with these indigenous. Indigenous from Palestina community (nowadays) were so clear when saying they find so difficult to understand what certification is. It is odd that they are convinced to go into certification but they are still waiting for a workshop about certification where NGOs are going to explain them what certification is consisting of and what it is.

Almost all the interviewed indigenous see certification as a strategy for improving their life and do not go further to know the final purpose of certification. It is something normal they do not understand well the concept because it is something brought in by promoters and certification grounds belong to another world. It is also normal that they just show interest about the points more interesting to them, so that is consider as an instrument that can bring material benefits and even political ones to the community. An overwhelming majority of organization representatives explained that in almost all the cases indigenous started certification process without being aware of what it really was, however they were in most of the cases aware of such a responsibility degree it implied. So, as we will see later when studying the objectives and aims behind forest certification, this comes up with different interpretations and objectives by different authors. There is not only one unequivocal use and interpretation of certification as it was supposed when introduced in its beginnings; authors can make different use of it.

A number of indigenous respondents from Cururú community, that by chance did not know the meaning of certification, emphasized that certification entails a prize, a reward for managing well the forest

Understanding of certification by indigenous is considered and taken into account by third part auditors when assessing the fulfillment of FSC principles and criteria in the communities. They assess indigenous certification knowledge and ask them about certification meaning in order to see how big is the community awareness of certification and how solid is its commitment to certification.

### 7.2.2. External policy organizations

Roughly speaking four fifth of the interviewed external actors gave a similar answer to the question about what certification is; they defined certification as market instrument whose first purpose is to reach environmental forest sustainability through the market.

### 7.2.3. External non-policy companies

In essence answers given by private sector about the concept of forest certification slightly differ from those given by NGOs and Forest Department representatives. The knowledge is the same, but there is more emphasis on economic profit than nature conservation. Most of the actors here identified certification as a market possibility.

### 7.2.4. Conclusion

When finding out what actors understand by forest certification it has been noticed that basic assumptions behind certification are linked to the meaning of it. Some actors see certification as a tool for different purposes, which is interesting for the general understanding on the meaning of certification by actors.

Besides knowledge people have on certification, another aspect that influences perceptions on certification is the utility or benefit it can bring.

What has been found in the field is that certification can have different interests for actors, and interests can be so different depending on the stakeholder group.

As might be expected, the expectations of certification amongst the communities of Lomerío were shaped largely by the information they were given. This is a general pattern observed in the rest of communities because certification is a concept coming from outside. Their first points of contact for this information were the presidents of community councils who, as representatives of CICOL, were responsible for communicating CICOL's plans concerning certification. For some communities, the available information on certification was supplemented by contacts with field promoters and forest management technicians from APCOB (Markopoulos, 1998).

According to literature authors differ slightly when pointing out the main reasons that moved first indigenous communities (and the first experience in the country) towards certification. Markopoulos (1998) indicates CICOL's motives in seeking certification were strongly linked to its potential commercial benefits, as well as the possibility that it might facilitate Lomerío territorial demands. In the minds of CICOL's executive board, previous attempts at territorial consolidation had proven unsuccessful.

Respondents among NGOs and companies working at Lomerío, and Lomerío indigenous too have agreed on pointing out the main objective sought by indigenous behind certification. They wanted to demonstrate that at the time they had the right over the forest, that they were doing a responsible use of the resources and that they were complying with three basis pillars (environmental, economic and social) and therefore this conceded more legitimacy to them in the face of society in order to consolidate their demands. In other words, there is a consensus the main reason was land recognition.

In this case, it is expressed by the members of different NGOs and other organizations working in the field with these communities that certification was the result of institutional projects and objectives rather than something really arisen from inside the community. NGOs started working strongly as they wanted to generate a pilot certification model in order to show everybody that sustainable forest management under certification was viable.

It is striking what few indigenous in Lomerío answered when asked about certification benefits and motivations. They said that recognition was something stimulating. They said literally that the idea of being known 'as the only one community in Bolivia doing forest sustainable management' was exciting for them. They admitted to like being in the spotlight and were proud of being the only one certified community in Bolivia.

Yuqui reasons for going into certification were different but promoted as well by an NGO.
Two important anthropologists working with Yuqui indigenous and belonging to big projects were so critic about institutions' procedures. In their view, certainly, WWF saw it as an opportunity that could gain the organization some worldwide recognition and BOLFOR needed to include some indigenous groups in its project to make its critics happy. Yuqui were simply told by powerful outsiders that they should do it. Both anthropologists agreed that this is a pattern they have seen over the years with most indigenous groups. More powerful interests at work (getting grant money, keeping your NGO alive, meeting government deadlines or objectives so the pipeline of money keeps flowing, etc.) simply lean on them and the project goes forward. Money was also forthcoming at some point, which of course simply reinforced that it was a good thing. They said that institutions needed this for project success—as long as no one looked too closely, to most casual observers, it seemed a

wonderful idea: a "small group of forgers is now learning to conserve their resources and we (the Western world) are showing them how".

As semi-structured interviews were open to any leads that might arise, it was observed in several cases that interviewees emphasized the facility to influence indigenous decision-making. They agreed it is easy to both influence positively and negatively the communities and that is why institutional objectives can be easily transferred to communities. This matter was not treated by all the respondents, but when it arose during interviews all the interviewees answered positively about the easiness to influence communities. These commentaries give cause for all of them to think that communities were led into certification by institutions, specifically non-governmental organizations. It suits well with the theoretical assumptions of our study; discourses and perceptions are influenced by norms, values, conviction, objectives and knowledge. As Bolivian lowland's indigenous are not reluctant to external people, in fact normally they identify close individuals among outsiders, they receive well external proposals. They do not know almost anything about certification because it is a foreign creation but they are told that some benefits can be derived from it and certification is not going to prejudice their natural resources and livelihood but improving to keep it. Then can be normal to think their discourse get led mainly by their knowledge (nothing) and their interest, that in this case have been told can be as attractive as land recognition or more economic benefits. Moreover they are going to be supported technically and financially by many institutions.

From last years till today, certification of community forest enterprises has been promoted by private sector initiatives. Mainly one certification enterprise due to its lack of timber supply has been stimulating certification of community forest enterprises in order to guaranty its business.

Table 7.6 shows multiple types of objectives behind certification related to actors in Bolivian lowlands.

**Table 7.6: Relationship between organizations in Bolivian lowlands and basic assumption behind certification**

| Actor | Sector | Objective | Specific objective |
|---|---|---|---|
| External Policy Organizations | NGOs | Ecological | - Instrument against deforestation and forest degradation |
| | | Political | - Pressure tool <br> - Make its critics happy |
| | | Institutional | - Getting grant money <br> - Worldwide recognition <br> - Generating publicity <br> - Keeping institution alive |
| | | Social | - Economic and social development of communities |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Government bodies | Ecological | - Resources conservation |
| | | Political | - Forestry policies acknowledgement |
| | | Social | - Development<br>- Employment |
| | Certification entities | Economic | - Clients, revenues |
| | | Institutional | - Organizational acknowledgement<br>- Corporation image |
| External Non-policy Organizations | Timber enterprises | Economic | - Business opportunity<br>- Market incentives<br>- Market access expansion<br>- Timber supply |
| Indigenous people | Local communities | Economic | - Price premium<br>- Increasing market security for community timber resources |
| | | Political | - Defense of marginalized rights by the State, e.g. land consolidation, forest use rights, etc.<br>- Improved relations with government<br>- National recognition |
| | | Social | - More money to be spent in social issues (education, health…) |

It is important to add to table 7.6 that in the case of the Yuqui some authors agreed pointing out that also the project was stimulated for personal objectives, as it was the case of one of the technicians hired by the coordinator of the project who was born in that region and had a personal interest in that group (Yuqui) to get ahead. This gives an idea of how complex can be a process like certification which embraces a lot of stakeholders and where individual interests can play a role as well.

These comments and table 7.6 constitute a good sign of such a different objectives and motivations that can lead actors to support indigenous communities towards certification.

## 7.3. Arguments used for stimulating certification

This section is structured as follows: first a short description of certification antecedents and first actors' reactions are provided in order to place discourses in the Bolivian arena. Secondly, in the different subsections, arguments used for stimulating certification are presented by categories according to their issue (economic, social and environmental).

The antecedents of certification at Lomerío can be traced back to 1994, with the integration of the Forest Stewardship Council's Principles and Criteria into the new community forest management plan. However, even before this plan was drafted, the concept of certification had been introduced to Lomerío by CIDOB's (national representative of the indigenous movement of Bolivia) Green Labeling Project (Markopoulos, 1998). This initiative, which began in 1993 with support from SNV (Dutch NGO), was designed to promote the idea, and ultimately practice, of certification among CIDOB's indigenous member organizations.
In order to have a vague idea of what were the first reactions of actors when certification fist came to Bolivia a small description is forthcoming.

As mentioned above, Lomerío was the first certification experience (around 1994 forest certification concept was introduced and began to be considered as a way for sustainable management). NGOs and the government were the first that brought certification discourse into the arena. They stimulated certification of forests in Bolivia as a political tool in response to deforestation and forest degradation. Green Labeling Project, PSV (Proyecto Sello Verde) promoted certification as a way of increasing income derived from forests, thus increasing the incentives to manage them sustainably and strengthening the legitimacy of territorial claims (Bebbington *et al*. 1997).

At a national level, although later on they did, private sectors did not get involved during the first years. Some stakeholders from civil society suspected that certification was a northern plan to control the world's rain forests (Quevedo, 2004). A lack of interest among the industrial forest companies, led by the CFB, which saw certification as a maneuver of NGOs, ecologists and northern conservationists and a roadblock to their commercial interests.

Obviously for the communities it was something new, in anthropologists' words it was "another way through which world knocks on their door" (Ruth Silva 2007; personal communication). They just were receiving external information and suggestions until they finally considered that certification could really bring something positive to them. Then they decided to go into certification.

When it started, while the national government promoted certification it never attempted to interfere or control the process. It was clear to government officials from the beginning that forest certification was a voluntary process, one that's success depended on its transparency, credibility, and independence from the government sphere. According to some authors (Quevedo, 2004) international project's officers were responsible for clarifying the government's role in certification to high-level government officials, and for communicating the objectives and benefits of certification, all of which were understood easily.

In the table 7.7 are represented the main discourses held by promoters of certification at the time, in each case. By 'main discourses' we understand the most frequently used, repeated and decisive that led indigenous toward certification.

**Table 7.7: Relationship between promoters, communities, interests and precertification discourses in Bolivian lowlands.**

| Case | Promoter organization | Interest of promoter | Interest of community | Main argument of the promoter | Aspects of these discourses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lomerío | NGO | Political Ecological | Political Economic | - land recognition | Political |
| | | | | - better timber prices<br>- open new markets<br>- increasing of marketable species<br>- increasing of marketable products | Economic |
| Yuqui | NGO | Political Ecological | Economic | - better prices<br>- market benefits | Economic |
| Cururú | Enterprise | Economic | Economic Timber supply | - better prices<br>- wider market<br>- market security | Economic |
| Palestina | Enterprise | Economic | Economic Timber supply | - fair price<br>- market security | Economic |
| | | | | - commitment<br>- transparency in the community | Social |
| Santa Monica | Enterprise | Economic | Economic Timber supply | - fair price<br>- market security | Economic |
| | | | | - commitment<br>- transparency in the community | Social |

Naturally, there are more arguments (and discourses) stimulating certification schemes, but they are considered as secondary by interviewed actors and the researcher, in terms that they did not play a great role in order communities go toward certification. For instance, some arguments highlighted that certification would help to keep the forest in the future and would bring social and environmental benefits, most fair treatment, etc.

As a first approach to the table 7.7, it is interesting to observe in the first two cases (Lomerío and Yuqui) how NGOs in spite of their interest in certification based on ecological and political reasons, addressed to indigenous communities with the idea of better prices and benefits; probably they knew that in some ways this argument would be more convincing. Especially in the Yuqui case, where the main discourse was completely economic. In Lomerío was thought certification could support land recognition claiming, something that effectively worked out. Considering that NGOs' nature have grounds for supporting community needs and would be opposed to their nature act maliciously against them, it is supposed that the use of those discourses was driven then by their knowledge about the topic, which led them to think of its so-called better prices and new markets and assumptions of this sort. There has been a lot of criticism and opposition regarding these NGO's modus operandi and proceedings, and the use they did of some discourses. They have been blamed by certain sector of the forest community for being exclusively driven by their institutional aims and their achievements' necessity, setting apart community real needs.

Lomerío was the first experience in Bolivia, so the use of this economic argument could be justified as the system was in a testing phase and so many arguments still needed to be proved; some of the theoretical assumptions of certification had not been proved yet. After these taken for granted premises were shown uncertain after Lomerío and other certification experiences in Latin America, there were no arguments in favor of the following institutions promoting certification in communities confirming and using that same economic discourse. What seems likely is the fact that these institutions found on it a very convincing one, and used it as a good tool to carry out their work, in this case to attract world attention in order to consolidate indigenous' land rights that at the time were denied by national authorities. According to experts in the field, Lomerío's people discourse was: "if these people that have never deceived us yet, are going to help us through certification to get more benefits from our forests, at the same time they say our forest will be better protected for future generations livelihood and above all, we have the possibility of obtaining legal rights over the land we have been growing all our life, why shouldn't we go into it?". As it was indicated in the context, at the time, these communities were witness to the fast deterioration of their forest and resources and started to feel the necessity of conservation of it and the help of some institutions for that was welcome. They were in hands of these non-governmental institutions.

In the community Cururú, discursive arguments used in stimulating certification schemes were a bit different. Promoter in this case was a forest private company with support of an NGO. Enterprise discourses used here were related to obtaining better prices, more access to market and higher stability when selling wood. Perhaps comparing discourses used by the same organization in the following and most recently cases Santa Monica and Palestina, we can better understand discourses used by this enterprise to promote certification.
Regardless of whether it is an enterprise or an NGO, we find again the discourse about obtaining better prices in stimulating certification of Bolivian lowlands' communities, not yet backed by experience.

In next subsections, we will go into details about these stimulating arguments and their aspects in the different certification cases in Bolivian lowlands.

### 7.3.1. Economic arguments

In this subsection we point out the importance of economic arguments when promoting certification in communities. After reviewing different arguments and opinions, and even in some cases directly asking actors involved what arguments they considered more important, economic arguments are considered the most decisive ones to lead indigenous forest enterprises toward certification.

Although in Lomerío (the first certification experience in Bolivia) economic arguments were not numerous, because decisive reason that led them towards certification was land rights' claiming, economic was an important aspect too. All indigenous interviewed by the researcher and people from different NGOs working with them admitted that indigenous were told about obtaining market benefits, especially in the form of price premium and market access. Almost all the organizations that worked together with indigenous said that although at the beginning indigenous were more interested in land rights consolidation soon they saw on it a way of turning forestry into an important economic activity and extra income sourcing.
In the rest of the cases, we can appreciate how economic arguments were most decisive than in Lomerío, to lead communities toward certification.

In the case of Yuqui six years after forest certification did begin in Lomerío, economic aspect of certification was the most decisive for a start. In fact, it has been found after interviewing actors that the convincing power of discourses leading these communities to certification rested on the economic benefits that certification could have brought, even when these benefits had not been proved. Setting aside current communities Santa Mónica and Palestina, the hundred percent of the respondents from visited communities explained that communities were literally talked by NGOs about obtaining better prices and selling more species in the market. In the case of Cururú, the current certified community in Bolivia, they were told too about getting a better price although in this case it was a timber enterprise instead of a NGO. The interest of that private enterprise stimulating certification in Cururú was not buying directly their timber but carrying out a development project in a developing country that would be financed by an external funding program and could contribute to keep the good image of this enterprise as doing something socially good, and as an investment to buy in the future its timber. In this case, other enterprises (which did not participate as promoters) are responsible for buying community's timber. This can explain why this enterprise told Cururu's community about obtaining better prices and the same enterprise did not do the same in Santa Monica and Palestina where they would be the buyers.

This counts for all the indigenous from Cururú too; after interviewing indigenous from this community (a mixed sample including leaders, management plan technical and common people) all of them understood that if they do not get certified they are going to get less money for their timber. This is supposed to have been told literally by promoters or could have been misunderstood by indigenous; that also can be possible as in fact they are not receiving more money as certified timber cost more than non-certified one but this money is more than the one they received in the past from timber buyers without having a contract.

Currently, in Palestina and Santa Mónica communities, the main arguments are also economical. They were not told like Yuki and Cururú about obtaining better prizes but about receiving fair prices. As in this case the promoter was a private enterprise, the same that would buy the timber, they did not offer something to them that couldn't be held; although in the past private enterprises deceived communities. Anyway, market stability was a good reason for these indigenous to move forward certification (taking into account the relationships' dark history between these communities and former wood buyers). Community members were told by this enterprise representative they were going to receive the market normal price but with guarantees and safety throughout time and the enterprise's commitment. This means that community in this way have a guarantee that next five years their wood will be sold to someone that will pay properly and they will not suffer like in the past frauds and traps by timber buyers.

Table 7.8 shows the most important economic arguments stimulating certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivian lowlands.

**Table 7.8: Economic arguments before certification**

| Case | Promoters' arguments |
|---|---|
| Lomerío | - better timber prices<br>- open new markets<br>- increasing of marketable species<br>- increasing of marketable products |
| Yuqui | - better prices<br>- market benefits |

| | |
|---|---|
| Cururú | - better prices<br>- wider market<br>- market security |
| Palestina | - fair price<br>- market security<br>- economic stability |
| Santa Monica | - fair price<br>- market security<br>- economic stability |

Many interviewees, most of them belonging to the private sector, responded as additional information that indigenous need to learn fast how to work as enterprise, keeping and reinvesting money in following years in order to be economically sustainable and not dependent on external funding.

In the tables 7.9/10/11/12, these economic arguments to stimulate certification are connected to aspects that affect discourses in each case. Knowledge and interest issues are discussed in Chapters 7.2 and 7.2.2.

**Table 7.9: Relationship between economic arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Lomerío case**

| | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | Open new markets | - |
| Convictions | Better timber prices | - |
| Values | Increasing of marketable species<br>Increasing of marketable products | - |

**Table 7.10: Relationship between economic arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Yuqui case**

| | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | Open new markets | Open new markets |
| Convictions | Better timber prices | Better timber prices |
| Values | - | - |

**Table 7.11: Relationship between economic arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Cururú case**

| | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | - | Wider market |
| Convictions | - | Better timber prices |
| Values | - | Market security |

**Table 7.12: Relationship between economic arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Santa Monica and Palestina case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Norms |  | Fair price |
| Convictions |  | Economic stability |
| Values |  | Market security |

### 7.3.2. Socio-cultural arguments

Since its beginning at Lomerío, forest certification has been considered and promoted as something socially good. Although arguments promoting certification dealing with social, political and cultural benefits are not considered on the whole as important as economic arguments are, we still find several socio-political arguments used for promoting certification. However, as we will see in section 7.4.3, social-cultural aspects turn out as an important constraint of success of community forest enterprises certification.

All the actors from all the organizations interviewed saw certification before experience as something socially positive. They said besides fair treatment to the workers it would bring more equity and transparency to communities. Namely, 'Certification will meet the needs of everybody' has been a frequent sentence collected by the researcher and it is indicated by community members as one of the most used by external actors.

'Certification will generate a social positive environment' has been recorded several times too; although its context is broader than the previous one has been observed with lesser frequency.

It was stood out by two company managers and some people who worked in the private sector (CFB) that certification would 'overcome and stop their own community people from working with illegal loggers for personal gain'. In the same line of this, and applied to Yuqui's case, an overwhelming majority of organizations' representatives explained that the Yuqui had a murky past regarding leader's bribe and fraud so they thought certification could bring transparency and equality. Moreover, there was a previous ethnic conflict between two tribes, Yuqui and Yuracaré, because they were sharing a territory (TCO) that was recognized together and it was thought that certification could join them and strengthen their links.

People from different NGOs responsible for implementation of projects like Lomerío, Yuqui and Cururú considered that socio-cultural aspects have been taken into account in the different projects when starting certification, as indicates the fact of being sociologist and anthropologist forming in their teams. Contrary to this perspective, anthropologists belonging to these NGOs thought before started the process that indigenous were not socially and culturally ready to assimilate forest certification implications.

In spite of these isolated cases that represent opinions from anthropologists and sociologists, an absolute majority of stakeholders supporting certification of community forest enterprises have thought throughout the different starting processes of certification in Bolivian lowlands cases that certification would be socially beneficial for those communities.

Indigenous people from Cururú, Santa Monica and Palestina communities (all of them *guarayos* indigenous) shared the view that all *Comunarios* (community members) have to be aware of the work that it is being done and it is planned to be done (transparency)   by

community representatives. In Cururú community, people used in most of the cases the word 'transparency', a concept that seems introduced in the community by other certification actors (mainly promoters), as it was frequently observed members from NGOs and supporting organizations to state 'certification will bring resources and management transparency'.

At Cururú, all the women from the community that were interviewed commented they were told during the meetings with outsiders that certification 'would be good for you and for your children in the future'. They admitted to appreciate a lot this aspect.

**Table 7.13: Socio-political arguments before certification**

| Case | Promoters' arguments |
|---|---|
| Lomerío | - Socially positive<br>- Equity<br>- Management transparency<br>- Meeting the needs of everybody<br>- Conserve, strengthen and protect indigenous culture<br>- Land recognition and protection<br>- Being the first certification case in the country |
| Yuqui | - Transparency<br>- Social equity<br>- Conserve, strengthen and protect indigenous culture<br>- Strengthen internal organization<br>- Land protection against invaders |
| Cururú | - Management transparency<br>- More community members participation in forest activities<br>- Good for future generations<br>- Being the only one certified community in the country |
| Palestina | - Management transparency<br>- Benefits distribution |
| Santa Monica | - Management transparency<br>- Benefits distribution |

In table 7.13 we can observe social discourses stimulating certification at the beginning of certification in Bolivia and today. We can observe some differences between social promoting discourses by NGOs (Lomerío and Yuqui) and forest companies (rest of communities). In those communities were certification was stimulated mainly by NGOs more importance was given to equity, everybody needs, cultural roots, etc.; in social discourses by forest enterprises the emphasis is placed on transparency. This reflects clearly the different nature of these two stakeholders group.

The indigenous majority in general, it does not matter the community they belong to and when they started certification, have mentioned that they were told by non-governmental organizations that 'certification is good for everybody'.

Beyond all the expected interests of certification by actors, it has been tried to find out when collecting the data some signs of fake discourses or malice especially on promoters' side when pushing indigenous communities towards certification. It has to be explicitly reported that we have not found maliciously discourses. It makes us to state that, according to the research finding's, all discourses about certification used by promoters throughout time were

honest. There have been collected some arguments pointing the possible dirty practices between a private company and indigenous leaders involved in the certification process in Bolivian lowlands, but these are not to be considered in our discourses study. When all these organizations that promoted certification, NGOs, projects and companies said what they said was because they were really convinced (or at least they had some arguments for that) that it would turn out like that, even though having a parallel interest in that. This is especially applicable to Yuqui's case where a lot of suspicions aroused due to the promoters' decisions.

Currently, discourses of different NGOs about certification of Santa Monica and Palestina communities are practically on the same track. Most of these institutions agree to strengthen relations between enterprises and communities, as they observe this more adjusted to the market reality. This stance is something within the business inclusive concept; as enterprises will last longer in time than projects and certification requires time, long commitments between them could bring more stability to the process of certification. The few, those NGOs that do not trust at all private enterprises' intentions, do not share the strategic alliance discourse between communities and companies; they still keep in mind that despite their social discourses they are enterprises and they do not mind communities, they just mind to generate economic profit and want to seem they are socially involved.

As discourses depend of five aspects, arguments that constitute discourses can be arranged according to these aspects. In the following tables are linked socio-political arguments used to promote certification and aspects that affect discourses. Knowledge and interest issues are discussed in Chapters 7.2 and 7.2.2.

**Table 7.14: Relationship between socio-political arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Lomerío case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | Equity<br>Management transparency | - |
| Convictions | Land recognition<br>Meeting the needs of everybody<br>Socially positive | - |
| Values | Conserve, strengthen and protect indigenous culture<br>Land protection against invaders | - |

**Table 7.15: Relationship between social arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Yuqui case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | Transparency | - |
| Convictions | Bringing social equity<br>Strengthen internal organization | - |
| Values | Conserve, strengthen and protect indigenous culture<br>Land protection | - |

**Table 7.16: Relationship between social arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Cururú case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | Management transparency | Management transparency |
| Convictions | Good for future generations | More community members participation in forest activities<br>Good for future generations |
| Values | Land protection | Land protection |

**Table 7.17: Relationship between social arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Santa Monica and Palestina case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | - | Management transparency<br>Benefits distribution |
| Convictions | - | - |
| Values | - | Lack of corruption |

### 7.3.3. Ecological arguments

Environmental arguments stimulating certification deal with the environmental positive aspects of certification, related to forest conservation and sustainability.

In the table 7.18, the environmental arguments used in each case by promoters are represented.

**Table 7.18: Main environmental arguments before certification experience**

| Case | Main arguments by promoters |
|---|---|
| Lomerío | - Resources sustainability<br>- Environmental sustainability<br>- Avoid community resources plundering<br>- Illegal hunting decrease |
| Yuqui | - Sustainability<br>- Forests resources protection<br>- Illegal hunting decrease |
| Cururú | - Illegal hunting and logging elimination<br>- Good use of the resources<br>- Forest protection<br>- Sustainability<br>- Animal protection within management area |
| Palestina | - Sustainability<br>- Hunting ban inside the area<br>- Wastes treatment<br>- Animal protection within management area |

| Santa Monica | - Sustainability<br>- Hunting ban inside the area<br>- Wastes treatment<br>**-** Animal protection within management area |
|---|---|

As it can be observed, 'sustainability' is the most frequently used word among community forest management actors. This word has been checked at least twice in all the interviews, and of course, its origin is community external.

It is inquisitive to observe how indigenous people use discourses like 'trees maltreatment' and 'forest maltreatment'. They refer to the plants and forest like an entity, as if they were like animals or humans. As explained in the theoretical framework, according to their convictions and values, indigenous consider themselves part of nature and at the same level than other living creatures as can be plants.

A well-known anthropologist, with long experience working with Bolivian indigenous, said that indigenous do know that certification is the right track to conserve their forests, the track to long-term livelihood obtaining.

Just like it was done in the previous subsections, these ecological arguments that constitute discourses are arranged in the tables 7.19/20/21/23, according to the five aspects that affect discourses. Knowledge and interest issues are discussed in Chapters 7.2 and 7.2.2.

**Table 7.19: Relationship between environmental arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Lomerío case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | Hunting ban in the management area<br>Avoiding community resources plundering | - |
| Convictions | Resources sustainability<br>Environmental sustainability | - |
| Values | Resources conservation | - |

**Table 7.20: Relationship between environmental arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Yuqui case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | Illegal logging prohibition<br>Hunting ban in the management area | - |
| Convictions | Forest sustainability<br>Forest protection | - |
| Values | Forest resources conservation | - |

**Table 7.21: Relationship between environmental arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Cururú case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | - | Illegal hunting and logging prohibition in the area |
| Convictions | Good use of the resources<br>Forest protection | Good use of the resources<br>Forest protection |
| Values | Forest resources conservation | Forest resources conservation |

**Table 7.22: Relation between environmental arguments stimulating certification and frames of reference for Santa Monica and Palestina case**

|  | NGO | Enterprise |
|---|---|---|
| Norms | - | Hunting ban inside the area<br>Wastes treatment |
| Convictions | - | Forest sustainability |
| Values | - | Forest conservation<br>Animals conservation |

## 7.4.    Experiences of local communities on certification

Discourses after certification implementation in Bolivian communities have great importance. As well as precertification discourses were interesting to appreciate what were the expectations generated by certification, post certification discourses are essential to assess the experiences (mistakes, incompatibilities, strong points, recommendations about how it could be improved, etc.); we can also observe what certification has brought in practice, what it has not, and whether expectations have been met. Here actors' opinions about what has been certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivia are compiled by issues.

Arguments relating to experiences with certification from both communities and promoters are reflected in the next subsections.

### 7.4.1.   Economic aspects

Results about post certification discourses obtained from checking interviews and literature are so explicit regarding economic aspects of certification.

Actors involved in the process of Lomerío and Yuqui communities' certification, namely NGOs working on those projects and indigenous from both communities, were asked about economic benefits of certification in global and specific terms. Basically they indicated that with certification they could benefit from access to new markets, managing more marketable products and species. The majority said it did not bring better timber prices and a minority said it brought an imperceptible price increase. Table 7.23 shows the arguments about economic benefits expressed in local communities.

All those that responded the question about economic benefits in global terms, indicated certification has not been profitable.

**Table 7.23: Arguments on economic benefits expressed by local communities**

| Case | Expected profit | Experienced profit and costs |
|---|---|---|
| Lomerío | Better timber prices<br>Opening new markets<br>Increasing of marketable species<br>Increasing of marketable products | - Certification requires high costs (evaluations and taxes)<br>- There is observed in the community a lack of information regarding market access and a lack of training in market sector<br>- There is no economic differentiation between wood coming from communities and wood coming from enterprises<br>- Limited market<br>- Timber selling has been always the bottleneck |
| Yuqui | Better timber prices<br>Market benefits | - Lack of a national market that recognizes economically certified products<br>- Small amounts of money and unsuitable mechanisms for the economic benefits distribution. Too much assistance that is not sustainable. |
| Cururú | Better prices<br>Wider market<br>Market security | - No better prices observed<br>- It has brought market security to communities |

There is a great diversity of opinions after the experiences of certification in Bolivian lowlands about economic viability of community forest enterprises. After analyzing collected data, there is not a common opinion among actors.

Most of the members of staff and experts from NGOs agree to state that certification is unachievable without institutional support because of the high costs (auditing and taxes) and think it still needs external financial support.

Others think that timber marketing has been always the bottleneck of community based forest management. There is not a global agreement regarding the costs as a main cause of decertification because most of respondents from private sector and certification bodies consider that once they would be able to work as an enterprise and know how to keep money to reinvest it for the future they will be able to assume taxes and evaluations' costs.

After fifteen years of certification experience in Bolivia, the majority of governmental and privates organizations interviewed still think certification is a demand and a competitive opportunity for the forestry sector and therefore for the country. A few private organization representatives mentioned explicitly that indigenous communities with their foot in their TCOs, their hands in their forests and the look to the world are part of the Bolivian social productive net. They stated that if these communities have a chance and the conditions are done they should be certified. Communities, forestry sector and the whole country will benefit. The whole private sector and two thirds of the NGOs' members interviewed answered that the first step in order to promote communities' certification is to assure a market. Without a secure market it has no sense to promote certification.

Recently, however, in the only one community certified in Bolivia (Cururú) they have got a positive discourse. They strengthen that certification has brought more stability to them, in the sense that they have a contract and their wood will be surely bought by this enterprise. Without certification there were not papers that guaranteed that such and such a wood amount on such and such a day would be bought.

Where opinions' difference exists is regarding financial policy followed by institutions. Almost half of the interviewees, basically those belonging to private sector, consider that so far everything has been paid for external institutions (specially NGOs) and this has made communities not appreciating this and therefore ending up without learning how to manage their money. The rest, mainly from NGOs, still think it has not been important elements to trigger decertification, although consider that the phase when they quit financing would be the ideal scenario, the last step to reach auto sustainability by communities.

### 7.4.2. Technical aspects

Although at the beginning of certification technical aspects are seen as easy to solve compared to social problems, a lot of technical problems have been found during certification implementation.

In the table 7.24 we show the discourses related to technical aspects of certification. They are not arranged by importance, but subsequently will be mentioned which ones are considered more important by actors.

**Table 7.24: Technical aspects after certification experience**

| Case | Arguments |
|---|---|
| Lomerío | - Indigenous need to learn accounting<br>- They have to learn how to manage their forests<br>- Certification is too much demanding. A lot of requirements that cannot be met by indigenous<br>- Use of a very technical language difficult to understand by them<br>- Labor aspects (social insurance, health insurance, etc.) turned out inappropriate<br>- Limited technology. The Lomerío's sawmill was second hand and presented imperfections. It had tremendous difficulty mastering the cutting techniques that would allow orders to be filled with timber of export quality.<br>- Waste and inefficiency in the milling process. |
| Yuqui | - Lack of transformation infrastructures<br>- Organizational weakness<br>- Lack of technical, administrative and accounting training |
| Cururú | - Indigenous are acceptable in the technical management part. Only few non-important mistakes are detected. |

Although the comments are mostly deficiencies found regarding technical aspects, most of community members from the three cases belonging to technical team mentioned that certification has been something good as experience and they can learn a lot from it. Most of the indigenous from Lomerío consider that technically they have improved a lot, and although they estimate that they are not ready yet to hold certification they do not rule out the possibility of going into certification after a couple of years.

From all the discourses collected during interviews it has been repeated that lacking of transformation infrastructures it is a handicap for communities. Especially private sector emphasizes that demand of certified round wood is almost inexistent. Market nowadays demands manufactured certified wood, something that indigenous forest enterprises are not capable to produce yet.

Although in Lomerío and Yuqui deficiencies were found during the technical implementation of certification, it does not mean that indigenous are not able to do proper forest management, as a minority think; during the initial Smartwood evaluation of 1995, at the begging of the project in Lomerío, the technical forest management aspects of the project received relatively high scores; today at Cururú both certifier entities and NGOs consider indigenous are getting by on implementation of forest management plans.


### 7.4.3.   Socio-cultural aspects

After analyzing evaluation reports of Smartwood from Lomerío and Yuqui communities, literature on the subject and the majority of the interviews, without doubt, forest certification experiences in Bolivian lowlands have shown that social aspects are the main obstacle for community forest enterprises.

In this subsection we describe all the comments regarding socio-cultural and political aspects of certification made by NGO and development organization workers as well as certifying organization Smartwood.

Table 7.25 summarizes the common opinions of external non-policy organizations regarding socio-cultural aspects of certification in communities once implemented it. As we see, most of the comments, if not all, are drawbacks.

**Table 7.25: Common arguments by external non-policy organizations regarding socio-cultural aspects of certification in communities after implementation**

| Case | Arguments |
|------|-----------|
| Lomerío | - Certification does not contemplate customs of the communities<br>- Auditors do not know communities' reality. They do not consider cultural, ethnic, traditional and organizational aspects of the communities<br>- Lack of knowledge and socialization of the certification process (language, understanding, interpretation, etc.)<br>- Communities do not have the capacity to work or to behave as an enterprise. Some indigenous only worked when someone was controlling them. Differences in values between the Chiquitano economy and the market economy. They have more interesting things to do: hunting, farming, growing, and religion practices. |

| Case | |
|---|---|
| | - Profits distribution problem<br>- Communities lack of organizational level. They need to learn to organize and work together as a group<br>- There were found social and administrative management problems<br>- There were internal pressures within the community |
| Yuqui | - Embezzlement by community leaders<br>- There was an interethnic problem that had serious consequences prior to certification. This failure project was more evident after certification<br>- They have more interesting things to do: hunting, farming, growing, and religion practices.<br>- Profits distribution problem<br>- Economic benefits wasting<br>- Lack of transparency. Lack of communication and coordination between community leaders<br>- Ignorance in relation to legal procedures<br>- Organizational weakness to work as an enterprise |
| Cururú | - It is shown that community do not work together towards certification<br>- Presence of envies among community members<br>- Leadership competition. Members belonging to technical forest team are increasing in authority. They take decisions on community's behalf<br>- Lack of hierarchy within community<br>- Problem with the accounting and handling of money<br>- Profits distribution problem |

However, not all discourses are negative. Community members from the certified territory of Cururú feel satisfied and are proud of being the only one community in Bolivia certified and doing good forest management. They like to feel observed, that they are doing something important. Also they admitted that when they feel observed they try to improve themselves.

Table 7.26 shows the discourses and opinions of interviewed actors belonging to NGOs, certifying organizations, Forest Department and private companies about deficiencies regarding social aspects on certification promoting projects.

**Table 7.26: Common arguments of external actors about social and cultural deficiencies of projects promoting community forest certification in Bolivian lowlands**

| Case | Arguments |
|---|---|
| Lomerío | - Lack of social vision<br>- Wrong analysis about internal conflicts that can be generated within community. Any attempt to use market-based approaches to development and natural resource management in indigenous communities must take value conflicts into consideration<br>- Forced processes |
| Yuqui | - It was a rushed and forced project<br>- Wrong analysis about internal conflicts that can be generated within community<br>- Power relationships analysis and internal dimension were forgotten |

| | |
|---|---|
| Cururú | - Power relationships analysis was forgotten<br>- Lack of analysis about internal conflicts that could be generated within community |

Members (manager included) from certifying organization stated after more than ten years of certification experience in Bolivia, there have not been advances regarding the social part in the community forest enterprises.

In the same line, the director of the main NGO working on the field with Chiquitano indigenous of Lomerío thinks organizational and social matters require a long time, about 15 years, because assimilation of social internal changes that certification entails is a very slow process.

It is striking to see that some indigenous from Lomerío used the word 'failure' to define certification experience, as taking responsibility for it. Although they obtained land recognition, considered by them as the first target of certification, the fact they used 'failure' to define their experience means that they probably expected more from certification.

Although indigenous from Lomerío could not hold certification, they could reach their main target regarding land consolidation. Lomerío publicity was a good model to encourage other communities like Yuqui to do the same forward certification. The vast majority of external actors interviewed with respect to Yuqui's case consider it was a rushed project. Almost eighty per cent of the interviewees used the word *precipitado ('hasty' or 'rushed' English words)* to define the certification process in this community. They consider this community neither was ready for the management plan nor particularly to forest certification.

The international NGO which promoted certification of Yuqui community was harshly criticized by people belonging to forestry sector, especially from other NGOs; they were blamed for leaving communities to their fate even after observing an increase in discrimination cases. Organizations should not leave communities alone after one or two years of work because it needs much more time. Certification is something that has to be stable.

This approach by NGOs and people in charge, Yuqui project, was to pay the costs because they were thought to be the bottleneck of the process. After that stage it was showed that there were a group of technical and organizational limitations that would require something more than money and technicians to solve it.

### 7.4.4. Ecological aspects

Environmental principles and criteria set by FSC certification are effectively assumed by actors as ecologically sustainable. Both indigenous from Bolivian lowlands and external policy and non-policy actors relating to forest sector in Bolivia agree about the necessity of accomplish them as a way of protecting forest and biodiversity. However, there are some blind spots or inconsistencies in actors' view when applying these criteria in communities.

In the case of Lomerío some indigenous commented that in order to generate processed wood products they used a lot of round wood or timber and just obtained a small marketable product. They do not understand such a wasting. They normally use wood for domestic use (building,

fishing, tools…) and the rest is sold in domestic market. After processing that wood, remaining was useless.

In Cururú, some indigenous do not understand why they are not allowed to hunt in the management area. They have always been hunting for livelihood and the fact they cannot do that now is not understood by community members and dislike it. They ask themselves then why they do need the forest.

As we observe these small details that certification entails sometimes clash with indigenous' convictions and values. They do sometimes what it is required for sustainability but, what does make sense if they do not know why?

In Cururú, members of the community said literally: "We are proud of being certified. Now with certification forest is less maltreated". So does it mean that before certification did they maltreat the forest?

## 7.5. Arguments used to continue with certification

Most arguments observed after implementing certification are basically related to the necessary improvement of obstacles found and possible options. It is necessary to remind that just two are the cases where certification has been experienced: Lomerío and Yuqui; Cururú is right now experiencing it. The other two cases are not contemplated in this chapter as they are still in a starting phase.

### 7.5.1. Arguments by indigenous communities

- **Lomerío**

After five years of certification, there were not solid reasons to go on with certification in Lomerío. Once indigenous solved problems about recognition of their lands, they moved from an optimistic stance about certification to a more real one; more according to the experience suffered. They learnt from experience and this could have led to a change in the arguments. Most of the community members agreed saying they did not have the capacity for working as enterprise, in a competitive market, and the social and economic part within the community were not sustainable yet. Through the certification experience they got the recognition of the land by the government so after that certification stopped being a priority. In this case their position seemed clear. Norms, values and convictions keep the same because once they have the land right they are in good position of keeping nature as they think it should be; with or without certification they do not consider the possibility of running out their resources. Its temporal interest on certification has been lost, and although few still have a small thorn in the side because it could not work out, it is something not attractive for them now.

In fact, it was a decision by the communities and CICOL association, as well members of supporting organizations at the time agreed about the inconsistency of continue with certification. They decided not to try to meet pending clauses from the last evaluation by certification bodies.

Notwithstanding, most of the indigenous from the technical team interviewed consider that they have learnt a lot and are sure that sooner or later they will be able to hold certification, so that they do not rule out this possibility in the future. First they are meeting the requirements of national legislation, and then they will see how this process evolves.

- **Yuqui**

In the case of Yuqui, certification did shed more light on the internal problems they already had before it. Discourse about certification of the majority of community members is mainly focused on criticizing the performance and abandonment of developing organizations. Most of them were disappointed with the early external support withdrawal and it made them think negative about external initiatives. Because of the common external pressure in the area, their experiences in the past, and this experience of certification with NGOs, there are reasons to think that probably their convictions could have influenced their discourse about certification; after that they distrust outsiders in a stronger way, and nothing they may bring will be well accepted at first (certification too).

Something that most community members agreed to point out is the fact that situation in the community after certification got worse. They consider forest certification as something very negative for them. They could not continue with certification as it turned out they had first a big social problem to solve.

- **Cururú**

As certification is currently held in Cururú community, discourses are mostly encouraging. Technical aspects seem to be handled by the team, and they feel very motivated in this aspect. Working conditions are better and skills are being developed. They are receiving good comments from evaluators, and improvements are being observed in this dimension. However, members from this community are aware that the main obstacle they are facing is connected to the social dimension that forest certification has generated. Tensions between community members are increasing and power relationships are changing. Discourses are mainly divided into two different streams: arguments by members of the technical forest team, and arguments by common members. Technical team members blame certain group of people within the community to boycott certification process, mainly due to the envy that certification have brought to community. That group of people against technical team criticizes the lack of transparency in the management, as it can be reflected in other extra (out of certification) activities which require some extra money that nobody knows its origin.

Anyway, according to members of the forest team, community efforts should be addressed to overcome these differences and hold together the certificate, as most of the people agree to say that situation in the community in general is better with certification. They emphasize they are making a lot of effort to join socially all the community in order to hold certification level.

According to community women, certification should be held because the availability of economic resources is bigger for improving education for children and health conditions.

### 7.5.2. Arguments by external organizations

- **NGOs and developing projects**

There are still some different opinions among NGOs, even differences between staff workers within the same NGO, with respect to the feasibility of forest certification in community forest enterprises, and therefore with plans related to continue supporting certification in community forest enterprises.

There are NGOs, the majority of them, which share the opinion that certification in communities it is only feasible in the short and long term through strategic partnerships with enterprises, as companies are going to keep living more in the future than developing projects that in most of the cases only take two or three years. That is why these NGOs are nowadays working to strengthen relationships between communities and private companies. This is now a very common view within the technical society from most of the involved NGOs. The analysis of the problem is made from a technical and financial perspective, and from the market, and the position of private companies it is in between.

There are others that share the opinion, less common, that certification is something achievable as working in the current action line of their NGOs (working with constant support in the field in order to build capacities, and with some financial support), but the assimilation of social internal changes that it entails it is a very slow process, so time is the only factor to be considered. They reject the idea of alliances between communities and enterprises, and consider that the first step is organizational capacity and administration before accessing to the market.

Both representatives from both mentioned groups of NGOs agree that the success of certification lies on communities being able to operate as companies, reaching certain level of working organization.

There is another small group of people belonging to smaller NGOs that consider certification of community forest enterprises us unfeasible; so they neither finance nor support this process in communities.

- **Forest Department**

Forest Department has been a very passive actor in certification of community forest enterprises since the beginning. According to this institution, considering the high costs of certification community forest enterprises could not progress in this process, therefore both Prefecture and Forest Department will try to more actively help these enterprises to certify their operations in the short term and make them to take the benefits from the new markets. The main arguments used by this institution to justify the lack of success in the process so far and to continue with are of economic nature.

- **Private companies**

Private companies in eastern Bolivia agree pointing that it will require a lot of time and a lot of resources indigenous communities to implement forest activities in a market competing level. These communities fully depend on the forest services' providers and without these, their autonomy (financially, technically, etc.) within certification is very limited. These

services' providers (companies) are the key door for the market. There is necessity of some services (landing, machinery, roads preparation and construction, transport, etc.), and not only good forest management, in order to have access to the market. These enterprises argue that some experiences in the past have shown that forest certification without market connection has no sense. It is a common view that only through agreements with forest companies, certification will have economic sustainability and market solidity.

- **Certification bodies**

In general, the progress observed during the last ten years in the social aspect of community forest enterprises certification is little. Economic aspects can have a good alternative through strategic partnerships in the short term, and technical issues are not thought to be problematic in the short term (important improvements have been observed during last years).

For these bodies, certification of community forest enterprises is something that still is in a starting phase, and a lot of development has still to be done. Everybody is learning from these experiences, and little by little improvements in the social part will come. The director of the main certification organization in Bolivia said that people should not take radically a stance in favor or against to certification; certification is something dynamic that after years and experiences is still evolving, and requires stakeholders working together in order to make it more adjusted to real conditions, practices and necessities. In certification bodies' view, forest certification in communities still need development, especially in the social part, and without external support it is something unfeasible yet.

## 7.6. Changes in discourses

We can observe some changes and differences in the arguments used in discourses after comparing different arguments used by stakeholders after and during certification, and arguments used to stimulate it.

According to the theoretical framework changes in discourses can be explained by modifications in knowledge, interests, convictions, norms and values which affect discourses.

### 7.6.1. Changes in indigenous discourses

Changes in arguments, especially in indigenous' discourses, are quite affected by the information received. There is a certain teacher-student relationship between institutions and indigenous with subsequent learning by the latter, so that arguments used by community members often are linked to the arguments of developing organizations and/or timber enterprises, normally to the external organization which is promoting certification. We observed in some cases that community discourses are not learnt from organizations' discourses but repeated literally, using words and concepts whose meaning or background they do not really understand. Words like '*manejo forestal sostenible*' (sustainable management), '*sostenibilidad de los recursos*', etc., are frequently used. In general the word 'sustainable' is prevailing. In a lot of cases indigenous could not explain what sustainability means or avoided the question. In the community of Cururú, whose management plan is currently certified, '*Transparencia*' (transparency) was another word used a lot by indigenous people; almost three fourths of the interviewed people in this community at a certain moment of the conversation used this word.

Where we can clearly observe certain influence of external discourses on communities is in the use of technical words. Being certification a management tool it entails the understanding of some technical terms needed for carrying out operations. '*Padrino*' is a term several times recorded that refers to the role that private enterprise is playing under a specific type of FSC certification program. '*Malversación de fondos*' (embezzlement of funds) has been quite recorded too from the communities when judging their leaders.

The director of a national non-governmental organization stated that fortunately indigenous learn discourses from NGOs. He thinks there is no way but teaching them. Good NGOs are those that know well both worlds (indigenous and market) and then can make a bridge between this two worlds without bringing negative consequences to communities.

Community people are probably the block of actors where it is most complicated to do the analysis of discourses.

Although in general terms, within a community, there can be differences in discourses among indigenous people, the fact that most of the knowledge and information they handle is received from outside makes most of them to share a common opinion.

Among community members it is important to differentiate between the discourse of those working as technicians in forest management teams, the community authorities and common members. Common members' discourses are confusing and the arguments are weaker as most of them do not know what certification means and sometimes their speaking make difficult the understanding. Among discourses of common members belonging to different communities there are not too much differences between communities. No matter the community you interview because you will hear a mix of words like 'sustainability', 'transparency', 'management plan' but without real connection.

When interviewing technical team workers and community leaders it is possible to observe some differences between communities; especially it is possible to appreciate a correlation between these peoples' discourses and corresponding promoters. First there is correlation with NGOs' discourses and later with enterprises' ones.

 In general at the beginning communities consider certification as something important and positive, with a lot of external support and paid expenses, something that can bring economic and political benefits to them. They share illusions generated by promoters and go into it certain they are going to obtain something positive from it. The role convictions, norms and values can play in indigenous discourses is not easy to define. As they consider human as part of nature, at the same level than the rest of organisms, they share the view of keeping the nature in balance. It means they agree with certification aims about sustainability and resources protection, at least in that regard; criteria and means to reach that are apart. They know they live within nature and they cannot use it up, because it would mean their auto destruction; although probably they have never asked themselves about resources depletion possibility because forest has always been there. If they are told that certification is one solution possible for their forests' conservation it would match their convictions.

Very few within community distrust certification. Probably because after promoters have got over community leaders it is easy to be accepted by the rest of common people; ideas can be introduced and easily discussed by members; actually as they are communities they take

decisions together so that the fact they go into certification means that at community meetings, the majority have approved the decision to do it.


**7.6.2. Changes in discourses of NGOs and development projects**

In the case of NGOs, more than interests, norms, conviction and values, changes in their discourses seem to be influenced by changes in knowledge.

It has been shown and confirmed by interviewed NGOs that after these two outstanding failures cases in Bolivian lowlands (Chiquitanos and Yuqui) these organizations have changed their policy and the way of intervention regarding communities' certification. They have changed their discourse. Two big international and national NGOs have moved from a promoting attitude to a moderate and passive one regarding certification of community forest enterprises; they neither do set certification as an institutional target any more, as they did before, nor promise donors to reach certification in communities. They are aware that forest certification has to be a voluntary project and prefer to focus more on emphasizing forest management plan activities without direct perspectives towards certification. They do not rule out supporting it in the future but just after things are done correctly at the forest management plan level. In fact, nowadays, we can clearly observe that enterprises are today the promoters instead of developing organizations.

The famous economic discourse 'certification will bring better timber prices' has been observed repeatedly at Lomerío, at Yuqui and recently at Cururú (2006). In all of this cases were NGOs involved using this discourse. As we explained before in the section about discourses which stimulate certification, it cannot be understandable from the knowledge perspective that they did not change their discourse in the following years after Lomerío, because they did not have signs that better prices were reached. Several years later they have changed their discourse as nowadays it is not observed anymore. It is also probable that not just knowledge has influenced the change of certification discourse. Some members from NGOs have doubts about the real benefit that certification entails to communities. They think maybe certification is good for forest conservation but not for indigenous life as it requires too much adaptations that are related to cultural and social values. This way of thinking could be related to changes in convictions and values regarding certification perception by actors but it still need further research. Perhaps they have realized that their interest as institution in certification of community forest enterprises could imply a incompatibility with their convictions regarding indigenous welfare, and therefore in this case institutional aims would not be in the same direction that indigenous interests.

Although NGOs are not promoting certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivian lowlands nowadays, in general they have a clear opinion about the scope for certification of community forest enterprises, which differs from the one they used to have in the past. All NGOs consider that certification requires a long time for communities especially in order to assimilate social aspects and reach market stability. Most of them have criticized that projects supporting communities towards certification in the past had always assumed a technical solution without giving any importance to social aspects like power analysis and internal dimension.

The majority thinks it is possible to accelerate the maturation of the process through alliances between enterprises and communities, because the market factor has been always a bottleneck;

the minority considers it would not work as communities must first learn how to constitute enterprises and then would be able to progress in all the possible ways of production, certification included.

For those, the majority, that defend alliances between communities and enterprises, almost all agree that it would be necessary to pay careful attention to the contracts to be beneficial for both sides; it means that all the temporary and variable aspects like shifts in the communities' directives and market prices fluctuations should be considered and do not affect the contracts.

### 7.6.3. Changes in discourses of governmental organizations

In the case of governmental organization, it is difficult to find changes as they have not had a direct participation in certification of indigenous forest enterprises. The involvement of governmental agencies in certification of community forest enterprises is not noticeable throughout Bolivian experience.

According to literature, governments accepted certification as a political tool in response to deforestation and forest degradation. During the life of certification in Bolivia they have taken a constantly passive role, namely regarding certification of communities. According to Quevedo (2004), it was clear to government officials from the beginning that forest certification was a voluntary process, one where success depended on its transparency, credibility, and independence from the government sphere. In its beginning at Lomerío, Bolfor's officers were responsible for clarifying the government's role in certification to high-level government officials, and for communicating the objectives and benefits of certification. Government organizations' discourses then have not had a prominent role in certification of community forest enterprises, as certification of these has not been a priority.

Nowadays, according to the Prefecture of Santa Cruz although certification does not entail direct benefits regarding better prices, it facilitates the access of products to a market more and more sensitive to environmental problems. Prefecture will help existing initiatives by enterprises' side to continue with the voluntary certification process. With respect to communities, they are aware about their lack of progress and they will adopt a more active role to help those communities to certify their operations and benefit from new markets. They propose to support integral forest management under a bio-commercial approach in order to increase benefits that local communities get from their forests. In the Superintendence officers' view, although certification would be something good for the country and would bring the acknowledgement by the society, this process would have to be voluntary and not forced.

### 7.6.4. Changes in private companies' discourses

Concerning private enterprises, there are reasons to wonder that changes in enterprises' discourses are most related to the aspect of interest. Changes in interest can influence more their discourses than knowledge, norms values and convictions can do.

Before the arrival of forest certification to Bolivia, some private enterprises and individuals from communities' surroundings made a good business buying easily cheap timber from communities and dealing at ease with indigenous people. Most of them could make good use of indigenous' naivety and principles and ignorance regarding timber market activities to

obtain very cheap -sometimes free- timber. These kind of entities or users do not mind what kind of wood they sell, whether it is certified or not. They move within national market, and requirements here are far away from international market ones.

At the onset of certification in Bolivia it was necessary to address a lack of interest among the industrial forest companies, led by the CFB (Bolivian Forestry Chamber), which saw certification as a maneuver of NGOs, ecologists and northern conservationists and a roadblock to their commercial interests; they refused to collaborate but they did not prohibit its members from doing so (Quevedo, 2004). Despite industry concerns, the certification process continued its course in Bolivia, along with the international process which convinced some markets to give preference to certified products. Although the timber industry did not initially trust certification, it did not boycott the effort (Quevedo, 2004). Time passed and as the benefits of certification became apparent –specifically that it was not a "trap" and that it was a feasible goal that did not require tremendous efforts- more firms engaged in the process and privates entities started to open into certification, including the CFB itself. By this point, all doors were open to certification, a phenomenon that led Bolivia to be the world's first country with certified tropical natural forests. Private companies did not concern about communities certification in the beginning, they just wanted to buy certified wood but not to meet a commitment with society. Throughout Bolivian history, private sector always has shown minimum interest over communities. This is completely normal. From the five aspects that constitute discourses' enterprises and due to the nature of enterprises no other but making profit, the aspect more decisive probably would be interest. Of course this interest is interconnected to knowledge and they go together. As enterprises develops knowledge more interests can arise or *vice versa*; and what started being of no interest and as an obstacle soon turned out to be a business possibility and even driven them to make alliances with indigenous communities.

Generally, the private sector thinks that communities are part of the Bolivian social productive network and therefore it would be good for forestry sector and the country economy if they get certified. If these communities have a chance and the conditions are given they should do it. Today, due to a lack of timber supply and with the support of funding programs in developing countries, the private enterprise INPA Parquet is promoting certification among communities. The enterprise's discourse is clear: communities gain stability selling their timber to them and enterprise gets wood for its factory.

We have been referring so far mainly to one enterprise which has played an important role as promoter in Bolivia. But there are other enterprises relating to certification that have bought certified wood to indigenous forest enterprises. The discourse of these enterprises is also supporting community-enterprise partnerships on forest management and timber exploitation, but in this case they are big national enterprises which have big concessions to manage in Bolivia and do not really depend from the supply of indigenous communities; they want to keep good company's image and then they do not just contribute to the social part regarding their workers but to the social part regarding indigenous communities as well. And of course, it is always good for an enterprise in a business to diversify raw materials sources.

### 7.6.5. Changes in discourses of certification bodies

As institutions in charge of assessing that FSC criteria and principles are met in communities, their discourse has kept unchanged. Institutionally they do not make distinction between

communities and enterprises; norms, values, and convictions are according to organization's nature. As an enterprise, certification means profit, but they have certain responsibility as auditing organization. Their members are aware of the high responsibility of being reliable and the importance of keeping the company's image and professionalism. They strictly carry out corresponding evaluation criteria depending on the case, without favoring certification of community forest enterprises. They try to take decisions on the basis that they have the monopoly (there are little competition in Bolivia) along the whole country and therefore, certifying community forest enterprises with no guarantee would be something unnecessary to do.

As we explained above, the certifying organization's discourse is clear, although the discourse of specific employees can be more flexible. Most of them have belonged in the past to NGOs and international projects (something very common in Bolivian's forestry sector with low employment stability) and have been close to the communities' certification movement. The majority of them currently hold a moderate attitude towards community forest enterprises certification. In the past they admitted to initiate assessments and evaluation processes in communities in which they were not sure about the guaranties of going ahead. Sometimes because of institutional pressures (NGOs mainly) or by the fact they personally wanted to trust the romantic idea of communities certification. Today, certifying companies are averse to evaluate communities without guarantees or certain signs of organizational maturity.

Instead of finding a discourse influenced by interests as in the case of enterprises, we think the certifying organisms' discourse is more affected by convictions and values. The main interest of certification bodies as enterprises is making money, and therefore it would be better for them to certify as much units as possible in order to get more profit. But morally, and for the enterprise's image, they are supposed to be accredited by FSC and then they would be losing their values. They have learnt from it and suspicions aroused from holding that kind of stances in the past; there is always a knowledge change.

### 7.6.6. Conclusion

On the basis of certification experiences in Bolivia, reasons for changes in the five factors that affect discourses are summarized in table 7.27.

**Table 7.27: Reasons for changes in discourses regarding certification of different stakeholders in Bolivian lowlands**

| Stakeholders | Factors that affect discourses | Reasons for changes in corresponding factors |
|---|---|---|
| Communities | Convictions | - |
| | Norms | - Distrust of people who have deceived them |
| | Values | - Commercial forest activities are not the priority<br>- New generations are losing traditional values (acculturation) |
| | Interest | - Aims reached |
| | Knowledge | - Learning from experience<br>- Information received from outsiders |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NGOs | Convictions | - New perceptions on certification. Is it socially good for indigenous? Is it really a necessity or is non-sense? |
| | Norms | - |
| | Values | - |
| | Interest | - Not setting communities' certification as a target any more |
| | Knowledge | - Learning from experience<br>- Critics received |
| Forest Department | Convictions | - |
| | Norms | - |
| | Values | - |
| | Interest | - |
| | Knowledge | - |
| Certifying organizations | Convictions | - |
| | Norms | - Getting more strict applying criteria. Impartiality |
| | Values | - |
| | Interest | - |
| | Knowledge | - Learning from experience |
| Timber companies | Convictions | - |
| | Norms | - |
| | Values | - |
| | Interest | - Changes in necessities (diversifying raw material sources, corporate image, etc.) |
| | Knowledge | - Lack of information |

Further research regarding changes in convictions, norms and values that affect certification discourses would be necessary; here we have just considered the outspoken ones, easily and indirectly derived from interviews and literature.


**7.7. Conclusions on the overall nature of discourses on certification and its dynamic**

Along chapter seven we have seen different opinions, arguments and discourses about certification from the beginning of certification in Bolivia lowlands until today. During this exposition we have presented discourses from different stakeholders and we have tried to understand these discourses according to the five factors set up in the theoretical framework. Among all these discourses (and arguments) we have identified some as a certain ideal-typical ones that can be reflected in the table 7.28.

**Table 7.28: Code of arguments used in ideal-typical discourses.** In thtable 7.29 these codes show which arguments are preferred by actors before and after certification experience.

| | Main arguments | Identification |
|---|---|---|
| **Discourse 1**<br>Emphasize forest conservation and local benefits | Environmental sustainability | a |
| | Illegal hunting elimination | b |
| | Resources sustainability | c |
| | Economic benefits | d |
| **Discourse 2**<br>Certification as a development tool | Land recognition and protection | e |
| | Management transparency | f |
| | Social equity | g |
| | Conserve, strengthen and protect indigenous culture | h |
| | Market security | i |
| | Resources sustainability | c |
| **Discourse 3**<br>Certification as opportunity for commercial timber enterprises | Economic benefits | d |
| | Better timber prices | j |
| | Opening new markets | k |
| | Increasing of marketable species | l |
| | Increasing of marketable products | m |

| | | i |
|---|---|---|
| | Market security | i |

Table 7.28 shows the main arguments making up ideal-typical discourses. Each of these arguments has been identified with a code in order to show in table 7.29 the presence of these arguments in the discourses of the main stakeholders before and after certification experience. Table 7.29 gives an idea about the variations in discourses on certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivian lowlands throughout time.

**Table 7.29: Relationship between identified ideal-typical discourses and promoter actors in Bolivian lowlands**

| | Actors | Arguments a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i | j | k | l | m |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Before certification** | NGO | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | - | x | x | x | x |
| | Timber company | - | x | x | x | - | x | - | - | x | - | - | x | - |
| | Community | - | x | x | x | x | x | - | - | x | x | - | - | - |
| **After certification** | NGO | x | x | x | - | x | x | - | - | x | - | x | - | - |
| | Timber company | - | x | x | - | - | x | - | - | x | - | - | x | - |
| | Community | - | - | x | x | x | - | - | - | x | - | - | x | - |

In the table 7.30 we can clearly appreciate how in general, after certification, arguments are used less frequently in the ideal typical discourses.

**Table 7.30: Frequency of arguments used by actors in discourses: before and after certification.** Numbers in cells represent the number of different arguments used from each discourse by stakeholders in Bolivian lowlands. Derived from table 7.29.

| Discourse | NGO | | Timber company | | Community | | TOTAL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Before | After | Before | After | Before | After | Before | After |
| **1** | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 10 | 7 |
| **2** | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 12 | 10 |
| **3** | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 7 |

Some conclusions can be drawn from previous tables and therefore about dynamics of certification discourses in Bolivian lowlands:

- It is possible to identify some ideal-typical discourses of certification among arguments used by different organizations, especially those which promote certification. Throughout years of certification experience in Bolivia, a decrease in arguments used to promote certification has been observed. In both groups of promoting actors (NGOs and forest companies) this decrease has been observed. Moreover, we have observed that arguments used in stimulating certification schemes have moved from NGOs to timber companies. At the beginning of the forest certification process in Bolivia, NGOs were the promoters in communities, today enterprises have replaced them.

- The fact that some arguments used to stimulate certification before, are not observed anymore nowadays or have decreased after experience in Bolivian lowlands (as commented before), might be due to changes in knowledge, interest, convictions, norms and values. In general, after certification experience arguments regarding economic benefits, better timber prices and new marketable products are observed less often.

- Certification experiences in Bolivian lowlands show that there are two aspects where arguments have been more concentrated on: social part and market. Actually, generally speaking, both of these aspects correspond with two of the ideal-typical identified discourses (certification as a development tool and certification as a business opportunity). On one hand, arguments concentrated on social aspects of certification in community forest enterprises show the problems and obstacles that certification has faced when dealing with the social part. Comparing arguments at the beginning and nowadays, we can hardly appreciate advances registered in the social part after twelve years of certification experience. On the other hand, arguments concentrated on economic aspects of certification in communities of Bolivian lowlands show the undeniable dependence on the market for certification success.

## 7.8. Relationship between ideal-typical discourses and stakeholder groups

A priori, without considering the results of this study, it should be logical to think that discourses 1 and 2 (forest conservation and local benefits enhancement, and certification as a development tool) are corresponded more with the assumed position of developing organizations and NGOs, and discourse 3 (business opportunity) is more in the line of private companies. Well, this is partly the result of our study, but with some clarifications.

First, it is striking to see how NGOs (and Forest Department as well, but not from a promoting position) have used several arguments related to the discourse 3 (about certification as opportunity for commercial timber enterprises). They have made use of these arguments in several occasions more than the enterprises themselves, when theoretically should be the opposite. Oddly, it can be appreciated how timber enterprises use some arguments from the social discourse before certification and then the use of these arguments notably decreases after certification experiences.

It is an evidence after the results of this study that despite being arguments used by NGOs more linked to social discourses (1 and 2), and private companies' arguments more linked to discourse 3, there is an overlapping, and actors make use of all kind of arguments.

Secondly, it can be observed the other way around of commented previously: arguments that have not been recorded before certification and have been observed after experience. It is the case of the argument about market security by NGOs, after they were convinced of the success of community-enterprise partnerships. Arguments that were not recorded before certification, about bringing more marketable species, have also been stated by indigenous communities after experiences in certification.

It is not clear the link between any of the ideal-typical discourses and the group of indigenous communities. There are reasons to think that arguments used by communities are influenced by promoters; they combine arguments from the three ideal-typical discourses, although focus more on the economic benefits, what could be perfectly associated to the influence that stimulating actors (both developing organizations and timber enterprises) may have in the discourse of these communities.

## 8. Discussion

This chapter further discusses the relevance of the research results and presents a reflection on the theoretical approach. This will be done in the context of the research objectives. Furthermore, the research methodology will be discussed with attention to the possible impact of the research methods used.

### 8.1. Empirical relevance

The empirical relevance of this study is foremost related to the fact that it is the first approach to assess the results of forest certification at community level through a discourse analysis. This study identifies the existence of several discourses on certification with the specific type of actors involved, and the importance that discourses may have in the perceptions on certification of community forest enterprises.

Other studies on certification of community forest enterprises have focused more on describing problems faced by these enterprises in establishing an organizational framework for fulfilling certification requirements, e.g. in respect to organizing labor and administration, recording distribution of benefits, etc. (Markopoulos, 1998; McDaniel, 2003). Our study provided a lot of information about these issues, but this information was not used as basic information for assessing the options for developing certification practice, but rather as basis for identifying basic issues involved in certification as expressed through discourses and argumentations. In line with the conceptual framework, the emphasis was on identifying convictions, norms, values, interests and knowledge behind arguments regarding certification. The experiences with certification were assessed on the basis of actors' arguments and opinions and not through a systematic analysis of the actual certification process. This approach offered the possibility of studying five cases in different parts of Bolivia, rather than focusing only on one case as was the case of earlier studies on certification in the research area. In the past, it has often been proposed that the results of case-studies, such as of the Lomerío case (Markopoulos, 1998), could be generalized. However, as demonstrated by our multi-case study, the experiences with certification as expressed through discourses, are partly location-specific, and the convictions, norms, values, knowledge and interests of indigenous communities and external actors may vary between regions.

Although the objective of this study was not to explain in detail the social, economic and ecological issues of certification in indigenous communities, our data support several findings of other studies on the relevance of certification of community forestry in Bolivia. As indicated by our research findings, there are two main issues in community forest certification in the Bolivian lowlands, i.e. the tension between the socio-cultural characteristics of indigenous communities and the requirements of market operations. This conforms the conclusions of several other studies concerning the Lomerio case (Molnar, 2003; Markopoulos, 1998; McDaniel, 2003) which found that many of the problems experienced by this project could be traced to fundamental conflicts between the Chiquitano culture and the values that necessarily accompany market-based development efforts such as community forestry. A study by Stearman (2006) also emphasizes that the failure in establishing certification in the Yuqui community could be related to social issues. Thus, most studies on forest certification in indigenous communities in Bolivia agree that the fundamental development problem is cultural rather than fiscal or administrative (McDaniel, 2003).

Several studies have also shown the importance of the economic issues in certification, especially the notion about certification bringing better prices (Molnar, 2003). This notion was also expressed clearly in the discourses identified in this study. Although it was not the aim of our study to critically test the assumption of certification resulting in higher timber prices, our data clearly indicate that in the majority of South American cases, certification has not resulted in a premium of timber prices.

An important conclusion from our study is that in the Bolivian lowlands the discourses on forest certification have gradually been extended from NGOs and developing organizations to private companies. As demonstrated by Benneker (2008), these private companies are increasingly becoming involved in community-enterprise partnerships on forest management and timber exploitation. Our study shows that several private enterprises recognize the value of certification of the community forest enterprises they are dealing with.

Another conclusion of our study is that the interpretation of sustainability issues in forest certification often concerns the ecological dimension of forest sustainability. However, as indicated by our study in case of community forest enterprises in Bolivia, the social and economic dimensions of sustainability are often more critical, and they deserve more attention in the further development of specific criteria for community-based forest management.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that although it was not the aim of this study to explain the influence of discourses among actors, the researcher was very eager to show the importance of discourses and arguments used by stakeholders to convince indigenous communities towards certification.

## 8.2. Reflection on the theoretical approach

The theories applied for the analysis of the research questions provided foundation for this study. Normally in discourse theory the operationalisation of discourses turns out complicated (Wetherell, 2001) and therefore specific attention was given towards developing a practical and handy way of identifying the discourses. Specific attention was paid to flexibility and adaptability when analyzing perceptions and/or discourses, and their changes throughout time. This was in line with the focus of the study linking discourses on certification with the knowledge and interests (among others factors) that actors have with respect to this process. Consequently, a theoretical framework was used which explains changes in discourses as a result of shifts in five factors that affect frames of reference. This theoretical approach was originally developed for an empirical study on perceptions of the treatment of farm animals in the Netherlands by Te Velde et al. (2001). They used a qualitative approach, based on in-depth interviews with meat livestock farmers and consumers, in order to assess motivations behind perceptions and to gain insight into the way people deal with possible discrepancies between their perceptions and their daily practices. The perceptions were analyzed with the help of a frame of reference. Initially, there were uncertainties about whether this frame of reference could be used in this study, because of the lack of information about its possible uses. Nonetheless, due to a lack of information at the start of the research about other ways of operationalisation of discourses (Wetherell, 2001), this frame of reference was considered useful for the study. The adoption of this approach for this study proved to be very useful. The utility and relevance to analyze discourses in this way may not be evident, but its functionality is high due to the broad range of elements it covers.

The assumption that discourses concern the perceptions of people and that these perceptions consist of a interacting mix of convictions, norms, values, knowledge and interests sets a broad framework to analyze what people say, proved to form a good theoretical basis for data collection. As demonstrated by this study, the simplicity of the theoretical frame and its general applicability makes it easy to apply to other studies (about other topics or similar and across countries) dealing with discourses or perceptions and changes in these throughout time. However, not all these elements were researched in this study, as the major focus was on knowledge and interests. The norms, values and convictions were not (or only lightly) incorporated in the study. The reason for this is that these elements require additional research questions methods that are more time-consuming and probably require more experienced research skills. Consequently, the theoretical approach of Te Velde et al. (2001) was only partially applied and its full application might have revealed further information on critical issues regarding certification of community forest enterprises.

## 8.3. Reflection on the research methodology

As already mentioned in Chapter 8.1 discussing the empirical relevance of this study, its research methodology was based on the aim of making a comparative study of experiences with certification of community forest enterprises of indigenous communities in Bolivia. There are only five of such related cases: two communities which were certified some years ago (Lomerío and Yuqui), one currently certified (Cururú) , and two that are applying already for certification (Palestina and Santa Monica). All these cases were represented in the study. Hence the coverage of this study was very complete, and its results are representative for the whole country. Of course, the results cannot be simply extrapolated to community forest enterprises of other groups or in adjacent countries.

This research was based on a qualitative research approach focused on data collection amongst a relatively small group of organization representatives and community members. These key informants were critically selected from the main categories of stakeholders involved in the process of certification. The selection of respondents was based on a preliminary list provided by the contact institution, an international developing organization in the area involved in processes of community certification in the past. The list, facilitated by an expert (forestry technical) with more than fifteen years of experience in forest issues in the region, was complemented with new contacts added by interviewees as they were suggesting that. Due to time constraints the list could not be amended on the basis of additional local information obtained during the case-study (snowball approach). Fortunately, the timing of the research was proper, as it was the end of dry season, when many timber extraction operations were being implemented. This meant that most workers and managers targeted were available in the field. During the interviews special attention was paid to checking and triangulation of information.  Of course, in future research the reliability and/or completeness of data could be increased by expanding the number of interviewees in the NGOs, private companies and communities.

A further methodological issue concerns the possibility that the quality of the information might be heterogeneous due to the different timeframes of certification.  Some communities were certified ten or more years ago, so actually the mind of these interviewees was not as fresh as it could be in the case of communities that are currently applying to certification. In the older cases the convictions and knowledge of people may have gradually changed or faded away, or respondents may mix up different discourse issues in time. The problem of

difference in recall period could not be solved, but we tried to limit it as much as possible by careful triangulation of information and omitting factual information obviously contradicting each other.

Care was taken to limit the possibility that the results of interviews might be influenced by the presence of other people, e.g. representatives of the development NGOs stimulating certification. Each respondent was interviewed individually, in Spanish language. Nonetheless, the introduction of the researcher into the community as a student hosted by a Dutch NGO may have influenced the answer and stimulated desirable answers regarding this NGO that was involved in the process years ago.

Notwithstanding the fact that due to a lack of local experience and time limitations it cannot be ruled out that some respondents responded strategically or that the answers were influenced by differences in recall period, it does not seem that the research results were unduly influenced by these methodological constraints. As discussed above, the results of the study are supported by the results of several prior studies and therefore the data can be considered to be in general reliable. It would be interesting to extend the research to other examples of South American experiences in community forest enterprises, to see whether results may differ and whether ideal-typical discourses identified do differ in arguments.

## 8.4. Conclusion

Besides being the first approach to assess the results of forest certification at a community level through a discourse analysis, the empirical relevance of this study was proved by providing information about certification experiences most of the cases supported by other studies' results.

Further research is recommended in how actors' convictions, norms and values can affect discourses on certification.

The frame of reference used in the theoretical framework for this study although uncertain turned out very useful to analyze discourse dynamics. Discourses on certification are influenced by convictions, norms, values, interests and knowledge. Changes or interactions among these can explain changes in discourses.

Even though the research has its limitations, it provided the opportunity to gain valuable insight into the opinions of stakeholders about certification of community forest enterprises and partly, an insight on the results of certification in community forest enterprises in Bolivian lowlands.

## 9.  Overall conclusion

This study sheds light in the different discourses about certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivia. We tried to put forward all possible discourses and arguments found and explain the evolution of these since the beginning of certification in Bolivia.

We have shown that certification of community forest enterprises is a multi-stakeholder process that not only involves certification bodies and communities; due to the given context of forestry sector in Bolivian lowlands and specific socio-economic factors conditioning communities living there, this process of certification also involves developing organizations and timber enterprises. For several reasons,  these external organizations have stimulated certification of these community forest enterprises. Indigenous communities, sometimes driven by the discourse of these institutions, decide to start this process that entails the accomplishment of demanding requirements. Thus, the variety of actors involved in the process of community forest certification in Bolivian lowlands is huge: NGOs, private companies, communities and certifiers.

Stakeholders have their perception on forest certification, especially influenced by past experiences and benefits expected from it. As a consequence, groups of stakeholders may have different perceptions on certification of community forest enterprises. Perceptions on certification are reflected in discourses, likewise held by arguments. Arguments observed related to the different dimensions of certification can vary throughout time, as lessons are being learnt and interests change; also norms, convictions and values of actors may change.

The results obtained with this study show the variety of arguments existing regarding forest certification of indigenous forest enterprises and the clear dynamic of these arguments constituting discourses. This dynamic shows how arguments in favor of certification of community forest enterprises in Bolivia tend to decrease. Discourse analysis may have great value in order to understand certification experiences and provide broad information.

In conclusion, the three main research questions formulated in chapter four can be answered as follows:

1. *What are the main features of discourses on community forestry certification in the Bolivian Amazon?*

Discourses on community forest certification are very dynamic. They are constituted by several arguments, which can be sorted by economic, technical, social and ecological aspects of certification. Three ideal-typical discourses have been identified: certification emphasizing forest conservation and local benefits, certification as a development tool, and certification as an opportunity for commercial timber enterprises. These ideal-typical discourses sometimes share common arguments.

2. *Did any change in discourse occur during the implementation of certification schemes?*

Discourses did effectively change after certification experiences. Arguments used by different actors have decreased in number after experience. These changes are supposed to be related to modifications and interactions among convictions, norms, values, knowledge and interests. This study only could thoroughly analyze knowledge and interests factors. The other three were slightly considered.

*3. What conclusions can be drawn from the discourse information about the scope for certification of community forest enterprises?*

Through analyzing different actors' discourses, a lot of heterogeneous information about certification of community forest enterprises can be gathered.

In the Bolivian lowlands the discourses on forest certification have gradually been extended from NGOs and developing organizations to private companies.

According to the study, the social and economic dimensions of certification of community forest enterprises are the ones which require more attention. Theoretically NGOs should be more identified with social discourses of certification and enterprises with the business opportunity one. The results of this study show that NGOs are connected to economic arguments and enterprises are connected, in a lesser degree, to social arguments.

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**Useful websites**

Official website APCOB: http://www.apcob.org.bo
Official website BOLFOR II: www.bolfor.org
Official website CADEFOR: http://www.cadefor.org
Official website CFV: www.consejoforestal.org.bo
Official website FSC: www.fsc.org
Official website SNV: www.snvworld.org
Official website WWF: www.panda.org

**Annex I: Representatives interviewed**

**i) Organization and project representatives interviewed**

| No. | Organization and project representatives | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Name of the Institution** | **Location (Santa Cruz department)** | **Contact person** | **Function** |
| | **Governmental Organizations** | | | |
| 1 | Superintendencia Forestal | Santa Cruz | Molina, V. | Forest Superintendent of Santa Cruz |
| 2 | Superintendencia Forestal | Santa Cruz | José Luis Urioste | Dirección Departamental Forestal de Santa Cruz |
| | **Nongovernmental organizations** | | | |
| 3 | APCOB (Apoyo para el Campesino Indígena del Oriente | Santa Cruz | Jorge Riester | General Director |
| 4 | CADEFOR (Centro Amazónico de Desarrollo Forestal) | Santa Cruz | Fernando Aguilar | Encargado comercialización (Ex- director CFV) |
| 5 | CADEFOR (Centro Amazónico de Desarrollo Forestal) | Santa Cruz | Rudy Guzman | Responsible for community forestry issues (Ex-BOLFOR) |
| 6 | CFV (Consejo Boliviano para la Certificación Forestal Voluntaria) | Santa Cruz | Henry Moreno | Ex- director |
| 7 | CIDOB (Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia) | Santa Cruz | Jorge Salgado | Coordinator |
| 8 | SNV (Netherlands Development Organization) | Santa Cruz | Javier Bejarano | Forestry technical (Ex-APCOB) |
| 9 | SNV (Netherlands Development Organization) | Santa Cruz | Bert Witteveen | Forestry inclusive program leader |
| 10 | WWF Bolivia (World Wildlife Fund) | Santa Cruz | Alejandra Sainz | Forest area responsible |
| 11 | WWF Bolivia (World Wildlife Fund) | Santa Cruz | Orlando Melgarejo | Forest assistant |

| 12 | WWF Bolivia (World Wildlife Fund) | Santa Cruz | Ruth Silva | Anthropologist |
|----|------|------|------|------|
|  | **Indigenous associations** |  |  |  |
| 13 | CICC (Central Indígena de las Comunidades de Concepción) | Concepción | Amado Olivera | Forestry technical |
| 14 | CICOL (Central Intercomunal Campesina del Oriente de Lomerío) | Comunidad El Pukio | Agustin Garcia | Ex- president |
| 15 | CICOL (Central Intercomunal Campesina del Oriente de Lomerío) | Comunidad El Pukio | Juan Soqueré | Ex- president |
| 16 | CICOL (Central Intercomunal Campesina del Oriente de Lomerío) | Comunidad El Pukio | Anacleto Peña | Ex- forestry technical |
|  | **Programmes and projects** |  |  |  |
| 17 | BOLFOR | Ascension de Guarayos | Alberto Claros | Regional office responsible |
| 18 | BOLFOR II | Ascension de Guarayos | Jorgen | Forestry technical |
|  | **Forest companies** |  |  |  |
| 19 | INPA Parket S.L. | Concepción | Paul Roosenboom | Director |
| 20 | INPA Parket S.L. | Concepción | William Pariona | Manager (Ex-Bolfor, and SmartWood auditor) |
| 21 | CIMAL IMR S.A. | Santa Cruz | Victor Yucra | Certification coordinator |
| 22 | CFB (Cámara Forestal Boliviana) | Santa Cruz | Jaime Teran | Forestry technical. Ex -Focerfo (Certification fund responsible) |
|  | **Certifier entities** |  |  |  |
| 23 | Smartwood Bolivia | Santa Cruz | Gerben Stegeman | Regional manager (Ex- SNV adviser) |
| 24 | Smartwood Bolivia | Santa Cruz | Freddy Peña | Coordinator Andean countries |
| 25 | Smartwood Bolivia | Santa Cruz | Rolyn Medina | Coordinator Bolivia |
|  | **Others experts** |  |  |  |
| 26 | - | - | Allyn Stearman | Anthropologist |

**ii) Community members interviewed**

| Interviewees | Community |
|---|---|
| 7 | Lomerío |
| 3 | Yuqui |
| 10 | Cururú |
| 5 | Palestina |
| 5 | Santa Monica |

**Annex II: Questionnaire**

**I)    for indigenous people**

A. Communities with certification experience (Lomerío and Yuqui)

1. Can you define forest certification?
2. How was the first time you heard about forest certification?
3. Who came to you speaking about Forest Certification?
4. What did these people tell you about Forest Certification?
5. What did you understand by forest certification?
6. What did you think about certification at the beginning?
7. What do you think now?
8. What did people from your community think about forest certification at the beginning?
9. What do people from your community think about Forest Certification now?
10. Why are you interested in certification?
11. Did you really want certification after they came to you?
12. Do you really want certification after experience?
13. What did stakeholders say during certification?
14. What do stakeholders say after certification experience?
15. What do you think are the problems to solve regarding certification?
16. What is your personal opinion of the experience?

B. Communities not certified yet or certified recently

1. Can you define forest certification?
2. How was the first time you heard about forest certification?
3. Who came to you speaking about Forest Certification?
4. What did these people tell you about Forest Certification?
5. What do you understand by forest certification?
6. What did you think about certification at the beginning?
7. What do you think now?
8. What do people from your community think about forest certification?
9. Why are you interested in certification?
10. Do you really want certification?
11. What do stakeholders say during certification?
12. What do you say to them?

**II)    For governmental organizations**

1. Can you define forest certification?
2. What do you understand by forest certification?
3. Why do you want indigenous community forests to be certified?
4. What did/do you tell indigenous people about forest certification?
5. How do you explain them what forest certification is?
6. What do you think they understand by forest certification?
7. Why do you think certification is good for them?
8. What do you think are the limitations for communities to be certified?

9. Why do you think it has gone down in some experiences?
10. What do you think about forest certification today?

## III)     For non-governmental organizations

1. Can you define forest certification?
2. What do you understand by forest certification?
3. Why do you want indigenous community forests to be certified?
4. What did/do you tell indigenous people about forest certification?
5. How do you explain them what forest certification is?
6. What do you think they understand by forest certification?
7. Why do you think is good for them?
8. What do you think are the limitations for communities to be certified?
9. What do you tell them after certification has gone down?
10. Why do you think it hasn't been reached in some experiences?
11. What do you think about certification of community forest enterprises today?

## IV)     For certifiers entities

1. Can you define forest certification?
2. Why did you think that certification could be good for communities?
3. What are your institutional interests behind communities certification?
4. What do you understand by forest certification for this people? What could you expect?
5. Did you speak to them? What did you tell them?
6. What do you think they understand by certification?
7. Why do you think certification has gone down in some experiences?
8. What do you think about certifying indigenous communities today?

## V)     For forest enterprises

1. Can you define forest certification?
2. What do you understand by forest certification?
3. Why do you want indigenous people to be certified?
4. What did/do you tell indigenous people about forest certification?
5. How do you explain them what is forest certification?
6. Do you really think is good for them?
7. How do you think is it possible to certify communities?
8. Why do you think certification has gone down in other experiences?
9. What do you think are the limitations for communities to be certified?
10. What do you think about forest certification today?

**Annex III: List of parameters used as indicators**

**1. Actors in forest certification process**

In order to gain understanding on the different discourses it is essential for the study to identify all the actors that are involved direct and indirectly in certification.

In consequence, our fist research question in questionnaire:

1. Who are the actors in the forest certification process in Bolivian lowlands?

Research variables and indicators for research question one:

| Variables | Indicators |
|---|---|
| 1. Actors in forest certification | 1. People that manage the forest object of certification<br>2. Communities that own the forest object of certification<br>3. Organizations supporting communities whose forests are object of certification<br>4. Enterprises that buy certified wood and/or give financial support<br>5. Government<br>6. Organization that certify the forest |

**2. Factors which certification discourses depend on**

According to the operationalisation of our theoretical framework discourses are constructed on the basis of frames of reference that are at the same time influenced by convictions, values, norms, interests and knowledge. Setting aside convictions, values and norms because of their high complexity for this study and considered as unimportant in building certification discourses we see knowledge and interests as the relevant ones for the formation of certification discourses.

**2.1. Certification understandings**

Asking what people know and understand by forest certification is interesting as it is one of the things that auditors from independent certification bodies do when assessing the fulfillment of principles and criteria of certification in communities. They ask to indigenous people this in order to see how far their understanding of the matter and their commitment to certification is.
Gaining insight in their perceptions of certification is better to understand what they say.

This leads to the following research question in questionnaire:

2. What is understood by forest certification?

Research variables and indicators for research question two:

| Variables | Indicators |
|---|---|
| 1. Actors' understanding | 1. Definition<br>2. Knowledge<br>3. Opinion |

## 2.2. Interests of certification

At first sight, objectives (interests) behind certification are the motive force of discourses. Besides what is understood by certification, discourses on certification are partly conditioned by the interest; therefore it is interesting to find out what are the interests and expected benefits of certification.
This consideration has built the foundation for the specific research question:

3. What do different stakeholders expect of certification of community forest enterprises?

Research variables and indicators for research question three:

| Variables | Indicators |
|---|---|
| 1. Objectives behind reaching certification | 1. Institutional aims<br>2. Institutional strategy<br>3. Motivations to certification<br>4. Economic benefits of certification<br>5. Socio-political benefits of certification<br>6. Environmental benefits of certification |

## 3. Discourses on forest certification

Discourses on certification are the focus of our research. They are the main part of the study so that we have to collect all the information regarding certification and compare these discourses and arguments between different moments throughout time (before and after certification).

This leads to the following research questions:

4. What do actors say about forest certification before having experienced it?

5. What do actors say about forest certification after having experienced it?

Research variables and indicators for research question four and five:

| Variables | Indicators |
|---|---|
| 1. Discourses before certification | 1. What promoters say when arriving to |

| | communities |
| --- | --- |
| 2. Discourses after certification | 2. Stakeholders' opinion about certification |
| | 3. Perceptions on certification |
| | 4. Issues of interest that stakeholders find on certification |
| | 5. Obstacles |
| | 6. Benefits |
| | 7. Trends |

## 4. Comparison of discourses

The main objective of the research is to see whether arguments and discourses have changed throughout time and, in the case they did, how these changes are. Therefore, it is essential to observe similarities and differences in arguments before and after certification. Then it is obvious to formulate the next research question:

6. Have discourses changed after experience?

Research variables and indicators for research question five:

| Variables | Indicators |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Changes in discourses after certification | 1. Arguments differences |
| | 2. Influence between actors |
| 2. Similarities in discourses after certification | 3. New aspects of interest |
| | 4. Learning from experience |

Within a given case, discourses can change after certification. Discourses before certification can also change between one case and another, especially when there have been a long time period between these cases.

From this the following research question arises:

7. Do precertification arguments differ throughout time?

Research variables and indicators for research question six:

| Variables | Indicators |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Differences between precertification discourses throughout time | 1. Different promoter |
| | 2. Different objectives |
| 2. Similarities between precertification discourses throughout time | 3. Learning from experience |

Certification of communities starts on the promoters' idea of certifying and therefore the corresponding approach to the communities with a discourse. There is an interaction between

promoters' discourses and arguments and indigenous with respect to certification. As in almost all of the cases indigenous are not familiarized neither with the concept nor the process in general, there may be influences among discourses and discourses learning from other actors, to be specific discourses learned by indigenous from the promoters.

This consideration has built the foundation for the specific research questions:

8. How much repeated are some arguments?

Research variables and indicators for research question seven:

| Variables | Indicators |
|---|---|
| 1. Arguments repetition | 1. Similarities in arguments <br> 2. Words used <br> 3. Words repeated <br> 4. Language limitations |

Arguments can not only be repeated, they can also be shared by actors; e.g., actors from different backgrounds with the same interest.

Connected to the previous research question and founded on the previous statement, the following research question arises:

9. Do actors share arguments?

Research variables and indicators for research question eight:

| Variables | Indicators |
|---|---|
| 1. Arguments sharing | 1. Words used <br> 2. Influence between actors <br> 3. Aims in common <br> 4. Understanding of discourses sharing |

**Annex IV: Workshops and seminars attended**

| Workshop | Organized by | Place | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Cadena de Producción de Madera Guaraya* | SNV (Dutch Development Organization) | Santa Cruz, Bolivia | October 2008 |
| *Socializando y creando capacidades en potenciales regentes para la implementación del sistema de regencia forestal en Bolivia* | CFV (Consejo Boliviano para la Certificación Forestal Voluntaria) | Santa cruz, Bolivia | October 2008 November 2008 |
| *Generando oportunidades de Negocios y Reduciendo pobreza* | CAINCO (Cámara de Industria y Comercio de Santa cruz) | Santa Cruz, Bolivia | December 2008 |