Amazonian States Map Threatened Borderlands

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Amazonian States Map Threatened Borderlands

By David S. Salisbury, A. Willian Flores de Melo, Jorge Vela Alvarado, and Bertha Balbín Ordaya

Improving Transboundary Planning

Recently, the Regional Initiative to Integrate South America has begun promoting a transboundary road that would bisect the forested boundaries and connect the two largest cities in the region, while the state governments seek to promote a direct ecotourism network for exploration and development. Both transportation initiatives promise to expand access and open new opportunities to tourist and development interests. As these people migrate through their reserves and neighboring parks, other traditional peoples, such as the Ashéninka, Yaminahua, and descendants of rubber tappers, live along neighboring rivers and adjacent lands. More recent arrivals include loggers, miners, and drug traffickers seeking to exploit these remote areas for high-value timber, minerals, and trafficking routes.

Bringing Diverse Areas Together

In the last decade, the Brazilian and Peruvian states have increasingly targeted the borderlands for conservation and development projects but with almost no knowledge of what lies on the other side of their respective boundaries. At the same time, the impacts of illegal logging and drug trafficking have spilled across borders, causing damage to the environment, local livelihoods, and diplomatic relations.

GIS provides a common language and shared framework regardless of national sovereignty or borders. Amazonian policy makers use ArcGIS to understand the geographic reality of remote borderlands. Scientists use ArcGIS to identify transboundary threats to Amazonian biologic and cultural diversity.

The 800 kilometers of boundary separating the Peruvian region of Ucayali from the Brazilian state of Acre crosses some of the wildest landscapes left on earth. The lush rain forests of this border region still resound with the low grunt of jaguar, while their canopy sways with acrobatic troops of woolly monkeys. Underneath the canopy roam hundred-strong herds of white-lipped peccary and the elusive and elegant ocelot. Underneath the canopy roam hundred-strong herds of white-lipped peccary and the elusive and elegant ocelot.

Highlights

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