Summary report:
Project:

Forest harvest effects on bird communities in Chiloé Archipelagos: implication for small, medium and large islands in relation to human progress.

The activities have been developed according to the objectives outlined in the project, focusing on the action plans contemplated in the programmes of the different public institutions, which have responsibilities for the management of natural resources in Los Lagos area (the administrative limits of where the project is developed).

First, the project has included as part of its objectives:

1. - Initial meeting, in Castro city, capital of Chiloé Province, where the scope of the project was explained. We invited people representing all the City Halls belonging to the jurisdictions where the project would be developed. All of them are currently in charge of the environmental departments of their corresponding City Halls and have local influence in the environmental and/or productive development area, (February 2008).

2. - Initial meetings with team works representing Governmental Institutions related to the environmental area (March – April 2008)

Servicio Agrícola y Ganadero, SAG.
Comisión Nacional del Medio Ambiente, CONAMA.
Corporación Nacional Forestal, CONAF.

3. - Working meetings, carried out in each of the 6 Chiloe municipalities involved in the project (Fig. 1): Quellón, Puqueldón, Queilen, Castro, Quinchao and Quemchi. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the specific plans and action for each one of the islands circumscribed to each municipality. We gathered information regarding the state of natural resources and local necessities, and bibliography related to the islands. We also planned and coordinated the activities that would be developed by the research team of CECPAN in each of the islands (March - June 2008). There have been 3 to 5 meetings with each of the municipalities. They will continue until the completion of the project.

The project's second phase is devoted to biological surveys. Bird surveys and banding were initiated during September 2008 in a group of islands known collectively as Butachauques (Fig. 2). The goal was to asses the bird assemblages inhabiting this small archipelago. By ringing them we will be able to evaluate the bird's dispersion dynamics in the whole archipelago of Chiloé.

Starting from the third week of November, after all the logistic arrangements were done, the surveys and descriptions of habitat for each of the islands began. According to our estimations, we will finish the field work by the last week of January 2009.

It is necessary to stress the high impact caused by this project. We have obtained more cooperation that we were expecting from the local people and even from other researchers. It has been also possible to integrate government organisations into the project. Thanks to all this, it was possible to plan the creation of a biological station in Mechuque Island (Fig.2). This will help to generate local ornithological investigation and research in the near future. The biological station will also impact positively in the development of environmental education in schools and the resident population, in a geographical area that have remained unaware of these kind of activities.

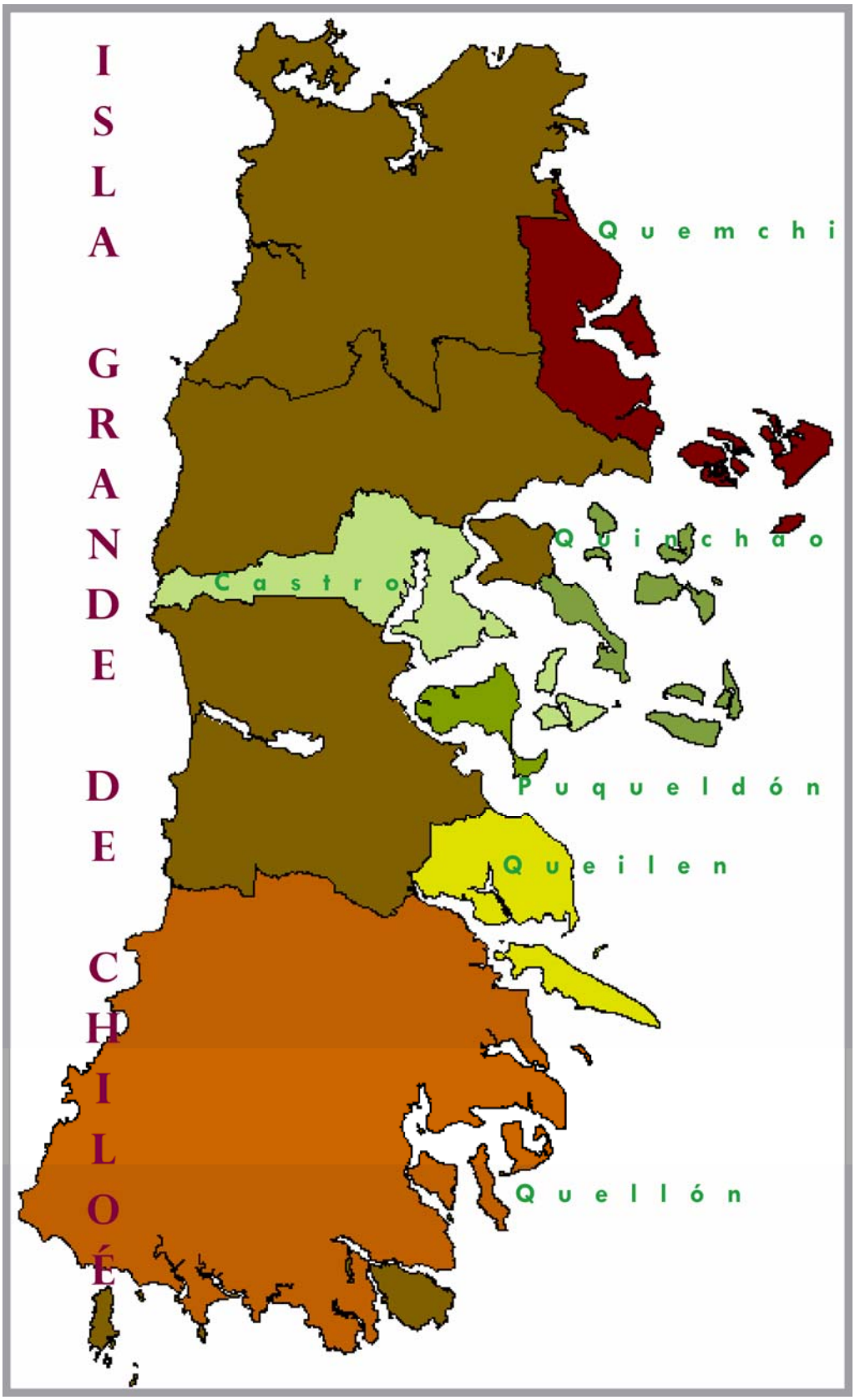
Also, as a consequence of the initiative supported by RFP, a new investigation proposal has just been established, channeled through CECPAN and the local Government institutions; "Discovering the archipelagic Biodiversity". This study will begin on January 26 2009 and it will include all the data that are being currently gathered by RFP project, and it will be complemented with an assessment of the biodiversity of the archipelago's islands that will include plants, fungi, amphibians, terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates and mammal species.

This great initiative aroused thanks to the diffusion of our project trough Chiloe's public media. It will allow extending the scope of the original goals without loosing the objectives initially outlined, and for certain it will benefit the conservation of the natural resources of Chiloé Archipelago.

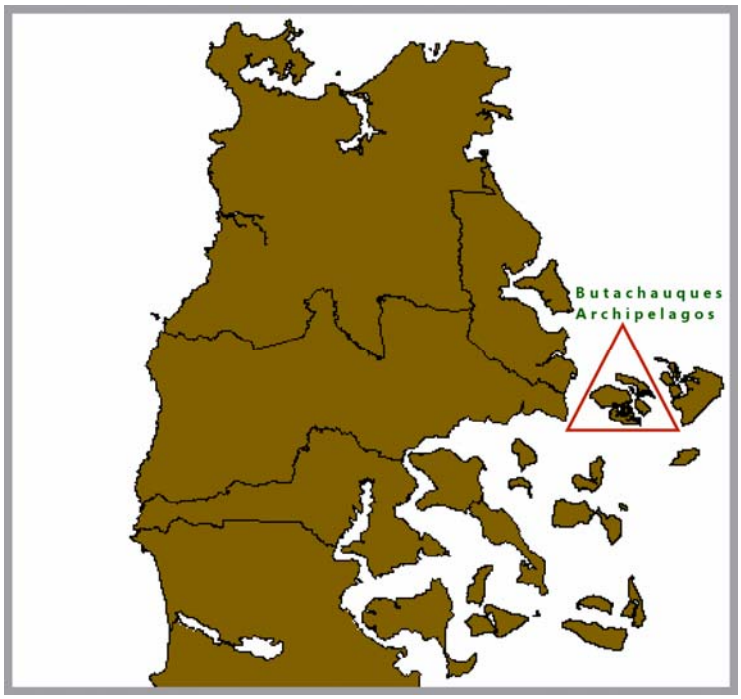
We will include in the final report all the information that will be gathered in this biodiversity study to your institution because it was your trust and support which made real the development of this studies, that are so necessary not only because of conservation of the archipelago's biodiversity but for benefit of the local people.

Images index

1. - Counties involved in the project (indicated by different color)



2. - Placed in Mechuque Island (belonging to But achauques archipelagos) will be the new Biological Station where the banding programme has started.



3. - Detail of interview with landowner (lef t) and distinction be tween tradition and contemporary progress (right) into the archipel agos (Caucahue Island), last comment rela ted with aquiculture advances along archipelagos zone.

4. - Landscape of Caucahue Island and electricity towers, as part of the government plan to improve the life quality of local people. It is possible to distinguish Quemchi city in Chiloe Island (left). To the right is possible to see remains of an ancient stone fishing weir that are spread for everywhere around the archipelagos.

5 & 6. - Clearing of forests by use of fire is one of the traditional methods to leave land ready for livestock use; one of the most serious threats to the forest remnants conservation.

6. - Selective logging and salm on farmer industry (background of the pict ure) produce direct and indirectly impacts on the forest retreat on archipelagos (Mechuque Island).

7. – Bird banding process and time to teach student about the importance and diversity of bird that inhabit the islands.

8. - Invitation card to the first public progress report about bird study in archipelagos (RFP) and release of the Archipelagos Action Plan. The second part of the works as continuation of our main project on bird communities and its preliminary result, presenting methodology that will involve others in the fauna and flora work group that starts its activities by end of January 2009.

9. - Rufford Small Grants Foundation vinyl sticker on our CECPAN pickup truck.