

empowering locally-led  
sustainable management of

# clean fresh water

introducing a replicable community-  
based conservation solution to restore  
and protect watersheds for the people  
and nature that depend on them

## our vision for impact

Rare is catalyzing a movement to empower vulnerable communities in Colombia to sustainably manage their watersheds (for reliable clean fresh water supply and habitat protection), which will:

- build natural resource management capacity
- boost environmental and social resilience to climate change
- improve livelihoods and water security
- conserve critical forest habitat and biodiversity

## the urgency to act

Increasingly, South America's economic growth and human development are creating unsustainable burdens on water resources and the surrounding ecosystems responsible for delivering a reliable supply of water.



### Habitat Protection

Some of the highest deforestation rates in the world<sup>1</sup> threaten the Tropical Andes' cloud forests and páramo ecosystems essential to wildlife and water supply.



### Water Security

35 million people rely on the Colombian Andes for clean fresh water.<sup>2</sup>



### Biodiversity

The Tropical Andes and Mesoamerican biodiversity hotspots contain 8.4% of the world's endemic plants and 9.9% of its endemic vertebrates, making these regions two of the hottest hotspots on the planet.<sup>1</sup>



photo credit: Jason Houston

**community  
empowerment**



**national  
partnerships**



**replication**

## how we work makes the difference

Rare inspires local and national support for increased reciprocity in watershed management by bringing upstream and downstream communities together to collaboratively conserve their cloud forests. Rare leverages its proven community mobilization expertise, and forms private sector partnerships that strengthen the economic and financial incentives for behavior change.

## where we work: colombia

Rare currently works with partners to implement our holistic watershed management solution in Colombia, the third most biologically diverse nation in the world and home to nearly 10% of the planet's biodiversity. A variety of technical and political factors combine in Colombia to indicate the likelihood of success, namely the urgency/need, high demand for a solution (i.e., an invitation to partner), and a strong fit with how Rare works.

## measuring impact

Working through local partners, Rare measures the impact of watershed Pride projects by monitoring:

- behavior change: self-reported and observed changes in behavior, interpersonal communication, attitudes, and knowledge
- rural community livelihoods and climate adaptation
- ecosystem health and biodiversity
- water quality

Regular data monitoring and analysis enables rapid program assessment, cross-site learning, and adaptive management approaches that benefit local communities, partners and the broader scientific/ conservation community.

## origin of the solution

The reciprocal watershed management approach has been pioneered in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru. The approach was initially cultivated in the early 2000s in the Los Negros and Comarapa valleys of Santa Cruz, Bolivia by Fundación Natura Bolivia, and it has continued to evolve and improve over the past decade. In 2008, Rare, along with specialists from Natura Bolivia and other partners, implemented the first Pride campaigns for watershed reciprocity in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.



At Rare, we believe that conservation's greatest challenges are the result of human behaviors – and so too are the solutions. Unique as a global conservation organization, we use our expertise in behavioral science to empower community-led adoption of new sustainable behaviors and solutions that improve livelihoods and biodiversity.

For nearly 40 years, we have worked with partners to spark hundreds of community campaigns that have led to movements around the world. These campaigns have provided solutions to some of the most urgent global conservation threats of our time, like overfishing, deforestation, contaminated freshwater and unsustainable agricultural practices, all of which impact wildlife, habitat, food security, climate resilience and economic and social stability.

1. "Biodiversity Hotspots for Conservation Priorities." Myers, N., R. A. Mittermeier, C. G. Mittermeier, G. A. B. da Fonseca, and J. Kent. 2000.  
2. <http://www.mundotnc.org/donde-trabajamos/americas/colombia/lugares/andes.xml>