

# Foundation 'Život postaru' ('Life in the Old Way')

## 1. NAME OF THE PROJECT:

CONSTRUCTION OF AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL CENTER (*CENTRO EDUCATIVO ALTERNATIVO - CEA*) FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AND ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITIES OF THE ECUADOR AMAZONIA

## 2. LOCATION

<b>Province:</b>	<b>Napo</b>	<b>District:</b>	<b>Tena</b>	Association:	ASOSERSAMAY
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Ruku Samay Lodge</b>			Telephone:	0994333654
<b>Legal representative 'ŽIVOT POSTARU', non-profit Czech-Ecuadorian organisation</b>	<b>Agustin Grefa</b>			Project Management	
	<b>Msc. David Salas</b>			Project specialist	

## 3. INTRODUCTION

In the week from 14th to 17th February 2020 the Foundation 'Život postaru' organized a first meeting of assorted national cultures of Amazon and Ecuadorian mountains (Kichwas, Shuaras, Waoranis, Quitus Caras) and foreign volunteers mainly from the Czech Republic, but also from Germany, Australia, Canada, Colombia and Mexico.

The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the necessity of restoring schooling in communities and to overall support education in the communities and indigenous families.

The Ruku Samay Ecolodge homestead, which is fully committed to the matter, is planning to build an alternative educational center for children and young people - the future protectors of natural resources in the Ecuadorian Amazon region - and to provide them with adequate sustainable, meaningful and evolving education. The intention is also to preserve the ancient knowledge of the ancestors related to plants and animals of Mother Earth (the

so called 'Pachamama'), as well as preserving the local forests in the community which have been disappearing due to the felling of virgin forests for the purposes of the mining and oil industries.

The spreading of the Western culture, the consumerist lifestyle and materialism are increasingly taking root in the lives of local children and youth and this gradually leads to the loss of their cultural identity.

The above mentioned meeting initiated the creation of a project whose main target is the creation of a new alternative sustainable school in the Ecuadorian Amazon rainforest.

Thanks to the foundation 'Život postaru' and their associates the project of an alternative sustainable school can be realized.

It would start in 2020 with the purchase of the ancestral land.

As a next step activities for 2021 would be specified and initiated and subsequently the school itself would be constructed in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

The construction of the school building would be financially covered by other revenues of the foundation and the school would be prepared for opening in September.

## **4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

### **The Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, 2008**

**Article 57:** In accordance with the Constitution, agreements, conventions, declarations and other international instruments in the field of municipalities, communities, villages and indigenous peoples are recognized and guaranteed following common rights:

“ [...] 14. To develop, promote and facilitate an intercultural bilingual education system with

quality requirements, from early age to the highest possible level of education, in order to care and protect the identity, whilst taking into account the cultural diversity, and in accordance with one's own learning methodology and education.”

**Article 343:** “[...] A vision of an international character will be integrated into the state education system in accordance with the geographical, cultural and linguistic diversity of a given country and with respect for the rights of communities, villages and nationalities.”

**Article 344 :** “[...] The State shall establish the Rectorate of the Education System through the State Education Administration, which shall compile the State education policy; it will also regulate and control activities related to the education and functioning of individual institutions of the system.

**Article 347:** The responsibility of the state will be: “[...] To guarantee a system of intercultural bilingual education, where the language of the respective nationality will be used as the main language of instruction and Spanish as the language for intercultural

relations, under the Rector's Office of public policy, while fully respecting communities, municipalities and nationalities.

**Organic Law in Intercultural Education (*Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural - LOEI*), 2011.**

**Article 37:** “[...] for ancient villages and indigenous nationalities, the System of Intercultural Bilingual Education applies, which, according to the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education, comes under the so-called Unconcentrated Administration (Nivel de gestión desconcentrada). This legal instrument (Articles 77 to 92) sets out the rules applicable to the Educational intercultural bilingual system (*Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe - SEIB*).

Educational intercultural bilingual centers (*Centros educativos interculturales bilingües CECIB*) and educational intercultural bilingual community units (*Unidades educativas comunitarias interculturales bilingües UECIB*): The system of intercultural bilingual education consists of Educational intercultural bilingual community centers (*CECIB*) and Educational bilingual community units (*UECIB*), with both groups providing all three levels of education: home community education for children, basic general bilingual education and a high school diploma. This education system (EIB) is characterized by the following educational process and the pedagogical activity derived from it:

**Home community education for children** (*Educación Infantil Familiar Comunitaria EIFC*): the attention is focused on the education of a pair up to the age of 5.

(**Basic bilingual education** (*Educación General Básica Intercultural Bilingüe EGBIB*): the inclusion in the semiotic process (*Inserción al Proceso Semiótico IPS*), cognitive, emotional and psychomotoric development (*Fortalecimiento Cognitivo, Afectivo y Psicomotriz FCAP*), development of skills and study methods (*Desarrollo de Destrezas y Técnicas de Estudio DDTE*), the research learning process (*Proceso de Aprendizaje Investigativo PAI*).

**High school diploma**: this is a general unified baccalaureate bilingual diploma (*Bachillerato General Unificado Intercultural Bilingüe*) - baccalaureate from the scientific disciplines *Bachillerato en Ciencias* and the baccalaureate from the technical disciplines *Bachillerato Técnico*.

**Article 60:** Bi-national educational institutions: These are special educational institutions which, through an agreement, contract, convention or other legal form signed by the given institution and the related state, receive the right to offer "bi-national" education if they meet the requirements of law and its statutes. Bi-national educational institutions can follow a special regime provided by the state school authority.

**Article 91:** Educational community intercultural bilingual centers: The administration of Educational community intercultural bilingual centers will follow the valid model of the state educational international bilingual system, taking into account the differences of given nationalities and villages.

Educational community intercultural bilingual centers (CECIB) with the participation of social agents (elders, Yachaks, etc.) who participate in intercultural bilingual education, responsible for the development of community knowledge, vocational and scientific education and revitalization of various forms of productive and cultural development of the community . Educational community centers of all levels and forms will be managed by Intercultural bilingual circles (*Circuitos Interculturales Bilingüe*).

The community will actively participate in the educational intercultural bilingual process and will form part of the Educational Community Government through its representatives.

**Article 92:** Study plan: The study plan of intercultural bilingual education will be formed according to the state study plan and according to the study plan of international bilingual education. The curriculum will support intercultural development, both by caring for cultural identity and using its indigenous language at all times, and by applying ancient inherited socio-cultural knowledge and experience, values and principles, and cultivating relationship with Pachamama, always in accordance with geographical, social-cultural and living environment, with the intention of improving the quality of life of villages and indigenous peoples.

Representatives of the Ministry of Intercultural Bilingual Education will form a study team of interdisciplinary bilingual and multilingual character, which will participate in the detailed preparation of the school intercultural bilingual plan. They will also define standard minima for the preparation of verbal and paraverbal materials.

**Article 111:** Bilingual educational institutions: Public educational institutions, state-supported institutions and private institutions may mention the qualification “bilingual” in their name, provided that a foreign language will be included in the school timetable of the given educational institution at least 40% of the time.

A team of teachers who will teach subjects in a foreign language must demonstrate knowledge of the given language. To this end, they must submit the results of standard international tests which, according to the Common European Framework of Reference, have a minimum level of knowledge of the B2 language. The Central State School Authority (*El Nivel Central*) will publish a list of recognized examinations suitable for accreditation of the given level.

In order for educational institutions to be considered bilingual, they must include the basics of bilingualism and the corresponding number of teaching hours in their proposal for the innovation of the school plan, which is part of the Educational Institution Project. Only those

institutions that receive the approval of the proposal for the innovation of the school plan from the state zonal school authority (*El Nivel Zonal*) will be considered bilingual.

## 5. JUSTIFICATION

Ecuador and the rest of the world are experiencing an economic and social crisis due to a health emergency caused by Covid-19 virus. Unfortunately, in this critical situation the local government leaves aside the most vulnerable sectors to which education also belongs.

The government does not pay much attention to these sectors and draws millions of dollars originally intended for the development of these sectors to be used for different purposes.

The economic downturn in the families of developing countries force many students to leave school and educational facilities.

The economic and social costs in the Ecuadorian Amazon caused by the pandemic have caused mass departure of community children and youth from schools and vocational schools with the unfortunate result of them losing the right to quality education. It must be taken into account that these children do not have the internet or the modern technology which would enable them to use the Internet and thus be a part of on-line schooling.

This fact also affects teachers who have to face the given technological reality.

According to the data published by the Ministry of Education in 2020, more than 70% of children and young people do not have access to this basic equipment, which has a negative impact on education in this area of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

With a large number of children and young people from the communities leaving schools, this generation is currently facing a major problem, as these young people will not be able to enter the world of work and gain stability in the future. Their job prospects are quickly diminishing, as they do not even finish high school, let alone continue their higher education. For this reason, the Foundation 'Život postaru' will support 5 children every year employing the resources of the Alternative Education Center (CEA). These will be children with low economic resources, who are in a difficult situation, are disabled, living on the street or are orphans. These children, local or foreign, will be supported by the foundation regardless of their religion, creed, race or gender.

It is therefore desirable to find educational alternatives for children and young people in the Amazon, to teach them to derive benefit from the natural wealth of the Amazon rainforest and to motivate them to engage in sustainable community activities, which is a very important step to the improvement of the quality of life in communities in the short, medium and long term.

We intend to use the knowledge of our ancestors, flora and fauna. Students could implement their own ideas, for example for foundation of an organic product shop, use resources in a sustainable and consistently sustainable way, and be free and independent at the same time.

The plan and main purpose of the project is to acquire ancestral land and build an alternative sustainable school in the rainforest, which will focus on learning about the sacred flora, wildlife and harmony with the rainforest that has surrounded our communities for centuries. This new education teaches how to protect, heal, dream, and nurture new protectors of the earth.

Grandparents have always taught the younger generation in this profound way, taught them to be able to listen to the rainforest and worship the ancient voices of the earth. Thanks to oral tradition, this knowledge, from which communities throughout the Amazon have drawn, has survived for generations.

Ecuador is a multi-cultural and multiethnic country and its constitution supports an educational intercultural bilingual system. Communities have gained sovereignty in providing education to their children. Grandparents would therefore help to acquaint children with the abilities of their ancestors, with traditional history and spiritual learning, together with the state curriculum professed by the teacher at school.

An alternative school would educate indigenous community leaders from children and young people, but it would also rely on science and rationality to build effective education that is strengthened by international relations and international indigenous networks. A more spiritual, holistic educational center would be built, which would include teachings about Mother Earth, the ancient knowledge inherited from fathers and grandfathers known as the Yachaks, or shamans.

The project also requires the acquisition of a sacred space for children and youth from communities. Pupils could have their own school, thanks to which they would protect the land and restore the traditions and knowledge of our ancestors.

The project also includes art and handicrafts, storytelling, music, ancient games, indigenous language, cognition and use of medicinal plants, hunting and fishing, crafts, ethics, food growing, recycling, ancestral gastronomy, obstetrics, sexuality, rituals and sacred ceremonies linked to the knowledge of basic sciences such as mathematics, literature or natural and social sciences, ie the general basis of current knowledge.

It is necessary to establish a school and obtain approximately 18 hectares of land, which would include sacred places, waterfalls, several rivers and a primary forest near the community of Rio Blanco in the district of the city of Tena in the province of Napo. More than 100 indigenous families with children and young people live in this community, which would also be involved in the project.

## **6. GENERAL OBJECTIVE / TARGET**

- To build an ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL CENTRE (*CENTRO EDUCATIVO ALTERNATIVO (CEA)*) which would support the education and ancient cosmic vision of “sumak
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- kawsay” as an alternative to protecting the knowledge of the ancestors of local communities and preserving the forests of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- To obtain funds for the purchase of land for the construction of the school and the adjacent natural space serving for games, labs, the faculty and assemblies.
- To legalize the school (International Treaty) and the property used for the development, care and protection of knowledge, with sustainable and realistic study plans and qualified teachers for our students.
- With the support of the Ruku Samay Ecolodge homestead, to build the first alternative Amazon school in the province of Napo as a benefit for indigenous communities, with all the basic services necessary for introduction of primary and secondary education.

## **7. DURATION OF THE PROJECT**

This is the time needed to legalize the project, to build the school and the various infrastructure needed to operate. It is essential for the school to become operational and to involve the people of the indigenous communities of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

In the first phase it is necessary to obtain legalization of the project. This process will take two months since the acquisition of the land.

The second phase of the project is the construction which will take ten months. Once the construction phase is concluded the attention will be focused on the opening of the school and its organizational structure. In the final phase of the project teachers and students will be provided.

## **8. METHODOLOGY**

The development of this educational and unifying project of Amazonian communities lies in creation of an ecological village and in the involvement of nearby communities, especially children and youth.

The project intends to be independent and operate for the benefit of sustainable development through its educational activities.

It's about community development and its preservation through the Alternative Education Center (CEA), with the support of Association for Tourist Services *Ruku Samay Vida Ancestral* (ASOSERSAMAY), which would partly support the project through its infrastructure and quality of service.

Especially in the field of communal ecological tourism, where it will provide accommodation for research teachers, but also accommodation for students enlisted in an exchange programme or their boarding accommodation, if the situation so requires, it will also provide accommodation for the volunteers helping to construct the first ecovillage in the Amazon rainforest.

Ecological alternative urbanism:

The construction will take place within the framework of Bio-architecture. Ecological and sustainable buildings will therefore be built, including elements of modern technology, employing knowledge of ancestors and using natural material from the forest without damaging the character of Amazon landscape and causing visual damage.

Clean energy and recycling system will be used to prevent pollution in the short and long term.

The buildings and their surroundings will create beautiful and harmonious space preserving the Amazon forest.

In the first phase, the entire infrastructure of the Alternative Education Center (CEA) will start functioning as a training center.

Accordingly, different educational activities will be gradually introduced and pupils will be enrolled and different levels of education will be formed. The required qualifications are:

- Knowledge of Bioarchitecture (sustainable carpentry)
- Preservation of ancient knowledge of our ancestors - YACHAKs, ie. their habits, diet, natural healing with forest plants.
- Organic trade - strengthening the production of natural medicine used for trade in the area and also for export.
- Use of equipment and machinery for the production and distribution of medicine.
- Marketing for the production of the product and its initial market.

The intention is to prepare the children and youth of nearby communities to become protectors of the forest and to pass on the knowledge of local shamans, or Yachaks, so that they will be able to provide their knowledge in an adequate manner and also in a written form.

## PROJECT LOCATION

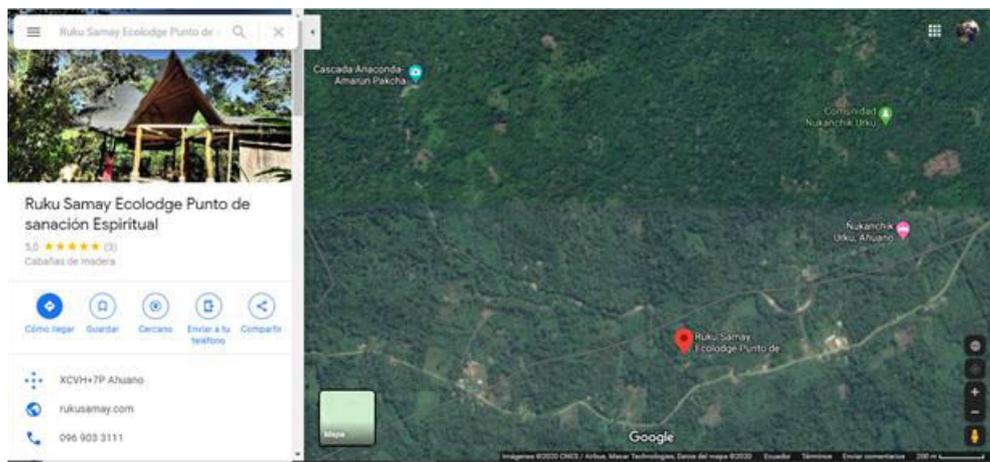
Community: Ruku Samay Lodge near the community Rio Blanco  
District: Tena

Province: Napo

Area: Amazon rainforest

Country: Ecuador

Coordinates: 1 ° 00'23.9 "S / 77 ° 34'14.5" W



## INFRASTRUCTURE

### a) EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVE CENTER (*Centro Educativo Alternativo CEA*)

One of the basic objectives is the acquisition of ancestral land amounting to an area of 18 ha, which will be used for the development and construction of the infrastructure and spreading awareness of the international educational bilingual system of our EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVE CENTER, with high quality requirements placed on certified education provided by qualified education and science experts, aiming at early education, basic education and the highest possible level, always taking into account the diversity of students who will be part of the ecovillage.

The construction will proceed as follows:

- The dimensions of the construction area will be 11 x 15 m, the building will accommodate 50 pupils. The building will be single-storied.
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- The base of the building will be built with the use of sacred geometry and will have the shape of an octagon. Mixed material will be used for its construction (concrete and stone for the foundations, wood and bamboo for the ceiling).
- The interior will be build for its future purpose as a classroom used for teaching different subjects such as carpentry, medicine, etc. The equipment will be fit for the purpose of the classes.

## **b) Laboratories**

Experimental research will be carried out and cooperation will be established with the “WAYUSA SHAYARY” site in Tena, where the organic business of the Amazon communities with cocoa and Wayusa is being developed.

This business is functional and will be further supported. Laboratory equipment and machines are already in operation and students could learn and practice here.

At the same time, students of the ASOSERSAMAY alternative education center would, on an area of 18 hectares, engage in experimental and field research to create new natural products such as shampoo, soap or natural detergents, with biodegradable extracts and packaging.

All products will originate in the forest, so they will be purely natural and would be of benefit to the ecological village and nearby communities.

It is also important to recycle and to reduce or eliminate plastics thanks to bio-packaging that does not harm the environment in order to develop a sustainable business for the maintenance and investigative development of the school in the field of environment and preservation of the natural wealth of the Amazon rainforest.

The laboratories will be designed to develop, direct and improve new sustainable products in accordance with the environment and the conservation of natural resources. To this end, a Sustainable Production System (*Sistema de Produccion Sustentable SPS*) will be created, which could eliminate the use of plastic in communities in the Amazon region.

- The area of the building will have the dimensions 9 x 9 m
- It should be equipped with air conditioning, microscope, telescope, crusher, oil distillation machine, sieves, test tubes, etc.

In order for natural forest medicine to be realized, it is necessary for the ecovillage to provide several machines for the production and possible - if required - distribution of the organic products.

## **c) Required additional infrastructure (Ruku Samay Lodge)**

Huts that have been in the area for more than 20 years need to be replaced and the following structures need to be built:

- 2 two-storey huts for 25 people, each measuring 50 x 50 m

- 4 huts for 4 people each measuring 5 x 10 m in length - these will be used for volunteers.
  - 4 family two-storey huts measuring 5 x 7 m - for scientific experts and technicians who come to assess and study the preserved reservations.
  - 6 one-storey huts for student accommodation (boarding school), for local people from the area, who will take care of providing accommodation in the community.
  - All huts will be properly equipped and will use clean energy.
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- Wastewater treatment, biogas, lighting that does not deplete or pollute the environment and is easily accessible will be provided.

#### **d) Meditation and Recreation Center (RUKUSAMAY)**

One hectare of land will be set aside for the development of this center. The intention is to share comprehensive teaching with all who will want to visit this Alternative Education Center (CEA) in the rainforest.

Among the activities that will take place here are alternative healing techniques such as Reiki, yoga, holistic massages, tarot reading, Akashic records and more.

The center will focus on promoting alternative medicine to improve the health of both local people and people from anywhere who want to visit the place.

The meditation and recreation center will be built on the site of the botanical garden and will have the following dimensions:

- The area of the building will be 22 x 22 m
- The building will be built according to sacred geometry and will have the shape of an octagon. Different materials will be used for the construction (concrete and stone foundations, wood and bamboo ceiling)

## **FINANCING**

In order to acquire the land, to preserve it and incorporate a new alternative school, 18 hectares will be purchased.

These 18 hectares will serve to enlarge the forest that surrounds and protects the community. The price of the land matches the value \$ 8,000 / ha, for a total of \$ 144,000



## INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure	Capacity	Building plot	Individual price	FOUNDATION Associates Contribution	ASOSERSAMAY	Total
Educational alternative center (CEA)	50 students	10 x 15 m + bathrooms		60.000		60.000.00
Laboratoř	10 products	9 x 9 m		32.400		32.400.00
Laboratorní zařizení	10 bioproducts	Machinery distillation device, sieves, crushers, shredders, forms, laboratory material, microscopes computers, etc.		40.000		40.000.00
2 huts (2 floors)	25 people	5 x 10 m	20.000		40.000	40.000.00
4 huts (Boarding school)	4 people	5 x 10 m	20.000	80.000		80.000.00
4 family huts	5 people	5 x 7 m 2 patra	14.000	56.000		56.000.00



Meditation and recreation center	50 people	22 x 22 m 3 floors			40.000	40.000.00
Wastewater and drinking water treatment	For ecovillage	Water tanks and biogas storage tanks		27.000		27.000.00
<b>TOTAL USD</b>				295.400	80.000	<b>375.400,00</b>

It should be noted that the estimated figure is \$ 400 per square meter of construction in the Amazon rainforest plus installation.

## SECOND PHASE

The second phase concerns the functioning of the educational unit in the rainforest as soon as the construction of the ecovillage is completed. It will be necessary to ensure the permanent contracting of teachers, ie the elders of the community themselves and qualified university staff (a volunteer, a local or a foreigner).

Some students will continue to do quality research and create new and innovative community projects, thus supporting sustainable development and local government. This would provide funds with automatic planning for the third year of operation of the center. There will also be more international volunteers who will also contribute economically, and in addition we can count on the potential of community tourism ASOSERSAMAY, which will provide the means for the standard running of the school.

However, in the first year, we expect the start of legalization and operation of the school with contributions from partners in the basic value of 50,000 USD

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Human resources	Number	Prize per unit	Time/duration	Total
Bio Architect	1	2000.00	3 months	6.000.00
Construction foremen	8	660.00	10 months	6.600.00
Accountant	1	500.00	10 months	5.000.00
Administrator	1	900.00	10 months	9.000.00
Transportation+ driver	4 times per month	50 USD	10 months	1200.00
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>27.800.00</b>

## TOTAL PRIZE OF THE PROJECT

18 ha of primary forest	144.000.00
Means for material School infrastructure	<b>375.400,00</b>
Human resources	27.800.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>547.200.00 USD</b>

## EXPECTED RESULTS

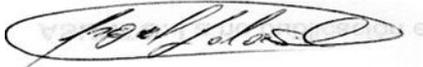
- To create a school and ecovillage, which will help more than 100 families, children and young people with primary and secondary education, with an emphasis on environmental education and responsibility for nature or Pachamama.
- To develop job opportunities, either directly in the field of education or, on a larger scale, indirectly in a related field, i.e. tourism, sustainable entrepreneurship or research and innovation in the ecovillage.



- To reinforce ASOSERSAMAY on the way to accommodate thousands of tourists visiting the Lodge, as well as volunteers, professors and research scientists, exchange students who will form part of the education process and alternative learning process of many institutions, governmental and international NGOs.
- To preserve ancient knowledge of the ancestors of Amazonian villages.
- To educate indigenous leaders who will teach in various cultural and research areas.
- To have a real opportunity to create dozens of jobs in our Amazon community in the medium and long term through productive, environmentally sustainable projects based on this proposal, through education and the construction of the first ecovillage in the Amazon.
- To treat the protected area properly. We have the opportunity to acquire 18 hectares for forest protection and for the development of a unifying project with the intention of expanding the area of preserved Amazon forests that surround the currently residing community of Rio Blanco. This intention will also support ecotourism, thanks to the help of partners and volunteers.
- To develop a program of visits to areas with petroglyphs, natural waterfalls, primary forests and learn about the different types of plants, trees, shrubs, roots, insects, etc. that are used as natural medicine for the treatment of various diseases. In addition, in collaboration with other communities, mutual cultural and social exchange with the intention of protecting the remaining nature reserves in the Amazon forest will take place, which is also meant to improve the quality of life of its inhabitants.
- To guarantee through this project the protection of the water that springs in the Ecuadorian Andes and flows through the community where it creates the Sacred Place of Wildlife (*Santuario de Vida Silvestre*) "ASOSERSAMAY".
- To ensure reforestation of areas affected by cattle breeding, areas which were degraded and converted to pastures.



**ŽIVOT  
POSTARU**

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