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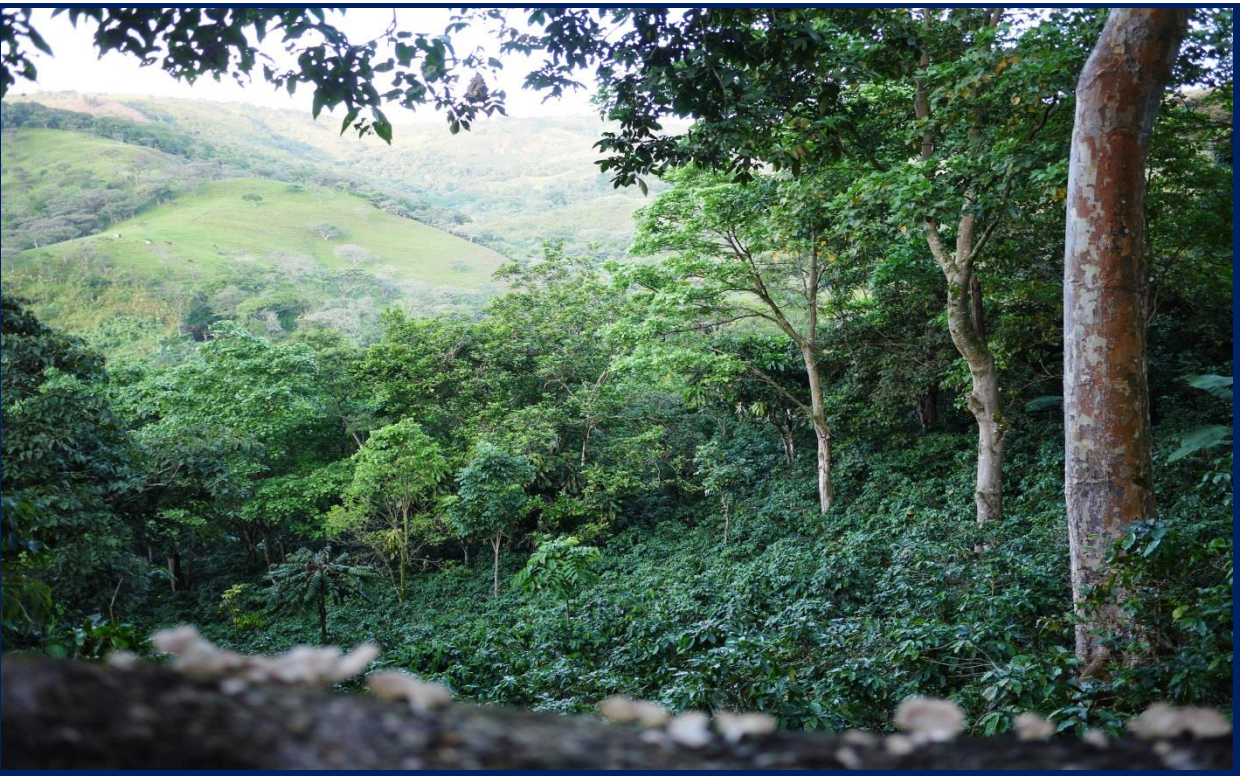

M.Sc. Alberto Pascual

Panama

Fundacion CoMunidad

Director

The landscape on one of the farms of small coffee producers shaded located in the buffer zone of the protected area (Photo: Fundacion CoMunidad)

Family coffee farmers improve mountain soils

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Panama City

Santa Maria River Watershed

(Map: Fundacion CoMunidad)

Family coffee farmers are located in the upper part of the Santa Maria River Watershed is a priority for Panama because it provides water to more than 200,000 people in three provinces: Veraguas, Coclé, Herrera and one indigenous region Ngäbe-Buglé, include a total of twelve municipalities in the country.

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Ruben Urriola, one of the thirty members of the association of coffee producers, working in his farm.
(Photo :Fundacion CoMunidad)

The production of shade-grown coffee is key to the conservation of mountain ecosystems. In Panama's Santa Fe National Park, coffee is a traditional crop and one of the main income sources for many family farmers who live in the protected park area and its surroundings. The cultivation of shade-grown coffee ensures environmental, polyculture and agroforestry and biodiversity, contributes to soil conservation and plays a crucial role in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

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Landscape from the Upper Part of the Santa Maria River Watershed
(Photo :Fundacion CoMunidad)

These mountain soils are suitable for the production of coffee, and their humid tropical climate also allows for the production of complementary crops such as citrus, beans and vegetables. With constant rain throughout the year and favorable soil features, the area also has good agricultural potential for various forest and fruit plantations

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(Photo :Fundacion CoMunidad)

The work of family farmers engaged in shade-grown coffee generates multiple benefits due to the use of native species, soil conservation and improvement practices, reduced dependence on petrol and derivatives through agro-ecology, practice of polyculture, terraced coffee plantations and crop rotation. Diversified systems support several ecosystem services such as soil carbon sequestration, regulation of the hydrological cycle, provision of habitat for natural pollinators and control of pests and diseases through natural enemies.

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Soil of the settlement of Chitra, Veraguas.
(Photo :Fundacion CoMunidad)

The techniques the family farmers have implemented for shade-grown coffee have reduced soil erosion and nutrient loss, while also respecting the ground cover, the trees and their extensive root systems which are key elements for agriculture to conserve and improve soils in mountains.

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¡THANKS !

For more information:

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