Governing indigenous territories in the Peruvian Amazon: placing people or forest first?

Josefin Egerlid

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Abstract

The current competition for land in the Peruvian Amazon presents a challenge to many indigenous communities which do not have legal ownership over their customary lands. In response to this challenge, several actions have been taken by indigenous groups to gain possession over forest areas which they consider as part of their ancestral territories. This thesis analyses the strategies of Alto Huaja, a Kechwa-Lamista community in the region of San Martín, to get a collective title for their communal forest territory. More specifically, it explores how this struggle is being influenced by different external actors and their views and models for how indigenous territories should be governed. Through the lens of governmentality, the thesis explores the two main tenure arrangements under discussion in San Martín – conservation concession and title – the rationales that underpin them and their possible consequences for Alto Huaja. The data was collected through participatory observation and informal interviews in Alto Huaja and semi-structured interviews with nine organizations (governmental authorities, NGOs and indigenous organizations) that are connected to Alto Huaja. The results suggest that the Kechwa-Lamista's opportunities to control their ancestral lands are becoming more tied to their ability to do conservation and behave as 'ecological natives' rather than their rights as indigenous peoples, a development that could turn them from being farmers to becoming conservationists.

Keywords: communities, conservation, indigenous, Kechwa-Lamista, native, territory, title

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Glossary

Apu	The local title of the president or chairman of a native community
AIDESEP	Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (Inter-ethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest)
ARA	Autoridad Regional Ambiental (Regional Environmental Authority)
CAAAP	Centro Amazónico de Antropología y Aplicación Práctica (Amazonian Center of Anthropology and Practical Application)
CEPKA	Consejo Étnico de los Pueblos Kechwas de la Amazonía (Ethnic Council of Kechwa Peoples of the Amazon)
Chacra	The local term for farm or field
Choba choba	A form of collective reciprocal labour exchange practiced among Kechwa-Lamistas
CN Alto Huaja	Comunidad Nativa Alto Huaja (Native Community Alto Huaja)
CP Huaja	Centro Poblado Huaja (Populated Centre/Village Huaja)
FEKIHD	Federación Kichwa Huallaga Dorado
FEPIKRESAM	Federación de Pueblos Kechwa de la Región San Martín
ITPs	Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
Native community	A community which has been legally recognized by the state as native, a status which entitles the community to certain privileges according to Decree-Law 22175.
NFTP	Non-Timber Forest Product
ORDEPISAM	Oficina Regional de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de San Martín
PECA	Payment for Ecosystem Services: Consequences and Alternatives (research project)
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
ZEE	Zonificación Ecológica Económica (Ecological Economic Zoning)
ZoCRE	Zona de Conservación y Recuperación de Ecosistemas (Area of Ecosystem Conservation and Recovery)

1   Introduction

1.1   Background

The Peruvian Amazon is currently going through dramatic changes, especially in the so called Upper Amazon which is the fringe zone where the rainforest meets the Andean mountains. This area can be described as a 'frontier', meaning a place that is imagined as unplanned and rich in resources not yet exploited; a place that attracts migrant farmers and artisanal miners as well as big agribusiness, mining and logging companies hoping to transform the resources into wealth. Frontiers are characterized by agricultural expansion, immigration and economic development accompanied by deforestation, environmental degradation and struggles over resources (cf. Tsing 2008). San Martín is one of the regions where these features are clearly displayed.

Figure 1. Vegetation map of Peru. Author:CIA (public domain). Source: https://commons.wiki-media.org/wiki/File:Peru_veg_1970.jpg

Figure 2. Locator map of San Martín Department in Peru. Author: Huhsunqu (Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported) Source: https://commons.wiki-media.org/wiki/File:Peru_-_San_Mart%C3%ADn_Depart-ment_%28locator_map%29.svg

The region has experienced dramatic economic and environmental changes, largely as a result of a series of commodity booms, and statistics from the Peruvian Ministry of Agriculture show that it is one of the most deforested of Peru's 24 regions[1]. According to figures from the research institute IIAP (*Instituto de Investigación de la Amazonía Peruana*) and the regional government of San Martín (Gobierno Regional de San Martín, GRSM) it is the most deforested among the five Amazonian regions,

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[1] According to measurements from 1985, 1995 and 2000.

affecting around 26.47 % of the territory in 2005 (GRSM 2007:10). This development has caused severe environmental problems in San Martín as deforestation and conversion of forest land into crop land has led to degradation of ecosystems. But it is not only the environment that suffers the consequences of the advancing frontier; the indigenous small-scale farmers that live here are also affected by the transformations that are taking place.

The region of San Martín is home to three indigenous groups: Kechwa, Awajun and Shawi. Kechwas, or Kechwa-Lamistas as they are also called because of their connection to the town of Lamas, is the most numerous and the focus of this thesis. The mode of livelihood of the Kechwas has changed radically over the last few decades. Traditionally, the Kechwas have lived from hunting, in combination with a highly diverse swidden farming system. Swidden farming (or shifting cultivation) basically means opening up a field in the forest by cutting the trees and burning the remaining vegetation in order to release the nutrients and prepare the ground for sowing. The field is cultivated for a few years and when yields begin to decrease the forest is allowed to grow back and a new field is established elsewhere. By tradition, the forest has played a central role in the life of the Kechwas since they have made use of it not only for their farming system but also for hunting, collection of medicinal plants, and wood for fuel and construction. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain this mode of livelihood. During the last few decades the Kechwa-Lamistas have seen their traditional lands being invaded by migrants from the Andes, logging companies, and other actors seeking to profit from the rich natural resources in the area. As a result, the forest cover has decreased in the region and at present many Kechwa villages have none or limited access to forest in their proximity. There are only few villages that still have vast forest areas where they can rotate their fields. The general trend is that the size of land holdings are shrinking and crop fields are made permanent (instead of shifting). Another trend is that many Kechwa farmers are moving from mainly subsistence farming to a greater focus on cash crops like coffee, cocoa, maize, cotton and inka peanuts, as a result of an increased market integration (cf. Marquardt et al. 2013:419).

The territorial situation of the Kechwas, as described above, is further complicated by different forest conservation initiatives that are being implemented in the region. There are several ongoing projects and programs – patronized by a range of actors on the regional, national and international levels – aiming to prevent further deforestation in San Martín. The current regional government of San Martín[2] (Nueva Amazonía, in power since 2007) promotes itself with the slogan "Green Region" to signal its concern for the environment and has been committed to creating new protected areas.[3] On the national level, the Ministry of Environment has set the goal of protecting 54 million hectares[4] of forest - an area larger than the whole of Sweden – by 2021. This goal was presented by the Minister of Environment in December 2008 during the UN

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[2] Under the presidency of César Villanueva Arévalo (2007-2012) and Javier Ocampo Ruiz (2012-2014) from the political party Nueva Amazonia.

[3] Some people have however criticized the regional government, saying that in reality it is promoting economic growth at the cost of the environment, despite the green rhetoric.

[4] 54 million hectares corresponds to 42 % of Peru's total land area (128 521 560 ha), and around 80 % of their total forest area (67 992 000 ha) according to figures from 2010 (CEPAL, 2011). This can be compared to the total area of Sweden which is approximately 45 million hectares.

Climate Change Conference in Poznan, as a contribution to global climate change mitigation (Che Piu & García 2011:10). In order to achieve this ambition, the government launched the National Forest Conservation Program for Climate Change Mitigation (implemented in 2013) which is funded partly through international cooperation.

The problematic side of these and other initiatives is that they often restrict the Kechwa communities' freedom to use the forest and its resources. Furthermore, forest governance in San Martín and in Peru in general is increasingly becoming more nested due to the proliferation of new actors with interests in climate change mitigation, for example through the REDD+ mechanism (Che Piu & García 2011:51, 25f). REDD+ is a global program that aims to mitigate climate change by reducing carbon emissions resulting from deforestation and forest degradation.[5] This type of forest conservation initiatives presents challenges, but also opportunities, for the involvement of indigenous communities in forest management since many of them target their ancestral lands. An important factor that has contributed to the 'nestedness' of forest management in Peru is the process of regionalization that began in 2002 with the objective of forming autonomous regions. Many responsibilities have been decentralized from the national state to the regional governments which now have extensive authority to craft their own territorial policies and take decisions over the forest resources in the region. However, many regions lack the capacity and human resources to handle these responsibilities (Che Piu & García 2011:14, 34). By contrast, actors from the private sector and the civil society seem to be playing a dominant role in the forest governance relative to the regional government institutions.

Another great concern when it comes to indigenous peoples[6] and their territories, in San Martín and in the Peruvian Amazon in general, is the increase in concessions granted for mining and hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation. Finer and Orta-Martínez (2010) have examined hydrocarbon activities in the Peruvian Amazon from 1970 to 2009 and found that the area currently covered by oil and gas concessions is larger than at any other point during this period. Between 2002 and 2007 the "concessioned area" increased from 7 % to almost 49 % of the Amazonian territory, and more than half of all indigenous titled territories are affected (NB: indigenous communities awaiting titles were not taken into account), according to the authors Finer and Orta-Martínez note that this sharp increase in hydrocarbon concessions resembles the increase that preceded the exploration boom which took place in Peru in the 1970s. They therefore predict that there will be a new hydrocarbon boom in the Peruvian Amazon in the coming years and that the oil frontier will advance further into previously untouched areas (Finer and Orta-Martínez 2010).

There is thus competition over land in San Martín – especially forested land – and over how it should be managed and governed. Among indigenous advocates in San

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[5] The Forest Carbon Partnership states on their website: "**REDD**+ stands for countries' efforts to **r**educe **e**missions from **d**eforestation and forest **d**egradation, and foster conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks."
https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/what-redd

[6] Following the International Labour Organization, this thesis uses the term indigenous *peoples* (as opposed to *people*, which would be more grammatically appropriate), to signal that it is not a homogeneous category, but one which includes a diverse range of ethnic groups.

Martín there is a growing concern that indigenous peoples are being side-lined and that their land rights are not respected. As one indigenous leader said:

> The governments have never taken into account that the territory of the indigenous people is their world, their life, and the tradition, where they go and fish and hunt, collection of animals… we have everything there. We don't want the territories to be given out for concession or sold or that they should extract our resources in the ground, whether it is the petrol, the gold, the gas or what have you. No, we consider it sacred.

The words of this indigenous leader echo the demands of the larger indigenous movement, or movements, that have gained momentum in recent decades, not only in San Martín and Peru but also throughout Latin America and globally. One of the common characteristics of indigenous movements in Latin America since the 1970s has been the demand for autonomy of their territories and of resource management (Ulloa 2005:35). This is a response to pressure over indigenous territories as a result of "the opening of national borders to trade, economic growth and of the modernization processes of [Latin American] countries" (Ulloa 2005:32.)

The demands of the indigenous movements draw on two international documents: the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, also referred to as ILO Convention No. 169, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Peru has ratified both of these documents which have also been incorporated into the national law. These documents and laws give indigenous peoples a number of rights, including land rights, but also access to natural resources, right to participate in decision-making processes regarding issues that concern them, and right to self-determination among others. Regarding land rights, Article 26 in the UN Declaration states:

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.

2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.

3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

The competition for land in the region of San Martín presents a challenge to many Kechwa-Lamista villages which do not have legal ownership over their customary lands. In response to this challenge, several actions have been taken by Kechwa-Lamista groups to gain possession over forest areas which they consider as part of their ancestral territories. At the time of writing, 15 out of San Martín's 150 (approximately) Kechwa villages had been granted communal land titles for their territories by the state. All of these 15 communities received their land titles in 1997[7]. Since then, the Kechwa people's struggle for their land rights has continued with other communities applying for land titles, but no new titles have been granted since 1997.

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[7] The regional government indicated existence of 15 Kechwa communities. Another source, Sociedad Peruana de Ecodesarrollo, stated 14 on their website: http://www.spde.org/documentos/publicaciones/actualizacion-normatividad-forestal/cesion-en-uso/Reconocimiento-y-titulacion-de-comunidades-nativas-San-Martin.pdf

Against this background, this thesis seeks to explore the efforts that are presently being made to secure Kechwa communities' control over their ancestral lands in the region of San Martín. More specifically, it seeks to investigate how different entities outside the Kechwa communities are trying to influence the governance of their communal territories. The communities are connected to a web of actors, such as state institutions, indigenous federations and NGOs, all of which claim to work in the interest of the communities and in respect of their rights to autonomy. Nevertheless, these actors are also pursuing their own interests and their views on what is best for the communities do not always coincide.

In the region of San Martín there is currently a discussion about how indigenous land rights should be put into practice. A central question is what form of tenure arrangement corresponds best not only to indigenous peoples' rights but also to the perceived need to conserve the forest. There are two main alternatives on the table: title and concession. Title means that indigenous communities get collective ownership over their communal forest. Concession is an option where indigenous communities are granted limited user rights for a (forest) conservation area that is owned by the state. The concession is for a limited period of time but proponents assert that the concession can be turned into a title at a later stage. The findings and discussion section of the thesis will primarily focus on comparing and discussing these two alternatives.

1.2   Objective and research questions

Objective

The objective of this thesis is to analyze the strategies which an indigenous community employs in order to secure territory and how it interacts with external entities to achieve this goal.

In addition, the study aims to map out the political field that is being formed, 1) around a particular Kechwa community (Alto Huaja) in pursuit of tenure security, and 2) around the Kechwa people's ancestral territories (in San Martín) in general. Who are the actors and organizations involved? What kind of power relations exist between them? What are they trying to achieve? It is important to clarify that the indigenous community is not seen in this study as a passive or powerless entity that is merely subject to external influences. Rather, there is an ongoing mutual interaction between the community and external entities which can potentially bring benefits to both parties. However, the focus of this thesis is to make a critical analysis of the interventions deployed by external entities, since the same interventions that are designed to support indigenous communities can also be seen as tools to govern.

Research questions

The research questions that guide the study are the following:

1.   What opportunities and challenges does the native community Alto Huaja face when it comes to exercising control over its ancestral lands/territory?

2.   How do households in the native community Alto Huaja secure their livelihood and how do they relate to the forest?

3. How is the struggle of Alto Huaja to gain possession of its communal forest mediated by external entities such as government agencies/institutions, NGOs and indigenous organizations?

This thesis is a contribution to the international research project "Paying for Ecosystem Services: Consequences and Alternatives" (PECA), run by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. The research project explores small-scale land use and provision of ecosystem services in the light of REDD. The case study from Peru has been made in collaboration with Waman Wasi – Center for Biodiversity and Andean-Amazonian Spirituality (*Centro de la Biodiversidad y la Espiritualidad Andino-Amazónica*), a Peruvian NGO that is working locally with Kechwa-Lamista communities in the region of San Martín, but which is also connected to the national level[8]. PECA is focusing on three themes: governance, livelihoods and social and cultural impacts on people and this thesis primarily contributes to the themes of governance and livelihoods.

1.3   Thesis outline

The thesis is structured as follows. First, an introduction is given to the key theoretical perspectives and concepts (especially governmentality), followed by a methodological description of how the study was carried out practically. The next section, findings, presents examples of how indigenous territories are governed in the region of San Martín and specifically in the village of Alto Huaja. The findings are divided into six subsections. The first subsection serves as a background about indigenous peoples and the legal framework that regulates their access to land. The second subsection gives an overview of the situation regarding indigenous territories in San Martín and the challenges which the Kechwa-Lamistas are facing in terms of threats against their ancestral lands. After this, the study zooms into the case of Alto Huaja and their struggle for territorial control. The third subsection provides a historical background of how Alto Huaja was formed, followed by an overview of the institutional landscape in which the community is embedded. In the fourth subsection, an examination is made of how the community of Alto Huaja relates to the forest, and how this relationship is being transformed as a result of agricultural intensification and other factors. Subsection five is focused on the conflict that has emerged between Alto Huaja and the neighboring community Huaja over their common forest territory and options for tenure arrangement (conservation concession or title). In addition, a presentation is made of the views and positions of a number of external actors regarding the choice between concession and title. The sixth and last subsection of the findings section examines what the two tenure arrangements (concession and title respectively) could entail for Alto Huaja, in terms of programs and projects offered to the community by different external actors. The findings are followed by a discussion section, in which the findings will be discussed in light of the theoretical perspectives in order to sort out what this means for Alto Huaja's opportunities to exercise autonomy over their ancestral lands. Finally, the study is summed up with some concluding remarks.

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[8] Waman Wasi is affiliated to PRATEC, the Andean Project for Peasant Technologies (*Proyecto Andino de Tecnologías Campesinas*).

1.4 Theoretical perspectives and concepts

1.4.1 'Indigenous' as social construction

A basic point of departure for this thesis is the notion/perspective that the world to a large extent is socially constructed and that many things that we take to be natural are actually made up by humans. It is not the material world itself that is socially constructed, but rather the way we perceive and think about it. From this perspective, 'indigenous peoples' can be seen as a social construction (cf. Crovetto 2007). That is not to say that ethnic groups like Kechwa-Lamista, Awajun and Shawi are mere imaginations; the existence of people living in the Peruvian Amazon is an established fact, but the label ascribed to them – 'indigenous' – and all the meanings attached to it, has been created in a certain social context (cf. Hacking 2000:10).

Crovetto (2007) gives an historical background to how the idea of an Amazonian indigenous identity has been constructed in the Peruvian context. According to this account, a discussion started in Peru in the 1960s around what word to use to denote the original inhabitants of the Peruvian Amazon. 'Tribal societies', 'ethnolinguistic groups', 'ethnic minorities' and 'ethnic groups' were some of the suggestions. In the 1970s the state and the academia adopted the word 'native' (2007:2f), and it was also incorporated into the legal vocabulary with the arrival of new legislation on land use and land rights in the Amazon. During a meeting organized by the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples in Lima 1984, indigenous leaders agreed to adopt the term 'indigenous peoples'. The Peruvian national law did, however, not mention indigenous people; it only recognized 'native communities' (2007:11). Until recently, indigenous people therefore had to be registered as native communities in order to enjoy legal rights and protection. Crovetto's account illustrates how labels such as indigenous and native, aside being socially constructed as ideas, also have the ability to construct the reality, i.e. to create tangible social and material effects for the people they have been attached to. As Hacking points out, labels change the way people see themselves as they react to, and interact with, the label; ether to assimilate or reject it (Hacking 2000:31).

In this thesis, the lens of social construction thus helps us to think critically about how words like 'indigenous territories' and 'native communities' are used. Instead of taking them to be static study objects, we will see them as dynamic categorizations that are continuously renegotiated. Interview statements about 'indigenous identity', 'Kechwa culture' or 'ancestral customs', can therefore not be treated as objective facts; our interest is rather to analyze how these words, and the idea of indigenous, are used by different actors to achieve certain goals in relation to territorial control and land use governance. As we will see in this thesis, indigenous representations can work as a tool/an instrument to exercise power/govern indigenous people's behavior. This leads to another key concept/perspective in this thesis, governmentality.

1.4.2 Governmentality

Governmentality is relevant to this study because of its ability to deal with subtle forms of power. Indigenous peoples, both in Peru and in the world at large, are protected by laws and conventions that grant them the right to be different, to practice their own customs and to remain on their traditional lands. It is more or less considered

taboo to try to intervene in the affairs of indigenous peoples or make them change their way of life, because it is their differentness which defines them as indigenous. Nevertheless, indigenous peoples in general, and in our case the Kechwa-Lamistas in the region of San Martín, have been subject to several interventions, especially with regards to their relation to the land they live on. These interventions are not in the form of force or discipline, as was commonplace in the colonial era; they are rather subtle, or 'governmental', in nature.

The concept of governmentality was originally coined by the French social scientist Michel Foucault to describe the exercise of government as a specific form of power, distinct from discipline, which works from a distance by making individuals govern themselves and their own behavior (Li 2007:5). As explained by Häkli: "Instead of direct forms of repression and constraint, social control is achieved by means of subtler strategies of normalization, which produces self-regulating individuals." (Häkli 2009:628). Governmentality is thus useful in the analysis of the strategies deployed by different actors to gain influence over the Kechwa people's territories; both by the Kechwa communities themselves and by other external entities. Rather than authoritative orders or threats, power is more often exercised through indirect strategies such as community development projects, economic incentives and educational activities.

The use of governmentality in this thesis is mainly inspired by a scholar from the anthropological field, Tania Murray Li, who has studied development interventions and their effects in Indonesia. Drawing on Foucault and other authors, she explains government as "the attempt to shape human conduct by calculated means" (Li 2007:5). Consequently, governmentality is the rationality that 'government' is the best way of achieving certain goals for the good of the population that is being governed (Li 2007:276).

For Li, the exercise of government is not limited to the official state apparatus with its "diverse state agencies with competing visions, mandates and techniques"; it also includes other actors from different sectors of society involved in different programs and interventions, or 'improvement schemes' as Li calls them (2007:1). The driving force of these actors is not primarily self-interest, but rather a "will to improve" things regarding the target population. The perspective of governmentality points our attention to how actors are endowed with power and how certain aspects or areas of human life become subjects for government (cf. Li 2007:276). The subject for government, in the context of this study, is the relation between indigenous people and their customary land, and government is taken to include all the different parties that are trying to influence decision making around this subject, although special attention will be given to state agencies, NGOs, indigenous federations and Kechwa communities.

1.4.3 Rendering technical

Following the example of Li, the study of governmentality in the context of this thesis will consist of an examination of each of the different actors and the rationale behind their actions - whether it is plans, projects or practices – to explore what it is they seek to change, to what ends and through what means. In other words, the study is concerned with objectives and techniques or strategies used to achieve these (Li 2007:61). Focus will especially be placed on a strategy Li has termed 'rendering technical', i.e.

the practice of redressing a complex problem in technical terms, and excluding political-economic factors from the problem description, in order to justify a certain intervention or technical solution (Li 2007:123ff). An example that will be discussed is how forest conservation projects could serve to circumvent indigenous peoples' claims to ownership of their ancestral land.

1.4.4 Ecological natives

An important principle in governmentality is that power is never unilateral. A Kechwa community contending with the state over territorial control indeed seems to be at disadvantage, but this does not mean that the Kechwa community does not have agency. There are various strategies the community can use to influence decisions, especially with regards to environmental policies. In a case study from Colombia, Astrid Ulloa explores the relationship that has evolved between indigenous people's movements and environmentalism and the opportunities this affiliation has presented for indigenous people to gain political influence. According to Ulloa, indigenous peoples have come to be seen by many as 'ecological natives' (Ulloa 2005:1), an identity which they have used to position themselves as key actors in environmental governance, both on the national and international level. In this thesis, Ulloa's concept of 'ecological natives' will be used to discuss how the Kechwas in San Martín have used their reputation as good stewards of the environment as a strategic tool in the struggle to gain possession of their ancestral lands.

1.4.5 Brokerage and social field

Another power strategy that will be discussed in this study is the use of brokers. Because of their rural characteristics, most Kechwa communities do not have direct access to the corridors of power, in this case the regional authorities in charge of land tenure issues. There is a gap between the communities and the regional offices, not only in terms of geographical distance, but also in terms of bureaucratic procedures which are difficult to maneuver through without a certain level of expertise. There is therefore need for a broker, or intermediary, that can bridge the gaps. Brokerage can be defined as "one of a small number of mechanisms by which disconnected or isolated individuals (or groups) can interact economically, politically and socially" with other social entities to which access would otherwise be restricted (Stovel & Shaw 2012:140). In the case study, this function of brokerage is mostly carried out by NGOs and indigenous organizations.

   Lastly, as we map out the actors involved in and around issues regarding indigenous territories in San Martín, their interactions and their different strategies, the picture that emerges can be described as a 'social field'. Following Bourdieu, a social field is understood as a network of actors struggling for power and influence in a socially confined area characterized by a certain internal logic (cf. Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992:96). In this thesis, we are studying a struggle over forest territories and what model of conservation is to be given preference which is being played out in what we can call the environmental field. In line with Ulloa's observation that indigenous movements and environmentalism are interlinked, indigenous movements can be seen as a subfield within, or a separate field that largely overlaps with, the environmental field.

1.5   Methodology

The thesis is based on a qualitative field study conducted in Peru between 14 February and 14 April 2014. The Waman Wasi center in Lamas served as my base during the field study and the staff supported me throughout the research process, in practical matters as well as analytical discussions and understanding of the cultural context. The organization is accompanying around twenty native communities with projects for agro-biodiversity and community education and training of teachers and leaders. During the first two weeks I visited five of the communities together with Waman Wasi's staff and two researchers from SLU to get more familiar with the work the organization is doing. Thanks to Waman Wasi's good contacts I had the opportunity to make a case study in one of these communities, namely the native community of Alto Huaja.

Alto Huaja was selected for the case study because of the conflicts it has been involved in as a result of becoming a native community and attempting to secure a communal land title. The struggle for territory and the tension between the interests of forest conservation and indigenous peoples' rights that can be witnessed here are symptomatic of the situation in San Martín at large. That being said, Alto Huaja may not be seen as representative for all Kechwa-Lamista communities. Alto Huaja is located in one of the provinces of San Martín called El Dorado, more precisely in the district of San José de Sisa (or Sisa, for short). Indigenous communities in the area of San José de Sisa, relate more to Sisa than to Lamas, which is the cultural center of the Kechwa-Lamistas, they generally do not participate in the culturally important annual feasts in Lamas (e.g. Santa Rosa) and their agriculture tend to be more market-oriented than in the communities closer to Lamas.

In order to get a deeper understanding of how the community was organized and the role played by external actors in relation to the community, the study was made up of two parts with different methodologies. The first part was the ethnographic study of Alto Huaja and its communal activities, and the second part consisted of interviews with some selected organizations that are influencing the community in one way or another.

1.5.1   Case study of Alto Huaja

The methodology for the case study of Alto Huaja was based on participant observation and informal interviews. My goal was to participate in as many different types of communal activities as possible and talk to people to hear their views on the native community as organization as well as the issue of territory. I spent a total of fifteen days in the community, spread out on five separate visits. Each time, I stayed in the house of the *Apu, i.e. the* president of Alto Huaja, who consequently became the main informant in this study. The *Apu* also introduced me to people in the community to interview and invited me to join community meetings. I participated in four community meetings, three of which were open for all community members (*asamblea general* or *reunión de la comuna*) and one was exclusively for the governing board (*junta directiva*). Issues regarding the communal territory was frequently discussed in these meetings. In addition, I attended a so-called *choba choba* (a form of collective reciprocal labor exchange practiced among Kechwa-Lamistas) where a group of people was helping one family to sow maize.

Most of the informal interviews were carried out in connection with these events, but I also visited some families in their homes. These conversations revolved around questions like what they think about the fact that Alto Huaja has been recognized as a native community, whether it has led to any changes in the life of the community (e.g. in terms of access to state services and cohesion among the villagers), how community meetings are conducted, and what kind of issues are discussed in those meetings etc.

A possible methodological implication of being hosted by the community leader was that some villagers might have been reluctant to express any critical comments about the native community organization or about the *Apu* as a leader. The advantage was that it gave me extraordinary insight into the governance processes of the community and the work that goes into leveraging assistance from external actors, particularly regarding the issue of territory. The time I spent around the house with the *Apu*, his wife and the extended family – eating meals, following them to their crop fields (*chacras)*, conversing about diverse topics and simply sharing life – likewise helped to deepen my understanding of the culture and everyday life of the community.

1.5.2   Interviews with organizations

The other part of my study consisted of interviews with some of the external actors that have been dealing with native communities, and with Alto Huaja in particular. There were many possible organizations to choose from but the ones that were finally included in the study are such that have been in contact with Alto Huaja and/or are dealing specifically with issues of territory, agriculture and conservation in the region of San Martín.

INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS		
CEPKA[9]	*Consejo Étnico de los Pueblos Kechwas de la Amazonía*	Ethnic Council of Kechwa Peoples of the Amazon
FEKIHD	*Federación Kichwa Huallaga Dorado*	Kichwa Federation Huallaga Dorado
NGOs		
CAAAP	*Centro Amazónico de Antropología y Aplicación Práctica*	Amazonian Center of Anthropology and Practical Application
Urku	*Urku Estudios Amazónicos*	Urku Amazonian Studies
Waman Wasi	*Waman Wasi - Centro de la Biodiversidad y la Espiritualidad Andino-Amazónica*	Center for Biodiversity and Andean-Amazonian Spirituality
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES/INSTITUTIONS		
ARA	*Autoridad Regional Ambiental*	Regional Environmental Authority
OR-DEPISAM	*Oficina Regional de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de San Martín*	Regional Office for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of San Martín
Programa de bosques	*Programa Nacional de Conservación de Bosques para la Mitigación del Cambio Climático*	Forest Program/National Forest Conservation Program for Climate Change Mitigation
Proyecto Huallaga	*Proyecto Especial Huallaga Central y Bajo Mayo*	*Huallaga Project/the Central Huallaga* and Lower Mayo *Special Project*

Figure 3. List of organizations interviewed. (For more information, see Appendix 1.)

The organizations were selected to represent three categories of organizations; government agencies/institutions/authorities, indigenous organizations and NGOs (see

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[9] The interview with the president of CEPKA had to be interrupted due to rain, and the perspective of CEPKA on the situation in CN Alto Huaja is therefore incomplete.

figure 3). The interviews were semi-structured and explorative and focused on the following issues:

1. General information about the organization in question
2. The organization's work with native communities
3. If, and how, native communities shall obtain legal recognition
4. The role of native communities in nature conservation
5. How best to accommodate the territorial rights of native communities in the region of San Martín

1.5.3 Data analysis

The gathered data consists mainly of recorded interviews, both from Alto Huaja and from the organizations and, but also of field notes and a research diary. The recorded material from Alto Huaja is extensive and has been partly transcribed. These recordings, together with the field notes, have mainly been used to make ethnographic descriptions of the community, particularly with regards to its organizational structure and mode of livelihood. The semi-structured interviews with the representatives of the organizations were transcribed word for word to facilitate analysis. The transcripts were analyzed by categorizing the interview statements into themes. This was done by tagging each statement with one or several keywords some of which were taken directly from the informants themselves (emic terms), while others reflected my scholarly interpretation of the statement (etic terms). For instance, where the informants were mentioning Andean migrants the keyword 'migrants' was used. For more complex statements, for example about the opportunities for the Kechwa-Lamistas to influence political decisions, I often found it more convenient to use keywords which were not mentioned by the informants themselves but which helped describe the content, like 'political representation' or 'indigenous empowerment'. The next step was to check which keywords were more frequently recurring. This served as a basis to identify themes of central importance in relation to native communities and their territorial situation. A summary was made of each interview to distil the key concerns of each of the informants, and a comparative analysis was made of all the interviews to see commonalities and divergences between the informants' views in certain matters, for example the legal recognition of native communities.

2 Findings

2.1 Legal framework for indigenous peoples in the Peruvian Amazon

As explained in the theory section, the Peruvian law refers to the Kechwa-Lamistas and other ethnic groups in the Peruvian Amazon mainly as 'natives'. In 2011, the Peruvian government under President Ollanta Humala passed a new law, acknowledging the right of 'indigenous peoples' to prior consultation regarding legislative or administrative measures that will affect them (for example a mining project or a new road)[10] as stipulated in the ILO Convention No. 169. For indigenous movements this new law is an important advancement, although it leaves much to be desired. The native community recognition is still an important legal tool for indigenous peoples to claim their rights. The legal recognition is, as the San Martín-based NGO Waman Wasi has pointed out, not about *becoming* a native community; it is rather about being recognized/acknowledged as an *existing* native community, as a way of being made visible to the state in order to claim rights and get access to state services. The state is obliged, according to the ILO Convention No. 169, to cater to all indigenous peoples in the Amazon, but will only do so if they are first recognized as native communities.

2.1.1 The law of native communities

Decree-Law 22175 "Law of Native Communities and Agrarian Development in the Lower and Upper Rainforest" defines 'native community' like this (Note: author's translation):

> Article 8: The Native Communities have their origin in tribal groups in the Rainforest and Edge of Rainforest [Lower and Upper Rainforest] and are constituted by sets of families linked by the following main elements: language or dialect, cultural and social characteristics, ownership and common and permanent use of the same territory, with nucleated or dispersed settlement.

> Article 9: They are members of the Native Communities who are born within them and those whom they incorporate provided that they meet the requirements specified by the Statute of Native Communities. The status of community member will be lost in case of residence outside the communal territory for more than 12 consecutive months, unless the absence is motivated by reasons of state or health duly accredited, by transfer to the territory of another native community according to the customs and by the performance of military service.

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[10] Law 29785 (author's translation):
Article 2: It is the right of indigenous or original peoples to be consulted prior on legislative or administrative measures that may directly affect their collective rights, their physical existence, cultural identity, quality of life and development. Consultation should also be effectuated consultation regarding plans, programs and projects of national and regional development directly affecting these rights.
Article 3: The purpose of the consultation is to reach agreement or consent between the state and indigenous or native peoples regarding the legislative or administrative measure directly affecting them, through intercultural dialogue ensuring their inclusion in decision-making processes of the state and the adoption of measures respectful of their collective rights.

According to the law, a community that meets these criteria and has been registered as a native community is entitled to a number of rights and privileges. More importantly, the state shall give the community a land title for its communal territory, i.e. the territory occupied by the community (Article 10-14)[11] and comprehensive education (*educación integral*) and training when it comes to community organization and administration and technical aspects of agriculture and forestry. Furthermore, the community's own governing bodies are given the authority to resolve and penalize minor conflicts and controversies between the community members, and in case of a legal process, the court must take into account the customs, traditions, beliefs and socio-cultural values of the community (Article 19).

DOCUMENT	IN FORCE IN PERU SINCE
Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957 (ILO Convention No. 107)	1960
Law of Native Communities and Promotion of Agriculture and Livestock Breeding in the Lower and Upper Rainforest Regions (Decree-Law 20653)	*1974*
Law of Native Communities and Agrarian Development in the Lower and Upper Rainforest, (Decree-Law 22175)	*1978*
Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (ILO Convention No. 169)	1994[12]
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007	2007
Law of the Right to Prior Consultation with Indigenous or Native Peoples, recognized in the Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO). (Law 29785)	*2011*

Figure 4. National laws and international documents concerning indigenous people's rights. Peruvian laws are in italics.

Advocates of indigenous people in the Peruvian Amazon often make reference to the legal framework – especially to the Decree-Law 22175 – to add weight to their demands for land. However, it is interesting to note the second component of the Decree-Law 22175, about agrarian development. The introductory articles (1-6) state that the objective of the law is to develop the rainforest and edge of rainforest region through agriculture by promoting settlement, stimulating investments and declaring the natural resources in this region a public interest. The rights of native communities were in other words not the primary interest, but they needed to be included in the law to pave way for the development of the Amazon region.

This section has partly addressed the first research question, in showing that the legal framework presents both challenges and opportunities for the territorial control of native communities. The same law that provides for indigenous peoples' rights in the rainforest also serves to reinforce the ongoing expansion of the frontier. From the perspective of governmentality, we can also see the law as a tool to govern the Kechwa-Lamistas since they have to align themselves to the legal definition of native community in order to enjoy territorial rights.

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[11] Article 13: The territorial property of Native Communities is inalienable, imprescriptible and indefeasible (authors's translation).
[12] Convention No. 169 has been ratified by 22 countries of which 14 are in Latin America.

2.2   Native communities and ancestral lands in San Martín

Although the Decree-Law 22175 was implemented in the 1970s, it took almost 20 years before San Martín's Kechwa communities began to actually make use of their legal right to be acknowledged as native communities. The number increased in the 1990s when the former President Alberto Fujimori launched a national project for titling of native communities. In 1997, 14 Kechwa communities obtained legal recognition as well as territorial titles, but after that the number stood still for almost a decade, until 2006. Since then, the recognitions have been increasing steadily, and several newly recognized communities have also proceeded to apply for territorial titles. The president of CEPKA, one of the organizations representing Kechwa native communities in San Martín, states that there are approximately 150 Kechwa communities in the region. 72 of those have hitherto been legally recognized as native communities, but as noted in the introduction only 15 have titled territories.

The informants mention several reasons as to why it has taken so long for the communities to get legal recognition. Firstly, indigenous leaders have been ignorant of their rights to recognition, title and self-determination.[13] Secondly, the responsible authority has been reluctant to grant recognition. Several informants testify that things have improved since a Kechwa staff has been employed in the division that handles recognitions. Previously applications for native community recognition would be rejected as soon as there were individuals in the village that did not support it, even if these were in minority. Thirdly, the notion of 'native' as a derogatory label and the fear in some communities that identifying as natives could lead to discrimination and reduced access to services. Fourthly, in some communities a small but influential immigrant minority has managed to discourage the indigenous majority from pursuing recognition. Lastly, the native community status requires that the village adopts a new organizational structure (president, secretary etc., see figure 5), and some communities have not been willing or able to go through such a process.

The recent upsurge in native community recognitions has a lot to do with pressure for land in the region. Many communities want to protect their ancestral territories by getting a communal land title, and they can only obtain it once they have native community status. The territory consists of individual properties for which they normally have individual titles already, and a communal forest which the villagers use collectively but without a title. It is the communal forest which they need the title for.

Interestingly, the concept of territory is relatively new among indigenous people in the region. Historically the Kechwa-Lamistas have practiced shifting cultivation in

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[13] The former president of CEPKA indicated (in an interview, April 2014) that FEPIKRESAM, the first Kechwa indigenous federation in San Martín was founded in the early 1990s with 14 legally recognized Kechwa native communities. According to FEPIKRESAM these 14 communities constituted the Kechwa population, but in reality they were many more and FEPIKRESAM was in effect contributing to "invisibilizing" the majority of the Kechwa people. FEPIKRESAM lost its credibility when the leader signed a contract with a petrol company, Occidental Petrol. Because of the discontent with FEPIKRESAM, a new federation, CEPKA, was formed in 2000 to work with the communities that were not legally recognized as native communities. It was not until years later, in 2004, that the leadership of CEPKA realized that legal recognition was not only for the existing 14 that were affiliated to FEPIKRESAM. The leadership then took immediate action to ensure that the unrecognized communities in CEPKA's care also received native community status.

combination with hunting and fishing during relatively long periods of time in a certain area, and with time as the settlement has grown, members of the old settlement have moved to establish a new one in a suitable area. Different clans had their own specific hunting grounds within the forest and they would move over large areas for days and weeks during their hunts. In this context there was no need to define the territory by fixing boundaries. Land was still abundant so that if one place became too crowded it was relatively easy to find free space somewhere else. But the expansion of the agricultural frontier, driven by economic booms (maize, rice, coca, coffee, cocoa) and incentives for agricultural development in the Amazon, has transformed the landscape of San Martin.

2.2.1 Threats to indigenous territories in San Martín

The picture of the territorial situation that emerges from the interviews with organizations working with the Kechwa-Lamistas is that their traditional territories are being threatened. This section is an overview of some of the major "threats" that emerged from the analysis of interviews and literature.

Andean settlers and agribusiness
The threat which is most frequently mentioned by the informants is that of the migrant settlers from the Andes who come and establish their coffee plantations in the middle of the forest. The problem is not only the encroachment on indigenous peoples' traditional territories; the agricultural practices of the migrants are also described as detrimental to the Amazonian ecosystem since they often deforest large areas for commercial production of cocoa or coffee (cf. Arévalo 2008:23).

Waman Wasi and FEKIHD also indicated that agribusiness companies are posing a threat to some communities. One of the Kechwa villages included in the PECA study has for instance applied for native community recognition in order to protect their land against Grupo Romero, a Peruvian company looking to expand its oil palm plantations on land bordering the village. One Kechwa community and two Shawi communities have likewise had problems with the Korean company Ecoamerica, which without conducting any consultation was granted access to over 72 000 hectares for logging and agriculture within the ancestral lands of these communities; lands for which the communities had no titles. The project was however stopped in 2011 (Servindi 2012 & Environmental Justice Atlas 2014).

Mining and hydrocarbons
Another threat which emerged in the interviews (notably FEKIHD, CAAAP, ARA, Waman Wasi and Proyecto Huallaga) had to do with the ongoing and planned mining activities that exist in the region. San Martín is rich in mineral resources and hydrocarbons and the national governments have been preparing to exploit these for a long time. One of the more explicit attempts was spearheaded by the former President Alan García[14]. Without mincing words he accused indigenous peoples in the Amazon of hindering the development of the country in a famous debate article published in one Peruvian newspaper (García Pérez 2007). In conjunction with a new free trade agreement between Peru and the United States, García introduced new regulations to make it easier to exploit the natural resources in the Amazon and pave the way for foreign

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[14] President Alan García Pérez was in office 1985-1990 and 2006-2011.

investments. This led to a series of protests and blockades by indigenous peoples – including Kechwas – during 2008 and 2009, and the climax came in June 2009 when security forces intervened to stop the protests. 23 police men and at least nine natives were killed near Bagua, in a bloody battle known as Baguazo. The reports of what actually happened are conflicting and the police have been accused of covering up the actual number of natives that were killed. After these events, some but not all of García's new regulations were revoked. CAAAP (one of the organizations interviewed) point to Baguazo as a crucial event that helped to put indigenous peoples on the national political agenda in Peru, and according to Che Piu & García it paved way for increased participation of indigenous peoples in the forestry sector (2011:33). Nevertheless, the threat of petroleum and mining exploitation is still a dark cloud on the sky, as pointed out earlier by Finer & Orta-Martínez (2010).

Conservation areas
Some of the conservation areas created to guard against extractive industries are also presented as a threat to indigenous people's ancestral territories. One of the prime examples is *Cordillera Escalera,* a regional conservation area[15] implemented in 2005. Cordillera Escalera was established to protect a mountainous area by virtue of its high biodiversity and its importance for the provision of water a large portion of San Martín's population, including the city of Tarapoto[16].

The Huallaga Project is the state authority responsible for the implementation and management of the park. The environmental director at the Huallaga Project, stated that one of the key reasons for creating the park was the need to protect the area from oil exploitation. A large petroleum lot is overlapping the conservation area, but all oil-related activities have been put to a halt since the management plan of Cordillera Escalera does not allow for these. However, indigenous people that live in the vicinity and make use of the area have voiced complaints over the restrictions placed on their use of the forest. They argue that the conservation area has been superimposed on their ancestral territories.

Waman Wasi reports that some villages have applied for their recognition as native communities to defend their land rights within Cordillera Escalera. Moreover, Waman Wasi notes that there are also several migrant settlements, and quite big villages within the park limits. Although they cannot claim any special user rights according to the law, these have often been treated with a laissez-faire attitude by the authorities.

At the time of the interview, the environmental director of the Huallaga Project was planning to initiate a consultation process with indigenous communities affected by Cordillera Escalera. There was no consultation before the establishment of the park, but by reason of the new law from 2011 (see figure 2) a consultation process was deemed necessary in relation to the revision of the management plan (*El Plan Maestro*). The purpose, according to the environmental director, is to find out if and how the indigenous communities are affected by the conservation area and to reach agreements with the communities about the use of its resources. Around 40 indigenous communities have been identified, both legally recognized native communities and *centros poblados*, which might be affected and therefore need to be consulted. Some

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[15] Regional Conservation Area (*Área de Conservación Nacional*) is a category of protected areas.
[16] According to the Huallaga Project representative Chazuta, Barranquita, Pongo and Lamas also get their water from this area.

communities are demanding titles within the protected area, but this falls outside the scope of the consultation, since issues of titling are handled by another authority.

Similarly, the regional government is also undertaking a zoning project for the whole region. In an interview, the officer explained that the project, known as ZEE or Ecological Economic Zoning (*Zonificación Económica Ecológica*), involved making an inventory of the land use in San Martín which would serve as a basis for future land use decision making. In the ZEE, around 70 % of the regional territory was identified as apt for conservation, and in order to achieve this percentage the regional government has invented a new land use category called ZoCRE which means Area for Ecosystem Conservation and Recovery (*Zona de Conservación y Recuperación de Ecosistemas*). Waman Wasi and CAAAP see ZoCREs as problematic. They argue that in several places, the ZoCREs have been superimposed on indigenous territories, and since the idea is to set the area aside for conservation the chances of native communities having a title here might be compromised.

Lastly, preparations are being made in San Martín for the launching of REDD+. Peru's large rainforest areas makes the country well positioned to receive funding through REDD+. As pointed out by CAAAP and Waman Wasi, the forests of interest for REDD+ are in many cases located within indigenous territories. The national indigenous organization AIDESEP (Inter-ethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Rainforest) has demanded for "full recognition of land and territorial rights and alignment of national legislation with international obligations in recognizing the rights of indigenous people" before REDD+ is implemented (White 2013:668).

This section has shown that indigenous territories are subject to various governmental interventions, many of which are perceived as threats to the autonomy and livelihoods of indigenous communities. In the following sections, a presentation will be made of how intervening agencies like NGOs is supporting the community of Alto Huaja organize itself in response to these perceived threats.

2.3   The case of Alto Huaja

2.3.1   The formation of the native community of Alto Huaja

Alto Huaja, also called *Yacu Shutuna Rumy de Anak Huaja* in the Kechwa language, was formed in 2011, after a group of people in the village of Huaja had decided to apply for native community recognition. According to the current *Apu* of Alto Huaja, it was not the hope of securing the territory that motivated them to form a native community, although the issue came on board later. What motivated them was rather the freedom to settle disputes and offenses within the community (as stipulated in Article 19 of Decree-Law 22175) instead of resorting to the formal judicial power in town.

The *Apu* played a crucial role in the formation of Alto Huaja. According to his account, the triggering event was the imprisonment of his 18-year-old son (in 2007). The son had been sentenced to 20 years in prison by the town court (*juzgado mixto*) of San José de Sisa for sexual violation of a 13-year-old girl from the same village. This was the reasonable punishment according to legal praxis, but the court had not

taken cultural aspects into account. The 13-year-old was actually the boy's girlfriend, and what happened between the two was part of the Kechwa tradition.[17] After three months, the *Apu* managed to get his son released from prison by proving that the alleged crime was a cultural custom. On the advice of a bilingual Kechwa teacher who was well-informed about indigenous rights, the *Apu* hired a lawyer. The lawyer sent an anthropologist to Huaja to investigate whether it was actually an indigenous community and whether wife robbery was part of its custom, and after the evidence had been presented to the court the *Apu's* son was released.

This experience made the *Apu* convinced of the benefits of being legally recognized as a native community. He realized that what happened to his son could easily happen to anyone in the village, and that being a native community would save them both money[18] and trouble since it would allow them to resolve conflicts in accordance with their own customs. In 2008, he presented the idea at the village assembly in Huaja and received wide support. In that same meeting the assembly unanimously agreed to form a native community, but to the *Apu*'s disappointment the decision was reversed. The main reason was that a few but very influential immigrated farmers were against the formation of the native community and managed to discourage the rest of the villagers from taking any further steps. Some people also resisted because they thought they would be forced to wear feathers and traditional native clothing.

Eventually the *Apu* and some other villagers decided to form a native community on their own, with support from the people who lived upstream. The *Apu* convoked a meeting and this time they were able to initiate the process with 40 members, and in addition around 30 people from the central village who were also appealed by the idea of judicial autonomy. After some months and several meetings with different institutions and authorities the application process was complete and Alto Huaja was finally declared a native community on 11ᵗʰ January 2011.

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[17] When a young couple wants to get married the boy "robs" the girl, meaning that they elope together and hide for some days, typically at the boy's parental home. The young couple then present themselves to the girl's parents, accompanied by the boy's parents and some other relatives to get their culturally prescribed punishment. The parents will spank them with a whip (*carawaska*) and "once their anger is stilled", as the *Apu* expressed it, there is collective celebration. Unfortunately in the case of the *Apu*'s son, the girl's parents did not approve of the relationship; instead they decided to report him.

[18] Because the *Apu* was a farmer the fare was reduced from 5 000 to 3 500 soles, but he was still forced to take a loan. Apart from the 3 500 soles to the lawyer, the *Apu* had to pay about 700 soles to other people involved, including bribes to the court secretary, to encourage her to execute the decision/court order to release the *Apu's* son from the prison.

Figure 5. Map showing the location of CN Huaja and CP Alto Huaja. Source: Map data ©2015 Google.

The formation of Alto Huaja meant that what used to be one single village was divided into two parts. Huaja was reduced to the densely populated village center and is still classified as *centro poblado* as before the division, while the dispersed settlements and the forested area upstream along the Huaja stream now constitute the native community (*comunidad nativa)* of Alto Huaja. To distinguish between the two they will henceforth be referred to as CP Huaja (*Centro Poblado Huaja*) and CN Alto Huaja (*Comunidad Nativa Alto Huaja*).

Despite the division, in daily life the two villages remain integrated. Some people have their house in CP Huaja while their farm *(chacra)* is in CN Alto Huaja. Others have both their house and their *chacra* in CN Alto Huaja, but they go CP Huaja almost daily to visit their relatives or to attend school. But as the law demands, CN Alto Huaja now has its own administration and statutes that outline the way the community should be governed (see figure 5).

FUNCTION	DESCRIPTION
General assembly	All community members
Governing board	Elected by the general assembly
President (*Apu*)	
Secretary	
Treasurer	
Conveners	Convoking the community members to meetings
Secretary of commercialization	Exploring opportunities to commercialize CN Alto Huaja's produce
Community patrol (*ronda nativa*)	Security guards, monitoring the territory and reporting illegal activities
President	
Vice president	

Figure 6. The political organization/organizational structure of the native community of CN Alto Huaja.

The formation CN of Alto Huaja has not only had implications with regards to political organization. The interviews with the *Apu* and the community members, suggest that the native community recognition is also connected to reflections around identity, i.e. around the notion of community and being native. The *Apu* seems to have reflected more than the other community members, arguably as a result of visiting Lamas and

participating in meetings and workshops with Waman Wasi, CEPKA and others. An indication of this is his initiative to order a number of traditional *takchacotón* shirts (for men), after the pattern in Lamas, for those interested. Previously, the men in CN Alto Huaja did not use *takchacotón* but it seems that the native community recognition has made them associate themselves more with the Kechwa-Lamista community. However, this identity construction has not trickled down to all the community members. It was noted during the field study that only the *Apu* and some of the board members were wearing *takchacotón*, and it was only done on special occasions, such as when visitors were expected.

2.3.2 Institutional landscape around CN Alto Huaja

In order to understand how CN Alto Huaja is governed, it is necessary to look beyond the internal political organization to see how it relates to other organizations outside the community. The institutional landscape around Alto Huaja consists the following types of organizations (among others): indigenous federations, NGOs and government institutions (See Appendix 1). Several new acquaintances that have been established as a result of the native community recognition, especially with indigenous federations.

Indigenous federations
In the region of San Martín, there are seven indigenous federations whose function is to represent their member communities, or 'bases', in relation to the government authorities. In addition, they assist the communities in their development and internal affairs, especially touching on issues of territory, education, health and agriculture. In the formative stages of CN Alto Huaja, the current *Apu* went to Lamas to visit two federations, **CEPKA**[19] (Ethnic Council of Kechwa Peoples of the Amazon) and FEPIKRESAM[20] (Federation of Kechwa Peoples of the Region of San Martín). The *Apu* found CEPKA more appealing because they had a larger number of affiliated communities and CEPKA eventually became CN Alto Huaja's choice of federation. CEPKA assisted Alto Huaja with the application for native community recognition, and in launching the new organizational structure. According to the *Apu*, CN Alto Huaja's statutes essentially follow the template provided by CEPKA, although they could have chosen to customize them.

In 2012, a new federation was founded under the name **FEKIHD**[21] (Kichwa Federation Huallaga Dorado), with several of CN Alto Huaja's neighbors as member communities. CN Alto Huaja chose to remain with CEPKA, whereas CP Huaja joined FEKIHD. This has caused some problems, which will be discussed later.

NGOs
Besides the federations, CN Alto Huaja has also initiated collaboration with two NGOs: **Waman Wasi**[22] (Center for Biodiversity and Andean-Amazonian Spirituality) and with **CAAAP**[23] (Amazonian Center of Anthropology and Practical Application). CN Alto Huaja receives regular visits from Waman Wasi, and some of the community

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[19] *Consejo Étnico de los Pueblos Kechwas de la Amazonía.*
[20] *Federación de Pueblos Kechwa de la Región San Martín.*
[21] *Federación Kichwa Huallaga Dorado.*
[22] *Centro de la Biodiversidad y la Espiritualidad Andino-Amazónica.*
[23] *Centro Amazónico de Antropología y Aplicación Práctica.*

members (mainly the *Apu*) have attended meetings/events at Waman Wasi's center in Lamas. CAAAP is a Catholic NGO working with indigenous people all over the Peruvian Amazon, with a regional branch in San Martín. The main task of CAAAP is to spread information about indigenous peoples' rights according to the ILO Convention No. 169, and more recently also the right to free and informed prior consultation (see figure 2). This is done through workshops with indigenous people as well as regional land local government authorities. CAAAP is also assisting the indigenous federations FEPIKRESAM and CEPKA (e.g. funding workshops, designing projects) and assisting native communities in the process of getting registered and getting their land title. One of the native communities they have assisted is CN Alto Huaja.

Another NGO in CN Alto Huaja's network is **Urku Estudios Amazónicos**, a non-profit organization based in Tarapoto with focus on conservation, research and strengthening of indigenous organizations. Urku provides technical support to FEKIHD, and several of its conservation and research projects are carried out in FEKIHD's affiliated villages. Urku and FEKIHD previously tried to involve CN Alto Huaja in a joint territorial strategy together with the neighboring FEKIHD villages (CP Huaja, Ishichiwi and Kopal Sacha). CN Alto Huaja eventually pulled out and currently there is no collaboration with Urku.

Government institutions
The regional government and its institutions exercise considerable influence over CN Alto Huaja, albeit from a distance. The Regional Environmental Authority**,** ARA (*Autoridad Regional Ambiental*) is in charge of natural resources, environment and land use. The division responsible for conservation is currently engaging several native communities, among them CN Alto Huaja, in forest conservation by offering them concessions for conservation. Besides ARA, CN Alto Huaja has also been in dealing with the regional directorate entity responsible for the recognition of native communities and issuance of land titles[24]

Other regional offices featuring in this thesis, although CN Alto Huaja does not relate to them directly, are the National Forest Conservation Program for Climate Change Mitigation[25] (for short: the Forest Program) and the Regional Office for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of San Martín[26], **ORDEPISAM**. The Forest Program is coordinating activities with ARA to achieve the goal of protecting 2.5 million hectares of forest in San Martín (according to the regional coordinator of the Forest Program). The program is targeting native communities as part of its strategy and is currently running a pilot project together with FEKIHD and the native community of Chirik Sacha. ORDEPISAM's function is to serve as a link between the regional government of San Martín and the indigenous peoples in the region, and to promote indigenous interests in the regional plans, programs, projects and policies. The office has three employees, representing each of the three indigenous groups in the region

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[24] The responsible authority when it comes to native communities is the Directorate of Titling, Reversal of Lands and Rural Land Registry, which is under the Regional Directorate of Agriculture (*Dirección de Titulación, Reversión de Tierras y Catastro Rural de la Región San Martín*, *bajo la Dirección Regional de Agricultura*).
[25] *Programa Nacional de Conservación de Bosques para la Mitigación del Cambio Climático*
[26] *Oficina Regional de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de San Martín.*

(Awajun, Kechwa and Shawi). The Kechwa representative indicated that OR-DEPISAM mainly collaborates with ARA, on a number of new programs targeting native communities (on the issues of conservation, concessions and programs like the Forest Program, San Martín REDD+ roundtable and a community forestry platform.

International cooperation & funding

Finally, it is important to mention the role of international cooperation. Without going into the nitty-gritties of who is funding what, it can be noted that money from international donor organizations is present at all levels, and especially when it comes to the NGOs. Waman Wasi is receiving funding mainly from Sweden and Germany[27] and CAAAP from Catholic and other organizations in Europe[28]. Urku is financed to 50 % through their Centro Urku, (Center for Training and Breeding of Amazonian Biodiversity)[29], where they receive both students and tourists. Urku also mentioned international cooperation as a source of funding but did not provide the name of the specific organization. Other sources reveal that the organization has received funding from the Development Marketplace of the World Bank for a climate change adaptation project.[30]

The indigenous federations mostly rely on the NGOs that operate on the regional level for funding. The president of CEPKA stated he and his board members are working "ad honorem" and their expenses for travelling, food and lodging is financed by CAAAP, Waman Wasi among others. FEKIHD has received funding through their community projects, part of which is used to administrate the organization.

The government institutions rely mainly on public funds and in some parts on international cooperation. The Forest Program is financed by the Peruvian government and the German government (GIZ[31]), and it also receives funding through the REDD mechanism, from Norway and Japan (JICA[32]). ORDEPISAM was created in 2011 as part of the regional government, but its implementation and first year of operation was funded by international cooperation (Oxfam and Conservation International). It still depends on different local and international NGOs to fund many of its activities (e.g. organization of joint meetings with the indigenous federations in the region).

2.3.3 Livelihood changes and agricultural intensification in CN Alto Huaja

A typical family in CN Alto Huaja and Huaja produces most of the food they consume, such as plantain, cassava, beans and fruits, and raise pigs and hens for meat (and eggs).

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[27] Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, TDH (Germany), Kindernothilfe Hilfe (Germany) and HelpAge (Germany). Previously Waman Wasi has received funding from Ampika of the University of Cambridge (England), and Geneva federation for cooperation and development (Fondo Ginebrino, Switzerland).

[28] Fastenopfer (Switzerland), Oxfam Intermón (Spain), Misereor (Germany).

[29] Centro de Capacitación y Reproducción de la Biodiversidad Amazónica

[30] According to the World Bank website, the project is called "Indigenous Wisdom and Biomathematics: Amazonians Tackle Climate Change", and received a "US$200,000 grant to help 500 indigenous people in the Peruvian Amazon better manage their agricultural production systems, protect their forest, and increase their income."(http://wbi.worldbank.org/developmentmarketplace/stories/dm2009-winner-sees-public-private-gap-climate-adaptation)

[31] Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit.

[32] Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Some people also have a few cows. These products are sometimes sold for cash, but the main cash crops are maize, cocoa and coffee.

On the landscape level, maize and pasture are the dominant features. There are a few big cattle owners – most of them are migrant farmers – with around 50 heads each. Maize, on the other hand, is grown by most families and it is the product that accounts for the largest share of the household income. Two different types of maize are grown. Soft maize is produced for household consumption and used for the preparation of *chicha,* a traditional fermented beverage. Hard maize is produced in larger quantities, most of which is sold while some is used by the household as poultry feed.

The *Apu* of CN Alto Huaja said that people started growing hard maize on the large scale around the 1990s. A maize processing plant was built in San José de Sisa, the closest town and some extension officers came to inform the farmers about the opportunity of producing maize for the plant and how big an area they would have to plant in order to get a certain amount of money. The *Apu* explained:

> At first we were skeptical, how could we cultivate such a big area of maize? But they themselves had the solution. They told us about the poison and that it would save us labor so we didn't have to weed the field manually, and we became convinced.

Since then, hard maize has been commonplace in the area, and so has the use of herbicides. The Kechwa native communities in the Sisa area are much more oriented towards commercial agriculture and agricultural inputs and techniques than their fellow Kechwas in the town of Lamas. In Lamas, most villages still rely completely on manual labor to weed their fields, but in CN Alto Huaja the farmers have become accustomed to renting weed trimmers (to prepare the field for sowing) or motor driven herbicide sprayers (to remove weeds shortly after sowing, when the maize is just starting to grow[33]) on a regular basis. Several people in CN Alto Huaja expressed their gratitude to the NGO Waman Wasi for teaching them how to prevent their water springs from drying out by saving some vegetation around the spring, but for a reason Waman Wasi did not intend. While Waman Wasi's goal is to encourage the Kechwa's traditional farming practices, their water protection measures rather supported them in moving away from these. The farmers use water to dilute the herbicide, and thanks to the springs they can collect water closer to their *chacras* located on the hillsides, so that they no longer have to go down and fetch water from the stream in the bottom of the valley.

The presence of migrant farmers and their focus on cash crops in combination with more intensive farming practices has led to a demonstration effect in CN Alto Huaja. Several farmers stated that they used to sow their maize "in disorder" but now they are sowing in straight rows because they have been influenced by the migrants. These above mentioned technologies have all permitted farmers to cultivate a bigger area than before which inevitably has resulted in a reduced tree cover. Another incentive for farmers to increase their production is that it has become easier to take the produce to the market thanks to improved communications between CN Alto Huaja and Sisa.

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[33] The staff of Waman Wasi were astonished by the pictures from a *choba choba* in which a family was getting help to plant maize. When they saw that the field was covered with weeds they asked: "What? Are they going to sow in the bush?" The explanation given by the farmers was that the weeds were to be removed with herbicide afterwards.

Before the dirt road was built seven years ago they would walk on a mud trail for three hours by foot or by horse, but now it only takes twenty-five minutes by motorcar.

As a result of an intensified agriculture, the labor exchange through *choba choba* has decreased in CN Alto Huaja. It is still practiced but less frequently and in smaller groups, since human labor has turned out to be very expensive compared to mechanical labor. One farmer (son of the *Apu*) explained that he would like to participate more in the *choba chobas* but he cannot afford it. The reason he gave was that it is cheaper for him to rent a trimmer for one day than to invite a group of people which he has to provide with food.

Forest and natural resources
Compared to other Kechwa native communities in the region of San Martin, CN Alto Huaja still has a relatively rich territory in terms of natural resources. The villagers testify that there used to be more forest areas in the village, but there are still some trees on the farms and portions of the fields consist of tree fallows (see figure 6 below). However, big trees are mostly seen along the stream where they have been spared to protect the water. The stream provides the villagers with water for all their daily needs, and even some fish, but the villagers testify that the flow has diminished "because of deforestation" and the fish are smaller. The concentration of trees increases as one moves farther upstream away from the village until one eventually after an hour's walk reaches a big old-growth/virgin forest area which is the communal forest.

This is where people go to hunt and collect plants for medicinal or other use and there is also a series of water falls where people go for recreation. The waterfalls have inspired the name of the native community in Kechwa, Yacu Shutuna Rumy, which means 'water that falls on the rock' (*agua que cae sobre la roca*) and they have been identified as one of the tourist attractions in the province of El Dorado. The villagers have agreed not to cut any trees in the communal forest territory. Most of the territory consists of areas not suitable for farming, which the villagers are very conscious of, mentioning how they could use it for other livelihood opportunities (tourism, medical plant collection etc.). Nevertheless, other groups could probably be interested in the islands of potential farming land that exist within the territory. According to the villagers, there are a few small settlements inside the forest, both by people from the area and migrants.

The amount of time the villagers spend in the communal forest has decreased of late and so has the consumption of forest products. According to the village leader, i.e. the *Apu,* people only go to hunt once or twice a year and several food stuffs which they used to consume frequently have become rare, such as snails (*congompe*), worms/larvae/grubs (*suri*), mushrooms (*cayampa*) and bush meat. The *Apu* and his family used to collect large amounts of snails close to their house, but due to the lack of old growth forest around the farm they now have to walk far if they want to have snails for dinner. Instead, beans have become more common. The diet has also been affected by the use of herbicides. The *Apu* and his family used to grow watermelon and sweet potatoes (*camote*), but they are too difficult to grow nowadays. The *Apu*'s explanation was that "the smell of the poison kills the plants".

Figure 7. View over CN Alto Huaja. The photo was taken from the Apu 's family farm on the slope on one side of the valley overlooking the opposite ridge. The field had just been planted with maize, and further down the slope there is a tree fallow. Photo: Josefin Egerlid.

The general picture that emerges from the analysis of interviews and ethnographic data is that CN Alto Huaja and the surrounding area is involved in a process of change in several respects. The construction of the road, installation of electricity, introduction of new cropping system for maize – all these are changes that have taken place within the last few years. This has led to an intensification of CN Alto Huaja's interactions with the surrounding world, both physically, economically and culturally. Physically, the villagers' mobility has increased since it has become easier to travel in and out from the village. Economically, people have become more market oriented in their farming enterprises. Culturally, people now have access to movies, films and music in the village, as a result of access to electricity. This process can be described in terms of market integration, agrarian change or modernization. The effects of these changes on the landscape are evident, especially the large areas of maize plantations and pastures. However the process of deforestation is not as advanced in CN Alto Huaja as in other places, for example closer to Sisa.

This section shows how the community CN Alto Huaja and its livelihood system relates to the forest, to describe the current state of its forest territory and some of the transformations that are taking place. This description will serve as a background to the following section about some of the ideas that have been presented in relation to the tenure arrangement and management of this forest area.

2.4   Concession vs. title

After receiving the legal recognition, the community of CN Alto Huaja wanted to get a land title for the communal forest territory. In a joint interview, the current *Apu* and his predecessor recounted that the size and boundaries of the territory had already been established in conjunction with the registration of CN Alto Huaja in *Registros Públicos*, but formal ownership had not yet been granted. The plan was to secure it in the name of CN Alto Huaja, but in practice it would be shared with CP Huaja. One day the community leaders in CN Alto Huaja discovered to their astonishment that CP Huaja and the indigenous federation FEKIHD (for more information about FEKIHD and other organizations, see Appendix 1), which is the indigenous organization CP Huaja is affiliated to, had made an application to turn the territory into a conservation area. In fact, CP Huaja had already been granted a concession for conservation with a duration of 40 years by the Regional Environmental Authority (ARA) and this was soon to be made public through the usual procedure by an advertisement in the newspaper. CP Huaja was even demanding CN Alto Huaja to pay half the cost of the advertisement. CN Alto Huaja decided to appeal and managed to have the decision revoked, but the application itself was not cancelled. By the time of the fieldwork for this thesis, CN Alto Huaja was waiting for FEKIHD to withdraw the application, and ARA had put the case on hold to wait for the sister communities to reach an agreement.

   The discord between CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja had to do, at least in part, with the external organizations that had been advising the two communities. Views on what is the best way to secure the territory differ among the organizations, and this has clash of views among the advisory organizations have caused some turmoil in the province of El Dorado, and particularly in the case study village where the views of the organizations have clashed. CN Alto Huaja belongs to the indigenous federation CEPKA and has in addition received support from the NGOs Waman Wasi and CAAAP. All these three emphasize the importance of land title. CP Huaja on the other hand is affiliated to the indigenous federation FEKIHD, and by extension also to the NGO Urku Estudios Amazónicos which serves as technical support for FEKIHD. Urku and FEKIHD support the idea of concession for conservation which is a tenure arrangement promoted by ARA, the Regional Environmental Authority.
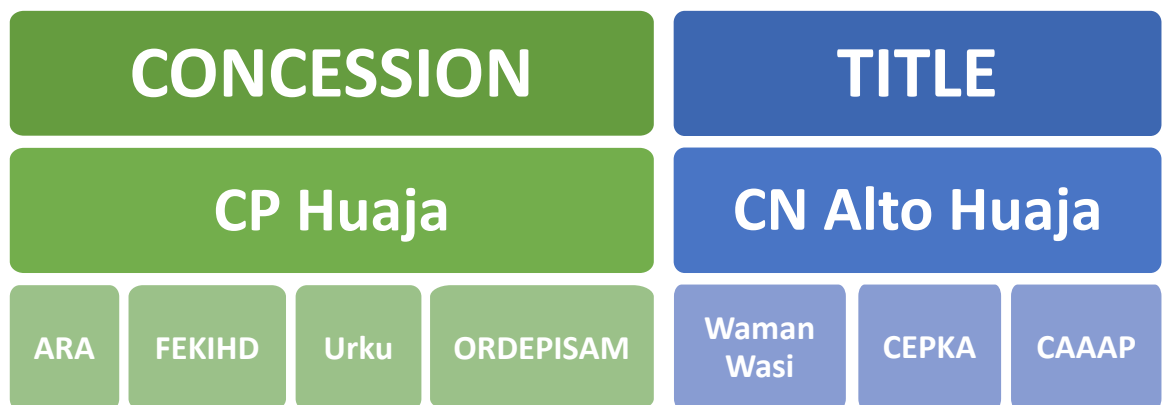

Figure 8. Actors and their positionings in the conflict between title and concession.

Thus, in order to understand the situation it is not enough to look at the two communities only; it must also be examined how other actors and institutions have been involved and what arguments, knowledge, problem definition etc. their actions are guided by. In what follows, the partial perspectives of some key actors will be presented.

2.4.1 Proponents of conservation concession

ARA is the Regional Environmental Authority, i.e. the regional government body responsible for land use and conservation of natural resources. The officer interviewed at ARA stated that the goal of the organization is to conserve as much forest as possible and one of the strategies is conservation concessions. Conservation concession means that land which belongs to the state, i.e. the regional government, is entrusted (conceded) to an organization, individual or indigenous community which commits to conserve the area. The analysis of the interview suggests that the authority is more interested in promoting conservation concessions for native communities than titles. ARA can assist native communities with titled territories to create a private conservation area if they so wish – the decision is with the community – but the conservation concession is more of a guarantee that conservation will take place.

The officer in charge of the division for conservation and environmental services explained the difference between conservation concession and title as follows: Conservation concession implies a commitment from the community to conserve, it is sort of a guarantee that conservation will take place, whereas in a titled territory they are free to do what they want. In the case of concession, the community is not hindered from using the forest for their daily needs; they are allowed to take wood to mend their houses for example, or to have ecotourism, but they cannot make any commercial use of the forest. With a title, on the other hand, the community can make commercial use of the timber, under the rules and regulations that apply to any logging activity (there are certain places where it is illegal to cut, for example around headwaters/headwater basins/headwater catchment). Citing the case of the Awajun people, the ARA officer argues that granting of ownership titles could be counterproductive to the forest conservation. This is because, upon receiving ownership rights, the Awajun people reportedly leased considerable parts of their titled land to others, with widespread deforestation as a result. By contrast, the Kechwas are seen as more inclined to conservation than the Awajun since they have continued their ancestral customs and preserved the environment in their territories.

A key reason why some native communities prefer the concession is because it is much faster than applying for a title, and it can serve as a safety measure against mining companies seeking to begin activity on community territory. This was the case for the native community of Ishichiwi, according to the ARA officer. ARA is critical of some NGOs that tell native communities that once they have a concession they are precluded from having a title. They have the right to decide for themselves what they want to do with their territory; it is they themselves that apply for concession and they also have the right to end it whenever they want and apply for a title instead. When it comes to CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja, ARA has decided not to intervene until the parties have reached an agreement, because they respect their own decision making process.

Later in the interview the representative of ARA recognized that the native communities are not acting entirely on their own. The concession applications have actually been carried out by the federation FEKIHD and with the assistance of Urku. The officer stated that most of the time, ARA is actually not dealing with the native communities directly but with NGOs that speak and act on their behalf, and for ARA this is problematic. The ideal for ARA would have been to interact directly with the people from the communities, either by regular visits to the community or by having a decentralized office where people could come and get the information they need, but unfortunately they lack the resources. The NGOs, by contrast, are ever present and influencing the communities. The ARA officer interviewed says that the general view among ARA staff is that the native communities are too much influenced by NGOs, and that the NGOs are hindering ARA and the regional government from having good working relationships with some native communities.

> I have noticed that some communities do not see us, the regional government, as allies but as enemies. That is what it feels like, and unfortunately it is not because of [the communities themselves] but because of other people. The NGOs [are driven by personal interests] because in the end they live off of the problems they create. Because that is their purpose.

The ARA officer is careful to emphasize that it is not only Urku, there are two more NGOs that assist the native communities in El Dorado: Waman Wasi and Paz y Esperanza. Urku is, however, implicitly described as playing a more constructive role than the other NGOs.

For **FEKIHD**, issues relating to territory are central, just as for the other indigenous federations in San Martín, but they differ in that they are in favor of conservation concession as a mode of tenure. One of the key leaders of FEKIHD argued that native communities' attempts to get land titles have so far been fruitless and that there is a need for another strategy. He further pointed out that no new titles have been granted in the region since 1997, whereas large tracts of land have been given out for concession. Title is still the most desirable modality, but instead of continuing the struggle for title without any result, FEKIHD is willing to try other modalities to secure the territory. Moreover, FEKIHD considers that organizations that assist native communities apply for title are deceptive. The goal for FEKIHD is for native communities to reclaim control over their ancestral territory however, under what type of tenure arrangement is less important. FEKIHD's strategy is therefore to get the concession first and once the geographical scope is under control they will apply for a title. The following quote from the interview with the leader of FEKIHD explains their position:

> For how many years have the communities been requesting for title, which is a right that the Convention [169] is assigning to them, and how many have not achieved territory that way? And on the other hand, how much has been given out as concessions in the area? [...] So that is the reason why we are opting, as a strategy, to obtain territory and control it geographically, and then, once it is under control, we will opt for the highest security.

As expected, the NGO **Urku,** FEKIHD's technical support, presents similar arguments as FEKIHD on the issue of land tenure arrangements; organizations like CEPKA and others have been struggling for land title for years without any success;

they talk about indigenous people having the right to land title but they never talk about how to translate this right into reality, and they do not have a correct understanding of some of the practical issues regarding territory. Urku's director mentions several such practical issues. First of all, the lands which native communities are claiming have been occupied by migrants. Some of the migrants have lived there for years, have well-established communities and cannot be commanded to leave at this stage. Secondly, the indigenous population is no longer controlling their territories physically and this is why the migrants have been able to enter in the first place. They have detached/distanced themselves from their territories due to a change in lifestyle and production system with a greater focus on agriculture. They are not spending much time in the forest anymore because the forest is far away from the community, they have to walk for hours, and they rather have to attend to their commercial crops at their *chacras* close to their houses, where their children can go to school. (The migrants have another mentality, they settle within the forest with the whole family, and after working hard for some years they sell the developed farm and move to the city.) Thirdly, a title is not possible in some places for legal reasons. Titles can only be granted in areas that are at free disposal, but many parts of the territories claimed by indigenous peoples have been designated for other purposes, for example productive forest[34] (or conservation, as in the case of Cordillera Escalera described earlier). Fourthly, Urku argues that in some cases title can even be inappropriate. The influences of market economy capitalism has led to social disintegration in many native communities and made people more individualistic. The director of Urku gives an example of a community which, once they received their title, divided their communal territory into individual plots. (Author's note: This makes it easier for them to make money by leasing the land to others, which it what has happened among the Awajun.)

It is against this background that Urku advocates conservation concession as a tenure modality. They see the need to invent new ways of exercising territoriality, and the advantage of conservation concessions is that it allows them to act fast and recover control in problematic places where there are migrant settlements.[35] Instead of struggling on their own, the concession grants the villages an endorsement of the state to defend the territory. They cannot throw people out if they have been there for years, but they can tell them not to advance any further. The idea is to win the migrants over in the struggle to conserve the forest and to stop further invasion. Once the area is under control, the concession can be reverted. The Urku representative explains:

> What we are doing is to recover territory, and with the control over the territory we are in a position to consider a title. The concession can be reverted, you don't have to wait for 40 years to do it, but you have to guarantee the control [over the territory].

However, in the case of CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja, Urku and FEKIHD failed to convince the villagers of their strategy. According to Urku's director, Urku and FEKIHD tried to help CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja to get a conservation concession but CN Alto Huaja ended up turning against them. Together with FEKIHD, Urku had the vision of creating a joint territory to be shared by several Kechwa communities, and to that end they organized a patrol with representatives from CN Alto Huaja, CP

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[34] Productive forest (*bosque de producción permanente)* is a land category where indigenous peoples have certain user rights but cannot get title.
[35] Urku estimates that 10-12 000 hectares have so far been recovered in the form of conservation concessions, in the favor of six to seven communities.

Huaja and the neighbor community Ishichiwi in order to inspect the territory. Urku and CN Alto Huaja give different accounts of what actually happened during this patrol. Urku's side of the story is that they encountered some migrants whom the leaders of Urku and FEKIHD confronted in line with their strategy, i.e. to tell them that they were on indigenous territory and that they are not allowed to advance. Unfortunately, some people from CN Alto Huaja[36] ruined the plan. They undermined the authoritative image Urku and FEKIHD were trying to establish by interfering in the conversation and revealing that they themselves were not sure how far their territory actually extended. To summarize, instead of defending their own territorial interests, CN Alto Huaja ended up legitimizing the invasion of the migrants, and on top discrediting Urku and FEKIHD when they were trying to help them. Because of this event and its aftermaths Urku and FEKIHD does not have any collaboration with CN Alto Huaja. Ishichiwi, on the other hand, landed a concession together with another village called Nuevo Barranquita. CN Alto Huaja claims that Ishichiwi grabbed part of their territory, but according Urku this is not the case because the people of CN Alto Huaja and CP Huaja has no track of where their own territory is.

ORDEPISAM is an institution within the regional government that represents the three indigenous groups (Kechwa, Awajun, and Shawi) in San Martín. ORDEPISAM's Kechwa representative is informed of the situation in CN Alto Huaja, although he has not been directly involved. The narrative he offers about the event of the patrol resembles that of Urku on several points. According to the representative, FEKIHD offered to help Huaja before the village was divided (i.e. before the native community of Alto Huaja had been created) but they rejected. The people of Huaja went to inspect the territory and later they started negotiating with the migrants, the exact opposite of protecting themselves. Furthermore, the representative supports FEKIHD's attempts to recover ancestral territory and bring it under control through the strategy of conservation concession. It is not a replacement for title and FEKIHD has actually not abandoned the aim of getting title, but most of the areas claimed by communities around Sisa consist of hilly landscapes where it is not possible to get a title but there is green light for conservation. So FEKIHD is strategically taking it as conservation area, and once they have removed the invading migrants and brought the territory under control they will apply for a title and then nobody can deny them their right.

The representative at ORDEPISAM mentions a number of causes underlying the conflictive situation that has arisen in CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja. One is the fragmentation and lack of leadership in CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja which has prevented the community members from reaching an agreement. The lack of good leaders is, in turn, a consequence of the lacking support from the federation CEPKA towards its member communities. In the view of the ORDEPISAM representative, CEPKA has too many communities in their care and not enough resources to serve all of them, especially the ones that are far away from the head office in Lamas. The best thing would be for all the native communities in El Dorado to join FEKIHD since they are

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[36] What makes it difficult to follow Urku's story is that they do not distinguish between *Centro Poblado Huaja* and Comunidad Nativa Alto Huaja, 'Huaja' is used to denote both of them. Nevertheless, it is clear that the people from CN Alto Huaja were the ones that eventually turned against Urku and FEKIHD, since CP Huaja still maintains good relations with the two organizations.

based in that same province. Lastly, the representative criticizes "some organizations", like Waman Wasi, which he thinks intervene capriciously.

> Waman Wasi has always opted for that, not for what is strategic but for something more radical. Sometimes you lose opportunities for being too radical, and this is what has happened with Waman Wasi in a number of communities. You have to know how to negotiate and dialogue.

According to the ORDEPISAM representative, Waman Wasi has caused several processes of native community and territorial recognition to halt and gotten people into legal trouble by orienting them to cut trees within Cordillera Escalera as a way of claiming land. The representative agrees that the territorial rights of communities within the conservation area have been violated, but he thinks that the situation calls for a more pragmatic approach.

2.4.2 Proponents of title

CAAAP is an NGO belonging to the Catholic Church which helps native communities get registered and apply for their land title, and CN Alto Huaja is one among the communities they have assisted. The staff of CAAAP recounted that the *Apu* of CN Alto Huaja came troubled to the office in Tarapoto one day because CP Huaja had demanded them to pay their share of the expenses for the titling process[37], and he did not know where he would get the money from. The CAAAP staff became suspicious since titling is supposed to be free of charge, and so they helped him to find out what was going on. The *Apu* had been told by FEKIHD and Urku that they would help to secure the territory for CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja, and he thought they would apply for title but it turned out that they had applied for a conservation concession instead. CAAAP helped the *Apu* and CN Alto Huaja to get the concession revoked and has since then been monitoring/following up the case to ensure that the application is cancelled. At the same time, they are helping CN Alto Huaja to apply for a title.

In CAAAP's view, there is no good argument as to why native communities should prefer a concession over a title. The advantage with a title is that it is perpetual and that it comes with autonomy. Once acquired, nobody can ever take it from them; they have the right to decide what they want to do with the territory and every decision has to be made collectively in the communal assembly. Having a title also makes it easier to evict migrant settlers, according to CAAAP.

Moreover, CAAAP presents several arguments against concession as an alternative tenure arrangement. First of all, it does not give the communities any legal security. It is only valid for 40 years and there is no guarantee that they will keep it after that. They also risk losing the conservation concession in case they fail to comply with their commitment to conserve. Secondly, it comes with restrictions on their use of the territory and its resources, which could affect their livelihood. Breaking the rules could lead to legal sanctions, even prison in the worst of cases.[38] Thirdly, the idea of getting the concession first and turning it into a title later is dubious. There is no legal

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[37] CN Alto Huaja was expected to pay half the cost of advertisement in the newspaper Diario Peruano, which was approximately 3 000-4 000 soles divided by two.
[38] Several people are currently involved in legal processes because of cutting trees within Cordillera Escalera, a regional conservation area which has been superimposed on indigenous territories.

mechanism for such a reversion, and even if there were, it seems much more complicated to do concession first and then titling, than to do titling directly. The fact that the titling process takes longer than the concession is not by any law of nature, it is simply lack of political will on behalf of the regional government. Lastly, concession does not correspond to what indigenous people are demanding. They want to have a titled territory in which they can exercise autonomy, but in a concession the community is not fully in control over the decision making, says CAAAP.

> If I give you work as a forest guard or help you with agricultural/productive projects, which is what any NGO does, it is not the same thing as you being the administrator of the area and you taking the decisions, which is what the indigenous peoples are demanding.

CAAAP is critical of the actions taken by FEKIHD and Urku. To begin with, they did not explain well to the people in CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja what they were going to do, i.e. that they would apply for concession and not title. Secondly, the concession was not applied for in the name of the community but in the name of FEKIHD. CAAAP's concern is that there is a risk in this type of arrangement that funding and resources destined for the management of the conservation area will be controlled/captured by the federation instead of the community. It would not be surprising considering previous experiences/occurrences of corruption/embezzlement in the region. Thirdly, they should have pushed for titling instead. Right now they are giving the regional government legitimacy to direct their efforts to concessions instead of titles. Fourthly, CAAAP means that some people have vested interests in the concessions. The two federations that have embraced the idea of concessions (FEKIHD and FEPIKRESAM), are receiving advice from two advisors (respectively) who are also doing consultancy together for ARA. The position of these advisors has allowed them to promote conservation concessions at ARA and at the same time encourage native communities to apply for concession.

When it comes to ARA and the regional government, CAAAP is equally very critical. Although the commitment to conservation and to being the 'Green Region' is praiseworthy indigenous people's rights are unfortunately being violated in the process. The classical conflict between environmentalists and indigenous advocates is perfectly illustrated in the region of San Martín, says CAAAP. Indigenous titles should be safeguarded before new conservation areas are created, but this is clearly not in the interest of the regional government. There is far more room in the budget for individual titles than for communal ones, and the reluctance to title native communities is justified by the concern that they might choose not to conserve.[39] CAAAP suspects that the aim of the regional government is to bring as much territory as possible under its control in order to access funding from REDD projects later on.

Title is certainly the preferred option for **Waman Wasi**, but to some extent they also recognize the logic behind the concession modality. According to Waman Wasi's

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[39] The CAAAP staff was referring to the fact that the Awajun people often is taken as a warning example of what indigenous communal titles can lead to, as exemplified in the interview with ARA. According to CAAAP, the Awajun people are not, however, the only ones to blame for the environmental degradation that has taken place in their titled territories. Construction of new roads paved the way for large scale immigration, and lack of government services and projects drove the Awajun people to give up their land for sale or rent so they would have a cash income to pay for things like education and consumption goods, says CAAAP.

understanding, Urku and ARA are aiming to protect one of the last (continuous) green areas in this part of the region by creating a regional conservation area that will be co-managed together with the indigenous communities in the area, and (CN Alto) Huaja has become 'a stone in the shoe' because they are demanding a title in the middle of the planned conservation area.

Nonetheless, Waman Wasi supports CN Alto Huaja's demand for title and see no reason why they should not get it. The government is obliged to grant them a title whether they like it or not. The problem is rather with the neighboring communities that have accepted the concession. The idea of conserving forest is good, but Urku and FEKIHD are playing with a half-truth, says the director of Waman Wasi. It is true that concession is a more viable option for many communities that are collaborating with FEKIHD and Urku. Some of them are in the category of *centros poblados* and as such are not eligible for title. Others have native community status, but in the moment of getting registered in *Registros Públicos* their communal lands were unfortunately not included. Because of a mistake made by the CEPKA representative who assisted them in the registration process they only appear on the map as a dot and not with their whole customary territory.[40] Granting these communities a concession might therefore appear as an act of charity on behalf of the regional government, since it means entrusting land areas into their care which they have not even claimed in the first place. But this is a deception, according to Waman Wasi. The director argues that the right thing to do would have been to recognize the communities as the owners of their ancestral territories, and create a co-management plan in which the state is helping the community conserve rather than the other way around. As it stands now, in the concession modality, the communities are being alienated from their lands. In addition, another senior representative of Waman Wasi comments:

> To me it seems good to preserve an area, but then, why not think of a co-management? A model of the same type as the biosphere reserves where indigenous communities have an agreement with the state but do not alienate their territories to the state?

The regional state is supposedly the guarantor of the ILO Convention No. 169, meaning that its task is to ensure indigenous peoples' rights to their land. The problem is that nothing will happen unless the indigenous people actively claim their rights, and even when they do, the regional state is not always willing. According to Waman Wasi's director, Nauta is one of the native communities that was registered without its communal forest. He recalls advising the community members to try and get it registered/titled retrospectively, but when they presented the idea to the regional government they were persuaded to take a concession instead. The director therefore concludes that the state is keeping some information from the communities and only sharing the information that serves its purposes. In addition, the titling process is expensive, around 20 000 soles, and the state is reluctant to pay because it lacks funding.

In the area around Sisa, CN Alto Huaja is the exception that confirms the rule since it has been registered with its communal territory. The explanation given by Waman Wasi's director is that CN Alto Huaja had access to better information than the other communities, and this is largely thanks to the advisory role played by Waman Wasi. The director's assessment of CN Alto Huaja is that they have a remarkable territory

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[40] Waman Wasi said they discovered the mistake, which was repeated in several CEPKA communities in the area of Sisa, but it was too late to rectify it.

with areas for farming, important water resources and forested areas, but they have not begun to reflect on what it means to be a native community, to exercise autonomy and to manage their territory. The formation of CN Alto Huaja was motivated by judicial reasons, whereas many other native communities had their legal recognition because their territory was somehow threatened. As a result, the people in CN Alto Huaja are not fully aware of what they have gotten themselves into. In the words of Waman Wasi's director:

> I think that it's still not clear to them. They are waiting for the other to come and give them a school, the other to come and give them a bridge, the other to come and put everything, which is the state. But they are not thinking about their own role. I think that the same thing is happening in many of these communities, I mean that their autonomy has been undermined, to say, hey why not raise our own development. [They don't have to] say no to someone who wants to give them something, but they are not thinking about their autonomy, as I see it.

Waman Wasi sees their role as one of helping the community to reflect and talk about how they want to manage the territory. They identify two major problems facing CN Alto Huaja at the moment. One is the conflict with the neighboring community Ishichiwi which has grabbed part of their territory. This needs to be cleared before CN Alto Huaja can get their title. According to the information Waman Wasi has received from CN Alto Huaja, the old people in Ishichiwi know where the boundaries are; the invasion was rather made by the young leaders of the community under influence by Urku and FEKIHD. The other problem is the lack of an experiential connection to the territory, especially when it comes to the youth. Waman Wasi holds the view that the conservation and wellbeing of the territory requires community members that are connected to the territory/living space/life space (*espacios de vida*) as part of their daily life, through activities like fishing, hunting and farming but this knowledge is not being transferred to the younger generation in CN Alto Huaja.

As explained initially, **CN Alto Huaja** are determined to have title, and reports on the progress of the title application is a constant item on the agenda of the community meetings. In one of the assembly sessions, a community member expressed his dissatisfaction with the treatment Urku and FEKIHD had given to the community, especially during the patrol (mentioned earlier in relation to Urku). After the meeting, the *Apu* gave a detailed account of what happened in said patrol. A central issue which caused the *Apu* and the other community members to lose their trust in Urku and FEKIHD was that they had raised signposts with Ishichiwi's name within their territory. The concerns raised by the community members of CN Alto Huaja show that they are also playing an active role in the governance of their territory, although this section has focused mainly on the perspective of the external actors.

2.5 Interventions targeting environmental management and livelihoods of native communities

There are several actors in San Martín that aim to bring 'improvements' (to use Li's term) of different sorts to Kechwa communities. The previous section presented examples of how NGOs, indigenous organizations and government institutions are trying to influence the form of tenure arrangement around the ancestral lands, specifically in the case of CN Alto Huaja and CP Huaja. Another area of intervention is

environmental management and livelihood activities. This section presents some of the attempts that have been made to improve the environmental management of Kechwa communities and to adjust the livelihood system to achieve the dual goal of protecting the environment while at the same time securing the welfare of the population. The intention is to show that, just like the tenure arrangement, these interventions could also affect communities' control over their ancestral lands, and they are therefore central to the discussion about how indigenous territories are governed. Moreover, the types of interventions offered to the communities differ depending on their tenure arrangements, that is, whether they have a titled territory or a conservation concession.

2.5.1 Conservation concessions

The practical implication of the conservation concession is that the concessionary – which in our case would have been Huaja and the Kechwa federation FEKIHD, had CN Alto Huaja not vetoed – commits to following a management plan which has been set up in agreement with ARA. As explained by the ARA officer in charge of concessions, to assist in the planning phase and in the actual forest management there is a technical support, which in the case of FEKIHD has been Urku. In addition, ARA can facilitate access to funding from different NGOs (e.g. SPDA and Fondo las Americas) or from the regional government's own Program for Sustainable Economic Activities (*Programa de Actividades Economicas Sostenibles, PAES*). Funding can be granted to finance the monitoring of the conservation area or to develop alternative activities alongside the conservation. It could be to grow mushrooms or medicinal plants or some other income bringing and sustainable activity which does not damage the forest.

2.5.2 The Forest Program

In the event CN Alto Huaja finally acquires the title for its communal forest it will become eligible for another governmental conservation scheme called the National Forest Conservation Program for Climate Change Mitigation, briefly referred to as the Forest Program. The director of the Forest Program states that the purpose of the program is to speed up the fulfilment of national and regional forest conservation goals. The specific goal for the region of San Martín is to conserve two and a half million hectares of forest in different territorial categories, one of which is native communities. The engagement with native communities follows a similar logic as the conservation concessions, but with some important differences. Only native communities with titled territories can participate and the conservation area is established within their own territory; i.e. it is not a concession from the state. The community receives an economic incentive, a so called conditioned cash transfer (*transferencia directa condicionada*), ten soles[41] per year and hectare during five years, provided that they actually do conserve. The funds are to be administered by the community. The director indicated that once the conservation area is determined, the native community is expected to make a life plan, a five-year vision statement, and an investment plan specifying how the money will be used. The objective is that in the fifth year of the program, the native community will be fully empowered so that they can continue on their own.

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[41] 10 PEN (Peruvian Nuevo Sol) corresponds to approximately 40 US Dollars.

Similar to the conservation concessions, the idea is that the funding should be used for productive economic activities that do not affect the forest under conservation, for example to enhance productivity in cocoa and coffee plantations. The rationale is that people will abstain from cutting forest to establish new fields if they can get higher yields from their existing farmland, or if they can increase their income otherwise, for example through non-timber forest products.

So far the Forest Program has only been implemented in Chirik Sacha which is one of FEKIHD's communities in El Dorado (not far from CN Alto Huaja, see Appendix 2), but the goal is to sign contracts with ten new communities during 2014. In Chirik Sacha the program has been running since 2012. The money they have received, 29 000 soles in total, has partly been invested in production of a medicinal plant called *uña de gato*.[42] The idea is that these non-timber forest products will lead to increased income for the communities, although the regional coordinator of the Forest Program admits that there is still a long way to go:

> I would be lying if I said we are already implementing it, but the challenge is precisely to get them to articulate with the market. We are yet to develop business plans and governing documents that guide us how we should do things.

The Forest Program is an example of the approach known as Payment for Ecosystem/Environmental Services, PES. A common definition of PES is "a voluntary, conditional transaction, where at least one buyer pays at least one seller for sustainable land management practices that favor the provision of well-defined environmental services" (cf. Noordwijk et al. 2012) In other words, the idea of PES is to combine conservation with different types of economic incentives for the local communities. PES is included in various forms in several governmental interventions, not only in the Forest Program but also in conservation concessions as well as in the management of the regional conservation area Cordillera Escalera (ACR-CE). REDD+ is also a type of PES, and it has striking similarities with the Forest Program. The regional coordinator of the Forest Program says that the administration of the Forest Program is partly financed through the REDD mechanism, with funding from Norway. The cash transfers to the communities are, however, financed with public funds allotted by the national government.

2.5.3 Support for subsistence agriculture and agrobiodiversity

In contrast to the two state-led initiatives described above, Waman Wasi is not focusing on forest conservation. Their aim is to strengthen native communities, and a key area of interest is agriculture and agrobiodiversity. According to Waman Wasi, the Kechwa-Lamistas are known to have a robust farming system with high biodiversity and the number of crop varieties they grow is even higher than other Amazonian peoples. One of the advantages is that it makes them less susceptible to climate change, since they both have varieties suitable for dry weather and for wet conditions. However, Waman Wasi is concerned about the changes that are taking place in Kechwa-

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[42] Mushuck Llacta de Chipaota, another community on the verge of signing a contract, will receive a larger amount since their conservation area is bigger (4 000 hectares × 10 soles = 40 000 soles/year), and the plan is to produce piassava, a palm fibre used for making brooms.

Lamista farming communities, especially the trend towards a greater market orientation. Many farmers tend to focus on a few crops that pay well, and often at the expense of their own subsistence farming. This is more evident in some communities than others and CN Alto Huaja is one of the most market oriented among the communities in Waman Wasi' network. The narrow focus on maize in CN Alto Huaja and the whole area around Sisa is worrying, not only from an ecological perspective, but also in terms of nutrition and food sovereignty. In the long run it could lead to malnutrition; not because they lack land, but because they focus on growing food for animals instead of people. The use of herbicides is also alarming, and the director says he is not surprised if people get sick from the chemicals they are spraying on their farms.

Waman Wasi's strategy to address these problems is based on educational activities that aim to make the Kechwas realize the value of holding on to what is seen by Waman Wasi as "their own customs". Although CN Alto Huaja is a new acquaintance for Waman Wasi, they have already participated in some activities. One example is the field trips where representatives from all of Waman Wasi's partner communities meet for two days in one community to visit farms and discuss important topics. Waman Wasi also organizes exchange of seeds, which is an old practice with long history among the Kechwas. The goal is to increase the biodiversity in the farms by stimulating the dispersion of seeds[43]. Waman Wasi's director says that the diversity have disappeared or decreased in many farms, but people still have the knowledge and skills (*los saberes*) within themselves:

> They have not lost their practices or their knowledge. The idea is to connect people who are nurturing diversity (*criando diversidad*) with people who are no longer nurturing diversity in order to turn them back again, not only in words though, but by accompanying them.

The director of Waman Wasi describes the work of the organization in terms of accompaniment (*acompañamiento*) rather than intervention, and cultural affirmation (*afirmación cultural*) instead of development. This is to highlight that they are not introducing exogenous things in the community. Instead, the aim is to "make the culture visible inwardly" to the community to make the Kechwas appreciate their own culture and in this way motivate them to continue their traditional way of life, especially their agricultural practices. Waman Wasi's director explains that the indigenous worldview (*cosmovisión*) sees the world as made up of three realms (*colectividades*), the human, the natural and the spiritual/sacred. These realms are interconnected and all the plants, animals, rivers etc. consequently have a soul (*ánima*). This worldview fosters a respect for nature and Waman Wasi sees it as a guarantor for the wellbeing of both humans and nature.

> Conservation is with them, it's with their knowledge and their practices. It's with their whole worldview. It's conservation according to their worldview. Here it's not called conservation but nurturing the space (*criar al espacio*). You have to nurture the space, because that space also nurtures you. If you care for it as they say, or we can put in our terms, if you conserve the space it will also give you what we call services. If you don't care for it, it will not give you any services. If you destroy it you are no longer going to

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[43] For example, a few kilograms of a bean species is distributed to a number of families. After harvest, every family is to give some back to Waman Wasi and this will then be distributed to a new group of households. In this way, farmers that are only growing one or two bean species will have added a new species and thus increased the biodiversity on the farm.

have water [for example]. But in their language, they call it nurturing the space so that the space will also nurture you. It's something reciprocal.

ORDEPISAM is collaborating on several regional projects that involve indigenous people, such as the issue of conservation, concessions, the Forest Program, the REDD round table of San Martín. Although ORDEPISAM's Kechwa representative is supportive of FEKIHD's choice of conservation concessions as a strategy to regain control over ancestral lands, he is very critical of the way many conservation projects are designed. When it comes to interventions to support native communities' livelihoods he actually seems to sympathize more with Waman Wasi's approach. One reason is because he thinks that current conservation arrangements exclude indigenous people from taking share in the benefits:

> Conservation should not be turned into the same mechanism as that of the petrol or the mining, to exclude [people] while all the profits go to others. To guarantee conservation there needs to be equity in benefits.

The representative does not think that the compensation (for conservation) offered to the communities by for example the Forest Program is sufficient.

> What kind of sustainable development can you guarantee by giving 18 000 soles to a community with 200 members? For them (the Forest Program) it is a big thing to teach them to spend those 18 000, but I am not convinced.

ORDEPISAM's representative is skeptical both of cash transfers and projects aiming to give communities a source of income through sustainable alternative products that do not damage the forest. This connects to another area of critique, that conservation arrangements are not taking food sovereignty into account. Unless food sovereignty is guaranteed conservation will fail, because people will revolt and take the land back or go and deforest elsewhere, even if it means breaking the law. Here is the representative's comments about the idea of investing in non-timber forest products like *uña de gato*, piassava (Programa de bosques) and latex (*shiringa)* (Proyecto Huallaga) as an alternative and more sustainable source of income:

> Is that what they are going to eat? Those sources of income will not guarantee the economic sustainability of the families. How are they going to dedicate themselves to producing that when they are dying from hunger? It might be sustainable for a few but not for the whole population, not for all the [communities].

The ORDEPISAM representative is positive to Waman Wasi's efforts to strengthen the subsistence part of Kechwa farmers' agriculture. According to ORDEPISAM, there is a need to boost food production in the communities, but unfortunately they have not gained support for the project proposals they have presented to the regional government. As it stands now, food crops are being abandoned in favor of coffee and cocoa, even though food crops like plantain, cassava and papaya pay very well. The farmers do not have to stop growing coffee and cocoa CN Altogether, but they can have an integrated production system (*actividad productiva integral*). If they only focus on one thing their business could be wiped out if there is a plague (which is what recently happened with the *roya* or coffee rust disease in coffee plantations all over San Martín). The idea is not to expand the areas for farming but rather to enhance production on existing farmland. What people need is technical assistance/extension services and perhaps economic support to get started. There is also a need for research

on food crops and animals. A lot of knowledge has been lost because the educational system has failed to value and fortify this type of ancestral knowledge and skills.

To summarize, this section has presented some examples of projects and interventions – either in the planning stage or already implemented – targeting Kechwa communities in San Martín. In what follows, these interventions will be discussed in the light of the theoretical framework, to see what the implications could be for a community like CN Alto Huaja and their opportunities to secure control over the communal territory.

3 Discussion

This thesis set out to analyze the struggle of the native community of Alto Huaja to gain possession of their communal forest and the ways in which different external actors influence this struggle. Indigenous advocates and organizations generally agree that a communal title is the best option for indigenous peoples to exercise control over their ancestral territories. The Peruvian law and international agreements even stipulate it as a right for indigenous peoples to have legal security for their land, but as the findings have shown, the existence of a legal right does not guarantee its translation into practice.

   The case of CN Alto Huaja reveals part of the ongoing power play around indigenous people's traditional territories and how they should be governed. This power play is not explicit; it is rather subtle which makes it difficult to get a clear picture of what is happening, not least for the people of CN Alto Huaja whose access to information is limited. The perspective of governmentality helps to shed light on this subtle power play, which often takes the form of what Li calls "improvement schemes" (Li 2007:1), i.e. policies, plans and projects aiming to improve the conditions of native communities.

What is in it for CN Alto Huaja?
The organizations interviewed have a lot to say about the how native communities should manage their forest territories, and how they can benefit from these in a way that serves both their wellbeing and the environment. By contrast, the practical management of the territory was hardly ever mentioned on the general assemblies in CN Alto Huaja. Their biggest concern was rather how to achieve the collective title, i.e. the issue of legal security. This does not mean that the people in the community lack ideas about how they want their community forest to be managed, but this seems not to be a topic of discussion or debate; it is rather a matter of convention and practical/tacit knowledge. The interventions presented in the findings section all claim to be participatory and to respect the will of the community, but the question is whether they take the reality of the community into account and if they actually respond to what the community wants and needs.

   The option of conservation concession is not an attractive one for CN Alto Huaja since they can have a title instead. CN Alto Huaja's neighbors in Kopal Sacha already have a titled territory, but have in addition applied for a conservation concession (see Appendix 2). For Kopal Sacha, the concession is more of an added bonus since it gives them opportunities to access funding and embark on new income-bringing activities. As mentioned earlier, part of the concession package is that ARA could help communities with conservation concessions to apply for project support from different NGOs and also from the regional government's own programs. But for CN Alto Huaja, the concession alternative would really only dispossess them of something that they see as theirs. Although it gives them the possibility to apply for funding which could help them for example to increase their presence in the forest, this could hardly outweigh the benefits of being the rightful owner of the land. Even though ARA has promised that they can have a title later, CN Alto Huaja cannot not trust that future governments will honor that promise.

The Forest Program could possibly look more attractive to CN Alto Huaja, since they would be paid to conserve their forest without having to denounce their ownership rights. The size of their forest territory is over 1 000 hectares which would yield around 10 000 soles in one year. Although it is not very much per capita, it would be an unusually big sum for the governing board to handle. The things which CN Alto Huaja would have to perform in return could however be problematic. The elaboration of plans and reports involves bureaucratic procedures that few if any of the community members are familiar with. As pointed out by Forest Program director, this problem will be solved by letting the community form a management board which will receive "technical assistance" to help them perform all the program activities. The question is whether the community members have the motivation to take part in the program activities. It is hard enough to convince people to attend the assembly meetings because it involves taking time away from their routine farm work. This is illustrated by a comment made by one community member who complained in a meeting that he does not see the point in participating in communal activities when there is no tangible gain. From the observations, it was only a fraction of the community members who were attending the meetings, and the same pattern could likely be repeated in case the Forest Program were implemented in CN Alto Huaja. This could lead to a situation where only the people who already have some degree of training, and in addition spare time to spend on activities outside the farm, would reap the benefits of the program.

The type of work which Waman Wasi is doing could be seen as more in tune with the everyday life in CN Alto Huaja as a farming community. Waman Wasi aims to adapt its support to the schedule and activities of the communities, and to accompany them in what they are doing rather than introducing new things that may be ill fitted to the existing cultural practices. However, the objectives of Waman Wasi are not necessarily the same as those of the community members, as displayed in the example of the water springs. Waman Wasi is fighting an uneven battle against what they see as the influences of modernity in CN Alto Huaja. Not in the sense that they wish to turn back time or "turn them into museum objects"; Waman Wasi rather encourages the community to explore new things, as long as they do not abandon what Waman Wasi sees as "their own culture". The question is whether the people in CN Alto Huaja agree with Waman Wasi's idea of what their own culture is and which cultural customs are worth holding on to. The use of *takchacotón*, the "traditional" attire of male Kechwa-Lamistas, is illustrative of the problems involved in trying to define the culture of the population of CN Alto Huaja. The *Apu* introduced the *takchacotón* in CN Alto Huaja after receiving inspiration from Lamas. However, the field observations suggest that it is only used ceremonially by a small number of men in CN Alto Huaja, notably in the community meetings and when there are visitors from outside the village. This shows that the so-called Kechwa-Lamista culture is subject to negotiation and reinterpretation of the group members. The cultural customs of CN Alto Huaja are not static and there is a risk that Waman Wasi's cultural affirmation project could become a nostalgic activity for the community members rather than a serious attempt to maintain a certain set of beliefs and practices.

3.1   Two approaches: forest first or people first

Two different approaches can be identified among the interventions presented in this thesis, two sets of ideas about how indigenous people's ancestral territories should be governed and managed for the benefit of people and nature. (In Li's terms, this can be seen as the object for improvement, which all the interventions seek to address.) The conflict between CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja can be understood as a clash between these two approaches. The idea of turning the communal territory into a conservation concession (with the intention of applying for a title later) can be categorized as a forest-centered approach. This approach is supported by FEKIHD, Urku and ARA, and it is also reflected in the Forest Program. The demand for a title that guarantees perpetual ownership of the communal territory is based on what we can call a people-centered approach. The main proponents of this approach is Waman Wasi together with CEPKA and CAAAP.

The reality is obviously much more complex. The two approaches are not completely opposite and there might even be some differences between actors within the same approach, but there is enough polarization to treat them as two distinct approaches. The two have a common interest to protect nature, promote the Kechwa people's ancestral customs and enhance their wellbeing, but the way these goals are envisioned and the proposed means/strategies to achieve them are radically different.

Roughly speaking, the forest-centered approach aims to protect the forest in order to guarantee the wellbeing of whole population of San Martín, including the Kechwa-Lamistas. By contrast, the solutions proposed within the people-centered approach do not take the forest as its point of departure. They rather places the Kechwa-Lamistas and their way of life at the center stage. The idea is that by promoting the continuity of the Kechwa-Lamista culture and farming practices the forests and the biodiversity will be preserved.

A common feature in the programs and projects offered by different actors in support of Kechwa communities is that they focus on one or a few issues while ignoring or downplaying others. This is not surprising, since every project has its limits and there is no single intervention which can fix all problems. However, the selection process, what is chosen as a focus, is always guided by certain values and interests. The process of designing projects and programs is thereby inherently political. In what follows, we will use Li's concept 'rendering technical' (2007:7f) to analyze the two models promoted by external entities in CN Alto Huaja's proximity and what problems they intend to solve.

3.1.1   The forest-centered approach

The forest-centered approach involves setting a certain forest area aside for protection. The community can still use it for their "ancestral customs" which is assumed to mean collection of medicinal plants, hunting and cutting single trees for example "to mend a house that has been damaged". Farming or commercial logging or hunting is, however, not permitted. As compensation, the community is granted economic incentives (cash transfers) and/or technical assistance to improve the productivity in existing coffee and cocoa plantations or to set up alternative income-bringing activities. Production of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and ecotourism could also be permitted.

The idea is that people will abstain from "advancing into the forest" if they have a stable income from other more sustainable sources than farming.

In the forest-centered approach, the farming practices of the Kechwas are identified as an issue which needs to be addressed. Relating to Li, "the identification of a problem is intimately linked to the availability of a solution" (2007:7). In the same vein, this model will only seek to solve the problems to which it has solutions. Choosing one problem indirectly means ignoring others, as noted above. Solutions like cash incentives to communities is a way of solving the problem of further encroachment of farms into the forest. Moreover, the governmental character of forest-centered projects is also revealed in their will to create norms for what is to be regarded as sustainable. The idea of sustainable alternatives presupposes that the current livelihood system of the Kechwas is unsustainable. The Kechwa communities are granted "freedom" to continue their ancestral customs, but at same time, the government is controlling and conditioning the way these customs are practiced. This control is not only done through supervision and reports. More importantly, it is done by defining what is ancestral. Even though the Kechwas are farmers and opening up the forest to establish *chacras* is one of the most central elements in their culture, this is not included in the government's definition of ancestral customs. In governmentality, people's behavior are regulated by influencing their norms, values and knowledge so that they choose to do the right thing by their own free will (cf. Häkli 2009:628, Li 2007:275). By promoting a certain definition of ancestral, the forest-centered interventions can lead the communities to believe they are allowed to continue their practices just like before, and that activities such as swidden farming is rather a step away from their traditional way of life.

Conservation activities following the forest-centered approach are supposed to be implemented through the technical support of intervening agencies (Urku, FEKIHD and Forest Program). Beyond supporting the community in preserving their own forest areas, the program also seeks to train them in a certain way of managing the forest. Such support schemes invoke the idea the communities do not have the needed expertise to do conservation independently. This way of claiming expertise and placing a boundary between those who know hand those who need to be trained is part of what Li calls 'rendering technical' (2007:7).

Critique of the forest-centered approach
The question is whether the forest-centered approach can lead to sustainability. A basic principle in this approach is that agriculture and forestry land need to be kept apart, something that stands in contrast to the Kechwa-Lamista's livelihood system in which agriculture and forestry are very much integrated. The Kechwas are praised by proponents of the forest-centered approach for their care for the environment but, strangely enough, the advantages of the integrated production system which many Kechwa communities practice are rarely mentioned. In San Martín, swidden agriculture is the order of the day for virtually all farmers, for Kechwas as well as for mestizos and migrant settlers. However, the swidden agriculture system practiced by the Kechwas is distinguished by its agrobiodiversity and management of fallow vegetation as soil fertility strategy, in some cases Kechwa farmers even plant trees in their fields to secure the fallow growth (Marquardt 2008). Moreover, most Kechwa farmers do not use fertilizers and very little or no chemical fertilizers on their fields. The forest-

centered approach is based on ecological and forestry science rather than on the Kechwa's knowledge about agriculture and forest management. The Kechwas ancestral lands are imagined as virgin 'untouched' forest, but the history of the Kechwas and how they have used the forest traditionally (the cyclical character of their forest management) is not taken into account. Neither is the notion of farmers advancing into the forest and doing away with the forest an accurate picture of what is happening in most Kechwa farming communities. The forest-centered approach takes farming as one of the main causes of deforestation, while excluding other factors which are more significant. AIDESEP reports the following major drivers of deforestation: gold mining, expansion of oil palm plantations, construction of dams, expansion of projects in oil and gas industry, road construction and weak governance structures for forest management (AIDESEP 2014:139f). These activities are not problematized in the forest-centered approach, but rather treated as background factors which fall outside the scope of intervention.

Another problem with the forest-centered approach is that it tends to have a strong focus on cash income and cash crops for export (e.g. coffee, cocoa and NFTPs), while neglecting the subsistence part of Kechwa-Lamista's production system. Extension services for cash crops would probably be appreciated by many Kechwa farmers since they need cash incomes to buy certain things and to pay for their children's education. But as the case study has shown, the trend (in CN Alto Huaja and elsewhere, as pointed out by Waman Wasi and ORDEPISAM) is to shift focus away from food crops and towards cash crops. As a result, people have started buying food to a greater extent, and in some cases it has also led to an impoverished diet. The one-sided focus on cash income in many forest-centered interventions could potentially reinforce this trend. This could in turn lead to a weakened food security and sovereignty, not only for the Kechwa farmers themselves but for the region as a whole since the Kechwa farmers sell part of their produce on the local markets.

PES-schemes, such as the cash transfers proposed by the Forest Program, is also part of the forest-centered "toolbox" for improving of the livelihoods of forest communities. However, the effectiveness of PES schemes like REDD have been criticized on several grounds. One is that the promise of PES in improving both livelihoods and forest management at the same time has been contested (McAfee 2012). As ORDEPISAM argued, the payment offered by the Forest Program is quite meagre and might not be enough to compensate the communities for their conservation efforts. Another observation is that the introduction of monetary incentives could "crowd out" other sources of motivation for communities to conserve their forest (Noordwijk et al. 2012:403).

3.1.2 The people-centered approach

The people-centered approach can be seen as a critical response to the forest-centered approach and its perceived inability to factor in the Kechwa communities' cultural ties to the forest. The problem is not that the Kechwas are in the forest; rather it is that they are not there, because of the change in farming practices which is tying them to their commercial crops and distancing them from forest-related livelihood activities. This is the reason why migrants are able to invade unnoticed. This is a problem which Urku also identifies, and on this point they agree with the people-centered approach,

but based on the solution they propose (conservation and monitoring) they can rather be seen as part of the forest-centered approach.

Rather than introducing sustainable alternatives, the people-centered approach sees the Kechwa-Lamista culture as sustainable already and efforts are therefore made to strengthen the culture in different ways. For Waman Wasi, environmental degradation and loss of cultural practices and beliefs are sides of the same coin. The best way to protect the forest is therefore not by creating conservation areas, but rather by securing the continuity in practices and beliefs, i.e. by "cultural affirmation". The people-centered approach is also a rights-based approach. This is exemplified in CAAAP's strategy to inform Kechwa communities of their rights as indigenous peoples and help them apply for title. What the communities decide to do with their land is their own business. But, if they are allowed to manage their own territory themselves and if their culture is strengthened they will protect it. Problems of deforestation, for example in Awajun villages, are explained in terms of external factors that have influenced the mentality of the people and distorted the culture.

Critique of the people-centered approach
The people-centered approach can be criticized based on Li's problem-solution linkage. A weak side is of the approach is that it proposes an internal solution to problems which are external in nature. The argument is that strengthening the capacity of communities will help them to withstand the pressures from the outside. Critically, Waman Wasi's project of cultural affirmation could be seen as a way to govern the very people they wish to protect. The idea of "helping natives to be true to their own indigenous traditions" has been identified by Li as one of the tactics of governing, used both in colonial and modern development interventions (2007:16). As pointed out in the theoretical section, the identities are socially constructed and highly dynamic. Ulloa argues that identity, as much as it is constructed, "is a product of negotiation of history, power and culture in the specific locations in which it takes place" (2013:133). It is therefore problematic to speak about Kechwa communities having abandoned their own culture and traditions.

Ecological natives
Despite the different points of departure, there is a common denominator between the above mentioned approaches in that both of them define indigenous peoples in terms of their care for nature, or environmental friendliness. This reflects what Ulloa has described as a global construction of indigenous identity which portrays indigenous peoples as "'ecological natives' who protect the global environment and give us all hope in the face of the environmental crises brought about by western-style development" (Ulloa 2005:1). The interviews with the organizations give several examples of how Kechwas are described as ecological natives. ARA and the Forest Program indicated that the reason why they have chosen to engage the Kechwas in their conservation projects was because they are more inclined to conservation than the Awajun people. FEKIHD argues that the Kechwas have been conserving for thousands of years, and that this accounts for why their territories are still forested. A similar argument is made by Waman Wasi, asserting that the Kechwas way of life is essentially conservation, although they themselves do not use the word conservation.

This kind of representations (ecological natives) produce effects which can be both enabling and constraining for the Kechwas. On one hand, the communities could use the ecological native image, and refer to their ability to conserve to gain access to/control over forest land and other resources. This is essentially what FEKIHD has done – by arguing that they are already doing conservation through their ancestral customs, they have been granted control over territory and resources to do monitoring. On the other hand, their opportunities to be granted this type of support is tied to expectations and requirements to behave in certain ways as ecological natives. As Ulloa points out, the ecological native image contains an inbuilt contradiction since they are recognized as capable and good stewards of the environment, and at the same time they are also in the need of protection and help to continue this lifestyle (2005:196).

3.2 Alliances and brokerage

The case study of CN Alto Huaja provides valuable insights regarding the role of NGOs and indigenous federations as brokers. The physical remoteness of many communities makes it cumbersome and expensive for local leaders to visit the authorities' offices, and it can be difficult to master the bureaucratic procedures and jargons of government institutions. Brokerage of some sort of is therefore necessary in order to bridge the gap between communities and the state. The case study suggests that this function is carried out by various actors on several levels. The *Apu* of CN Alto Huaja is brokering on behalf of the community members in the relation to the federations and NGOs. The federations CEPKA and FEKIHD serve as brokers between their affiliated communities and the regional government. In addition, ORDEPISAM can be seen as a broker between the federations and other departments within the regional government. Lastly, the NGOs are acting as brokers between the Kechwa communities and their federations on one side and on the other international donors, and sometimes government institutions.

Brokerage involves linking otherwise disconnected actors so as to facilitate interaction and "access to valued resources" (Stovel and Shaw 2012:140f), for example information or financial resources. Writing on brokers in the field of development, Mosse and Lewis (2006) suggest, that brokers can be thought of not only as intermediaries but as translators. Beyond serving as bridge which connects actors, or a vessel through which information or resources flow, brokers also have the power to build alliances, and bring parties into agreement by reconciling their interests and helping them discover that they have something in common (Mosse and Lewis 2006:16). The idea of translation raises several interesting questions regarding the brokerage exercised in the case study under examination, as to who the translators are, what is being translated, and what the possible effects of these translations for CN Alto Huaja and the other actors involved.

The federations are brokers by design, since their reason for being is to represent native communities in relation to the regional government. Defending the ancestral lands of Kechwa communities is a joint interest for all the federations, but as we can see in the case of CN Alto Huaja and CP Huaja, the federations CEPKA and FEKIHD have chosen different strategies to achieve this end. The difference can partly be explained as a result of their distinct translations. Through CEPKA, CN Alto Huaja has

been connected to rights-based organizations like CAAAP and Waman Wasi, who argue that native communities have a legal right to title. Consequently, these organizations have assisted CN Alto Huaja in their recognition process and title application and thus translated their concerns into the language of indigenous peoples' rights. FEKIHD, on the other hand, has chosen to connect CP Huaja to Urku and to ARA, who mainly speak the language of environmental protection. Seeing that the door to titles has been closed since 1997, FEKIHD has chosen to instead align CP Huaja's claim over its ancestral lands by presenting the argument that "the community is already doing conservation". ARA, on the other hand, is also translating its forest conservation goals into the language of indigenous rights by stating that the community is "allowed to continue their ancestral customs" and at the same time providing an adapted definition of "ancestral customs".

The role of the federations as representatives of the indigenous communities thus needs to be problematized. As CAAAP and others testified, the federations have strengthened their position in the regional political arena in recent years, and have become an important resource for the communities as well as for the authorities which often use the federations as a channel to reach out to the communities. However, the findings suggests that the discord between CN Alto Huaja and CP Huaja has a lot to do with the alliances which their respective federations have made with other organizations; it not necessarily reflecting the will of the communities. The federations should therefore be seen as (political) actors in their own right and not straight off synonymous with the indigenous peoples/communities.

On this note, it is important to also analyze the role of the *Apu* as a broker. Many of the organizations interviewed speak about the communities as organic wholes with a single will, and the *Apus* are often assumed to be a representative of the collective will of the community. As pointed out by Guijt and Shah, this view of community is a myth, because it obscures the heterogeneous character of all communities and the fact that people do not necessarily agree in everything (1998:7). The story of how CN Alto Huaja came into being indicates that the *Apu*, more being a representative is someone who has managed to mobilize part of the population along the Huaja stream to claim their rights as a natives of the Amazon. It was through the *Apu's* agency some community members became convinced of the need for native recognition and communal land title in the first place, but since he did not gain the support of everyone the village was divided in two. Without the *Apu's* knowledge and awareness of the legal framework CN Alto Huaja might never have been formed. This illustrates the observation of Stovel and Shaw (2012) that brokers possess certain skills or advantages that qualify them as brokers, such as greater access to information or other resources.

However, the same authors also note that the broker's advantage can lead to distrust, or the broker's dilemma: "Given that a broker – due to her greater access to information, control over resources, or structural power – has a clear opportunity to gain at the expense of either or both of the groups for whom she is brokering, how does she maintain the trust necessary to continue brokering between them?" (Stovel and Shaw 2012:154). Distrust can also arise from a sense that the broker is biased or closer to the other party (Stovel and Shaw 2012:142), or that the broker is in for personal gain or self-interest (2012:151).

The broker's dilemma, or vulnerability to distrust, can be observed on several levels in the case study. One example is the *Apu's* assertion that some community members have suspected him of having a personal interest in securing the title. Similar suspicions have been levelled against Urku by the *Apu* and community members of CN Alto Huaja. Even though Urku's director has denied the allegations of favoring Ishichiwi at the expense of CN Alto Huaja, the experience from the patrol event was enough a reason for CN Alto Huaja to disassociate themselves from Urku. A third example is CAAAP's concern that the federations FEKIHD and FEPKRESAM could lay hold of the project support intended for the communities that are managing conservation concessions. Lastly, ARA remarks that some self-interested NGOs are misrepresenting the regional government as unsupportive of the communities in their quest for tenure security. Concurrently, they speak of another NGO as a good partner that is collaborating with ARA in implementing concession projects in some communities. These statements suggest that ARA distrusts some NGO's as brokers between the authority and the communities, while giving preference to NGO's whose objectives are more in line with those of ARA.

The above discussion gives a picture of the ways in which different actors, internal and external, are influencing decisions regarding the management of indigenous territories, and the social field that is formed as a result. The polarization in the title vs. concession debate (see figure 7) also gives us a hint of the alliances that exist among the specific organizations/actors figuring in our specific case. The actors' level of influence or relative strength in this social field is largely dependent on their ability to translate or align their own interests with those of other actors in the field. The interesting thing to note is that one set of actors is more aligned with the government while the other set of actors is more in opposition/antagonists to the government. This is revealed in the comments – both explicit and implicit – that the organizations make about themselves and the others. We have already mentioned ARAs distinction between the NGOs. Moreover, ORDEPISAM describes FEKIHD as pragmatic whereas Waman Wasi is seen as too radical. But for Waman Wasi being radical is a compliment and in their view some organizations and indigenous representatives in the government have detached themselves from the reality of the communities. Finally, CAAAP criticizes Urku for its close relationship to the regional government and thinks that the director of Urku has a vested interest in the conservation concessions because of his role as consultant both for ARA and for FEKIHD.

From the interviews, it is clear that Urku has the strongest position in relation to the regional government. Even though both FEKIHD and Urku try to downplay Urku's role in supporting FEKIHD it is obvious that Urku has assisted FEKIHD extensively (for example in project applications) and that Urku's good connections with the regional government have benefitted FEKIHD in several ways. Depending on what perspective one chooses, it could either be seen as an example of a successful alliance, or "strategic translation" (Mosse and Lewis 2006:19), through which an indigenous organization has managed to gain access to the regional political arena. Or, it could be seen as an example of how the regional government has co-opted an NGO and an indigenous organization as channels to extend its governmental power. From the perspective of governmentality these two ways of seeing it are not mutually exclusive, they can both be true. The federation FEKIHD could both be and object and a subject of power at the same time.

3.3 Governmentalization of territory

The current tendencies[44] in the region seem to indicate that the regional government is trying to gain more and more control over of San Martín's territory. Under the vision of the 'Green Region', the regional government has driven a number of different initiatives with environmental overtones, such as the zoning project ZEE, conservation areas (e.g. Cordillera Escalera, ZoCREs, conservation concessions) and the Forest Program. All this can be seen as a part of the governmentalization of the territory, that is a process through which the territory is constituted as governable, or as realm/subject that warrants governmental intervention. All the documentation, maps, plans and expert knowledge produced in relation to these interventions serve as a means to exercise power over the territory and its dwellers (cf. Häkli 2009:629, 632). This is done in a subtle way, i.e. not by discipline, but by presenting it as a technical problem (rendering technical). The statement that 70 % of the regional territory has been identified as apt for conservation is typical example of how a problem of a political nature is rendered technical. This figure is used to legitimize virtually all conservation interventions led by the regional government of San Martín. It also serves as a justification for not giving titles to native communities.

This process of territorial governmentalization is not a recent phenomenon. Decree-Law 22175 (see figure 2) and the fact that indigenous peoples have to organize themselves into native communities and formally apply for ownership over their ancestral lands is one of the most evident expressions of governmental control over indigenous territories. The reluctance of the regional government to award titles to native communities, although it is their legal right, and the simultaneous generosity in granting concessions for conservation seems to indicate a desire to tighten governmental control over the lands of San Martín in order to manage them according to certain political goals.

A question that prompts to be asked is what might be the driving force behind this will to govern the territory; what are these political goals? From the perspective of governmentality, government interventions do not originate from a single will, it is rather an assemblage of different objectives, knowledges and practices etc. (Li 2007:276). The primary goal of interventions following the forest first model (such as the Forest Program and conservation concessions) is to conserve the forest (for the sake of its biological values and its significance for climate regulation/global climate change mitigation etc.). But this strong will to conserve should be seen in the light of the emerging global market for biodiversity as commodity and other ecosystems services. The Amazonian forests can now generate income, not only by turning them into timber products, but also by leaving them intact. The conservation initiatives in San Martín and commitment of the national government to protect 54 million hectares by 2025 can therefore be interpreted not only as an expression of concern about deforestation and climate change, but also as a strategy to turn the country's rich forest resources into a source of revenue.

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[44] "Current tendencies" refers to the time when the field study was conducted. Since then, a new Regional Government has been elected in San Martín.

Conservation as 'green grabbing'

As CAAAP, suggested, the chances of getting REDD money in the future is a strong motive for the state to try to gain (and maintain) control over territory for conservation. This trend towards a strengthened state control over forest resources has also been observed in several other countries both in Latin America and beyond (Ribot et al. 2006). As noted by, Fairhead et al. (2012) "the commodification of nature and its appropriation by a wide group of players for a range of uses all in the name of sustainability, conservation of green values is accelerating" – a phenomenon they refer to as 'green grabbing' (Fairhead et al. 2012:238). This can be seen as a result of market-based strategies which have identified natural landscapes as sources of ecosystems services (McAffee 2012:26). ORDEPISAM's observation is that conservation is starting to resemble mining because it works to dispossess indigenous peoples of their land. From the perspective of market logic, this is the reasonable response to the demand on the global market. It presents a nation like Peru, which has large areas of rainforest, with a golden opportunity to become an exporter of "products" like biodiversity, recreational landscapes and carbon storage. And by extension, the dwellers of these forests have to become conservationists rather than farmers.

The consequence for indigenous peoples is that their opportunities to control their ancestral lands have come to rely less on their rights as stipulated in international agreements and national laws; it is rather tied to their ability to protect the forest. In this respect, the Kechwas have an advantage; they have a reputation of caring for nature which they can use to gain control over territory. But this only works as long as nature conservation remains political priority. Conservation concession is clearly a weaker form of tenure than title and it gives little legal security if coming governments rather want to give more room for exploitation of minerals and oil.

3.4   Concluding remarks

At the time of writing, CN Alto Huaja had still not been granted a title for their communal forest territory. It is too early to say which one of the two strategies are most successful in landing a title for indigenous communities; to apply for title directly or to accept the conservation concession and hope to convert it to a title later on. It all depends on the type of politics that will be pursued by future governments. Future demands for hydrocarbons and other natural resources could also place things in a different light. It might turn out that concession was the best option, or that title was better. But this study has pointed to a trend: the Kechwa-Lamista's future control over their ancestral land is not only dependent on their rights as indigenous peoples. It also depends on their ability to conserve according to the standards set by governmental interventions and their ability to use the image of the ecological native to their advantage, and finally, on their ability to align themselves with other actors who can help promote their interests. In the future, they might become forest guards instead of farmers, as one indigenous leader commented:

> It is not only by tilling the land we can have an income or a future profession for our children, but also by conserving our forests. We can capture carbon dioxide and negotiate in a responsible way this resource which the forest gives us, now that we are living in a globalized world.

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Appendix 1: Presentation of organizations interviewed

ARA, *Autoridad Regional Ambiental* (the Regional Environmental Authority) is part of the regional government and it is the regional governmental body in charge of natural resources, environment and land use. ARA has three sub-divisions, and the one that has been interviewed for this thesis is the sub-division responsible for conservation, namely the Executive Office of Administration and Natural Resource Conservation. The office is engaging several indigenous communities in forest conservation by offering them concessions for conservation, for example CP Huaja and CN Alto Huaja.

CAAAP, *Centro Amazónico de Antropología y Aplicación Práctica* (Amazonian Center of Anthropology and Practical Application) is an NGO of the Catholic church (founded 1974 on the national level, present in San Martín since the early 1990s) working with indigenous people all over the Peruvian Amazon. Including the three ethnic groups of San Martín. CAAAP's goal is to make indigenous people's rights known and respected. To this end, they spread information about indigenous peoples' rights through workshops with indigenous peoples as well as government authorities on local and regional level (e.g. health, education and judiciary). CAAAP is also supporting a few indigenous federations (FEPIKRESAM and CEPKA, e.g. funding workshops, designing projects) and assisting native communities in the process of getting registered and getting their land title. One of the native communities they have assisted is CN Alto Huaja.

CEPKA, *Consejo Étnico de los Pueblos Kechwas de la Amazonía* (Ethnic Council of Kechwa Peoples of the Amazon) is an indigenous organization, or federation, which represents around 30 indigenous communities in the region of San Martín. Every native community (with legal recognition) in San Martín, and some *centros poblados* (without legal recognition) belong to a federation. There are seven federations in total in the whole region, four of which are Kechwa federations. The federations represent their member communities, or 'bases', in relation to the government authorities and assist the communities in their development and internal affairs. The federations differ in some respects, but they tend to focus on the same type of issues, such as defense and development of the native communities, territory, education, health and agriculture. One of CEPKA's member communities is CN Alto Huaja. CEPKA helped CN Alto Huaja to apply for native community recognition, and to launch the new organizational structure.

FEKIHD, *Federación Kichwa Huallaga Dorado* (Kichwa Federation Huallaga Dorado) is the youngest of the indigenous federations in San Martín (founded in 2012) (see CEPKA for an explanation of the term 'federation'). As the name suggests, FEKIHD's area of influence comprises the provinces of Huallaga and El Dorado, or the Central Huallaga area. CP Huaja is affiliated to FEKIHD.

ORDEPISAM, *Oficina Regional de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de San Martín* (the Regional Office for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of San Martín),

is a relatively new authority of the regional government (implemented in 2011). OR-DEPISAM's role is to link the regional government of San Martín and the indigenous peoples in the region, so that their interests will be promoted in the diverse plans, programs, projects and policies of the regional government. The office has three employees, representing each of the three indigenous groups in the region (Awajun, Kechwa and Shawi), and they are primarily working with the ARA on a number of new programs targeting native communities (on the issues of conservation, concessions and programs like the Forest Program, San Martín REDD+ roundtable and the community forestry platform).

Programa de bosques, *Programa Nacional de Conservación de Bosques para la Mitigación del Cambio Climático* (National Forest Conservation Program for Climate Change Mitigation, or Forest Program for short) is a national program with a regional branch in San Martín. The Forest Program is headed by the Ministry of Environment (MINAM, Ministerio de Ambiente) and is carried out in collaboration with the regional government of San Martín (and other regions throughout the country) to achieve the goal of protecting 54 million hectares of forest by 2025. The program is targeting native communities as part of the strategy and it was implemented for the first time in Chirik Sacha – not far from Alto Huaja – which is one of FEKIHD's base communities.

Proyecto Huallaga, *Proyecto Especial Huallaga Central y Bajo Mayo* (the Central Huallaga and Lower Mayo Special Project, or Huallaga Project for short) is an organ of the regional government that is especially dedicated to different types of development projects. It has four directorates/divisions: Construction, Investigations, Environment, Agricultural Development (*Obras, Estudios, Medioambiente, Desarrollo Agropecuario*). For this thesis, the Director of Environment was interviewed. The Directorate/Division of Environment is responsible for the management of a regional conservation area called Cordillera Escalera (ACR-CE), and it is currently engaging affected indigenous communities in a consultation process to create update the management plan and to resolve the tensions caused by the establishment of the park.

Urku Estudios Amazónicos (Urku Amazonian Studies) is a San Martín-based NGO (founded in 2000) dedicated to conservation, research and strengthening of indigenous organizations. Urku provides technical support to FEKIHD and several of its conservation and research projects are carried out in FEKIHD's affiliated villages. Urku and FEKIHD have been involved CN Alto Huaja in their territorial strategy since their three surrounding neighbors (CP Huaja, Ishichiwi and Kopal Sacha) belong to FEKIHD.

Waman Wasi - *Centro de la Biodiversidad y la Espiritualidad Andino-Amazónica* (Waman Wasi - Center for Biodiversity and Andean-Amazonian Spirituality) (founded 2002) is a San Martín-based NGO that supports around twenty Kechwa native communities, for example in the areas of agro-biodiversity, intercultural education and training of teachers and leaders. Waman Wasi's center is located in Lamas and is used for courses, workshops, spiritual retreats/*ayawaska* rituals, and other activities. CN Alto Huaja is a fairly new acquaintance, but Waman Wasi' staff visits the community on a regular basis and assisted them with their application for native community recognition.
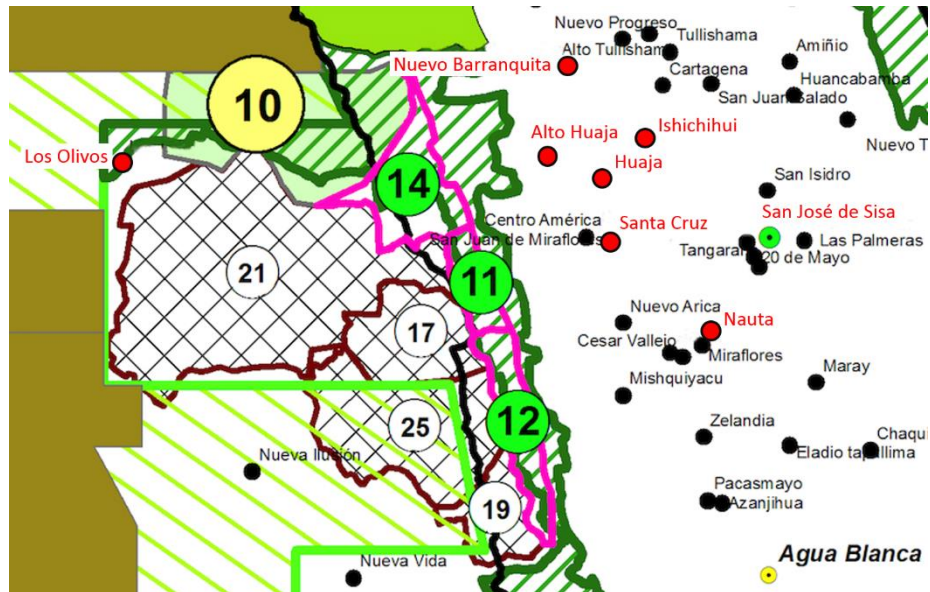
Appendix 2: Map of study area

Figure 9. Map of land categories in the study area. Source: GRSM 2013. The map and the legend are adapted from a map of protected areas in San Martín published on the regional government website. The communal forest in dispute is marked with number 14 and delineated with a pink line, indicating that a process to turn the area into a conservation concession has been initiated. Places that occur in the text are seen in red.

Legend

▭	Conservation concessions on request *(Concesiones para conservación en solicitud)*
▪	Forest concessions *(Concesiones Forestales)*
▪	Properties registered as ZoCRE *(Predios Inmatriculados como ZoCRE)*
▨	Areas in process of registration as ZoCRE *(Areas en proceso de inmatriculación como ZoCRE)*
▨	Permanent Production Forest *(Bosque de Producción Permanente)*
▪	Conservation concessions granted *(Concesiones de conservación otorgadas)*
▪	Protected Natural Area *(Área Natural Protegida)*
▨	Native Communities *(Comunidades Nativas)*
●	Provincial capital *(Capital Provincial)*
●	District capital *(Capital Distrital)*
●	Populated centres_2012 *(Centros poblados_2012)*
▭	Provincial limit *(Límite Provincial)*
●	Places that occur in this thesis

GRANTED CONSERVATION CONCESSIONS	10	Concesión de conservación Ishichiwi	3,220.8 ha
PROPOSED CONSERVATION CONCESSIONS	11	Kopalurku	464.72 ha
	12	Nawtakashuyuk	821.51 ha
	14	Waha (Huaja)	1,231.02 ha
NATIVE COMMUNITIES	17	CN Nuevo Arica de Kachiyacu	1,395.02 ha
	19	CN Kawanasisa	805.74 ha
	21	CN Copal Sacha	6,652.26 ha
	25	CN Chirik Sacha	2,599.62 ha