

# GOLFO DE NICOYA

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Factsheet Transfer Region Osa Region, Costa Rica



Responsible partner:



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| Campinas, Brazil

Factsheet – English



*The capacity of civil society organisations  
and their networks in community based  
environmental management*

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## Introduction to case studies in the CiVi.net project

One of the main aims of the CiVi.net project is to identify 'success stories' of local communities where solution strategies have been developed for the effective management of commonly used natural resources. Therefore the project has taken an action research and case study approach, selecting a number of 'original' case study regions, i.e. communities where solution strategies have already been worked out. For each of the selected original case study regions possible 'transfer' regions are identified. The selection of transfer regions is done in consultation with local stakeholders of the original region, the project's advisory board and the European Commission.

More information on the CiVi.net project and the Spanish and Portuguese version of this factsheet can be found on the website of the project: [www.civinet.eu](http://www.civinet.eu). Information on the case studies and transfer regions is available via [www.civinet.eu/english/79277/5/0/100](http://www.civinet.eu/english/79277/5/0/100).

## Context and problem statement

The region that comprises Golfo de Nicoya is located in the central-North Pacific of Costa Rica. It is part of three different conservation areas: Pacific-Central (ACOPAC), Arenal-Tempisque (ACA-T) and Tempisque conservation area.

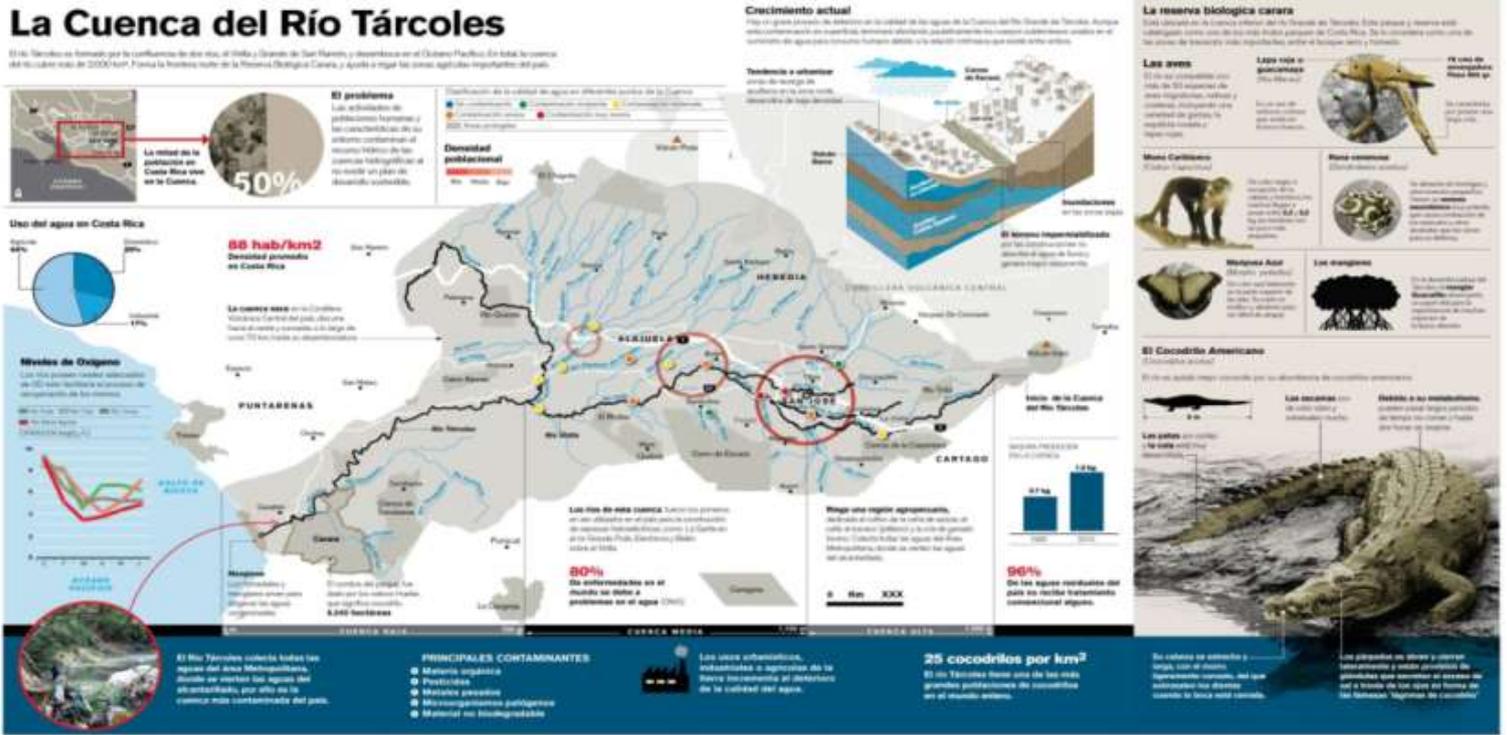


*View from Golfo de Nicoya (picture: Fundación Neotrópica)*

Whereas the environmental management of the region is divided into three leading areas, the administrative management is divided between the Guanacaste and Puntarenas provinces, specifically the Nicoya and Puntarenas municipalities.

The zone shows a strong link with the Central Valley, one of the most densely populated regions and the main generator of water/solid waste of the country. This connection mainly exists through the Rio Grande de Tarcoles basin, which is considered one of the most contaminated basins in Central America according to the eighteenth state report. Due to the river mouth location of this important river in the Pacific Central and the marine currents disposition, Golfo de Nicoya has been the waste and contaminated water depository for years.

In addition, Golfo de Nicoya mangroves and resources suffer from other pressures, such as the expansion of agricultural land into the mangrove zones (especially in the case of sugar cane), the strong presence of shrimp farms, the urban pressure in zones such as Puntarenas, and massive touristic activities.



Cuenca del Río Grande de Tárcoles diagram (figure: Diario La Nación)

### Local livelihoods and biodiversity conservation

The current situation has affected the fish and shell fish production in the zone enormously, forcing local fishermen to extent their fishing areas and move increasingly offshore. Nowadays, the population faces a big problem because this resource is depleting and there is little they can do to stop the process. Herein they also experience a certain level of self-pressure since they also need to gather goods for their own livelihood in the area. The fisheries sector is defined as one of the populations with the most pronounced depletion levels and it is in continuous deterioration within a background that offers only few employment possibilities. It is quite common to find solely women and their children engaged in this activity as well as their families that perform this activity in a traditional way.

On the other hand, the mangrove areas of Golfo de Nicoya accomplish an important function in the biodiversity conservation and connectivity. For instance, the three-wattled bellbird (*Procnias tricarunculatus*) is a bird species that, although it lives in the cloud forest, performs attitude migrations that bring them towards the mangroves. Understanding the importance of the connectivity among the different ecosystems, the biological corridor for the three-wattled bellbird was created. This is a process that links stakeholders and promote integrated actions that provides the biological connectivity restoration and maintenance, natural resources conservation and local communities welfare. This corridor encompasses the territory between the Monteverde cloud forest and the mangroves of Golfo de Nicoya.



*Mangrove areas in Golfo de Nicoya and location of Campo de NEO field station in the region (CEEC SUNDT) (figure: Fundación Neotrópica)*

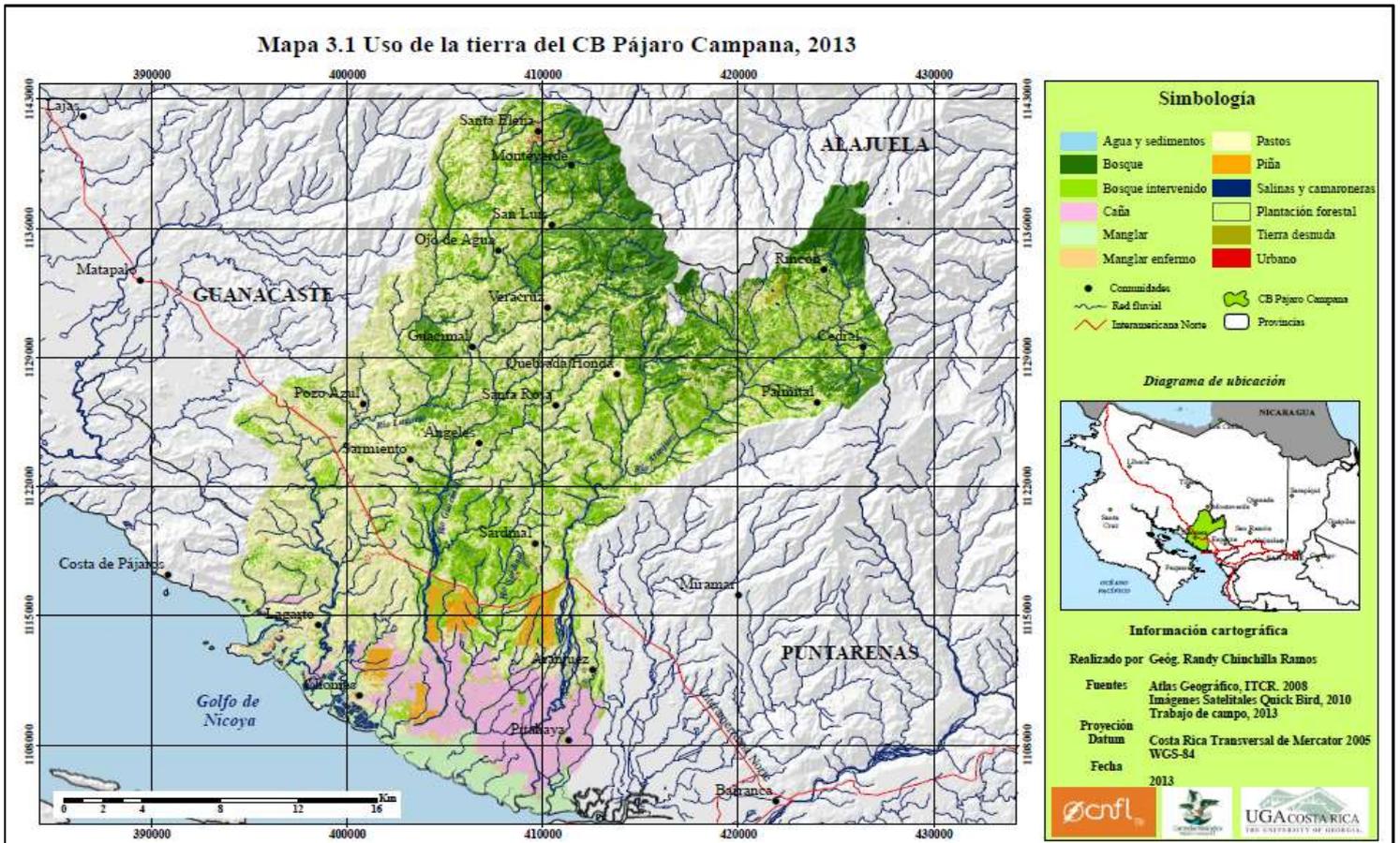
The preceding text indicates the existence of a complex outlook with a lot of interrelationships where the main challenge is to promote the sustainable management of the Golfo de Nicoya mangroves in such a way that this resource continues to accomplish its ecological function, and giving the local communities the environmental services it provides today. To achieve this, the participation of the organized communities is needed, therefore the Neotropica foundation has begun working with the local fishermen committee of Manzanillo and the local council of the biological corridor of the three-wattled bellbird. In addition, the following local organizations have been identified:

- Comité Local de Pescadores en Chomes
- Asociación Verde Manglar
- Asociación de Pescadores Artesanales Unión de Cocoroca-Chomes
- Asociación de Mujeres de Punta Morales
- Asociación Comité Local de Pescadores de Morales
- Asociación de Pescadores de Costa de Pájaros

Fundación Neotrópica manages a field station in the region, called Centro de Estudios y Empoderamiento Comunal (CEEC) Sundt, in collaboration with the State University of New York (SUNY).



Members of ASOPEZ (of Golfo Dulce) y collaborators of Fundación Neotrópica visiting the tranfer area (picture: Fundación Neotrópica) View of Golfo Dulce (picture: Fundación Neotrópica)



Sustainable management and participation

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The CiVi.net project is part of the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Union, with a focus on community based management of environmental challenges. Theme: ENV.2011.4.2.3-1 / Project ID: 282750



The CiVi.net project aims to analyse, transfer and disseminate successful and sustainable community based solutions with regard to ecosystem service management in Latin America. The role of civil society organizations (CSOs) within these governance models is thereby at the core of the research.