The State Park of Ilha do Cardoso

Factsheet Marujá, São Paulo State, 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 discussed, though the final selection of transfer regions will be made upon the start of the project after conferring with the local stakeholders of the original region, the project's advisory board and the Commission.

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

The State Park of Ilha do Cardoso

The State Park of Ilha do Cardoso (PEIC), created in 1962, is located on Laggon-Estuarine Complex of Paranaguá-Iguape-Cananéia, the border between the states of São Paulo e Paraná in Ribeira Valley Region (Figure 1). It has the largest area of continuous Atlantic Forest Biome, holding 38,14% of the remaining forest in the São Paulo State.

Development of the region

During the creation of the Park the tourism visitation in region became more intense by both the construction of highway BR-116 (Régis Bittencourt) linking the major centers to the region Lagamar as the pressure to make the territory a resort. The growth of tourism caused an increased level of migration to the region and triggered land speculation. This has seen an increase in the number of houses built, mostly on the sandbank in mangrove areas, leading to a situation of environmental degradation. Another activity that has increased through the use of Forest resources as the extraction of caixeta (wood products) and non-timber products such palm juçara threatened with extinction.

As a mitigatória the government created about 20 conservation units (CU) in the Ribeira Valley, from 1958 to 2006, causing great economic and social impact in a region of agricultural and extractive economic base. Many of people whose territory became CU were expelled without any kind of compensation.

Figure 1: The Marujá Village location

Marujá Community

The Marujá community lives in PEIC (Figure 2), a State Park with 22.500 hectares extension. The presence of this community within the Park has helped in preserving the local ecosystem because people have learned how to handle some important ecosystems services decades ago (fisheries, timber and non-timber products, etc.) Despite this fact, the Marujá community faced some problems and difficulties after their territory became a Park, due to the park model adopted, which in theory does not allow the presence of people living in the territory, including existing traditional communities, as in the case of Marujá.
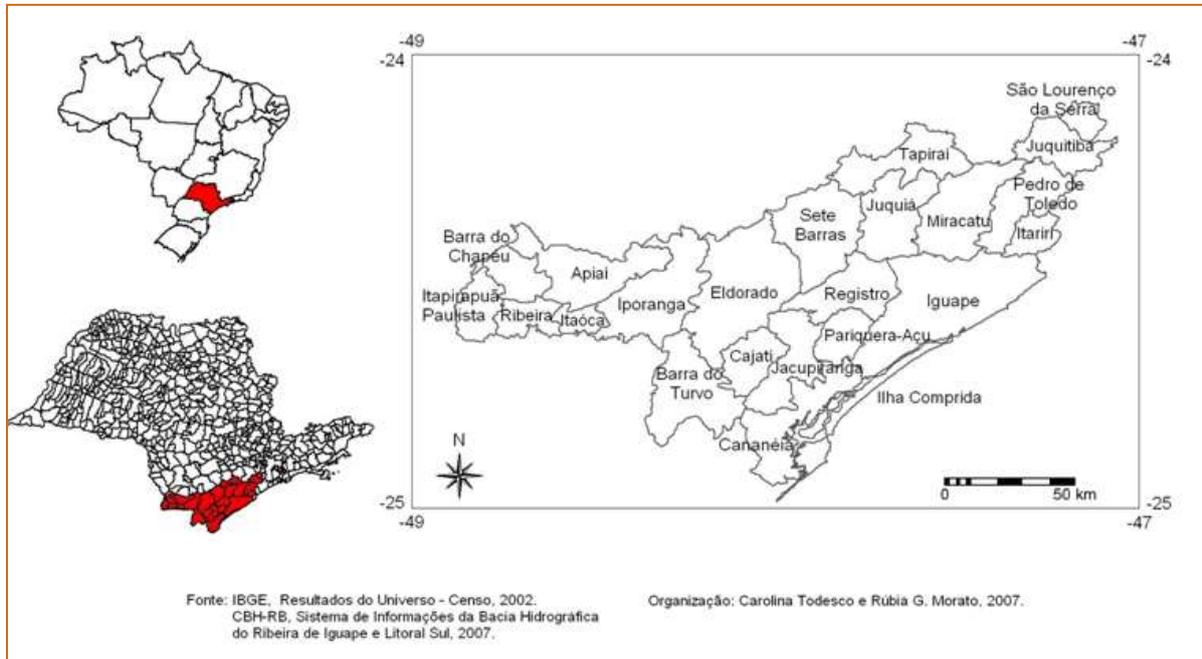

Figure 2: Ribeira Valley

The community is well-organized, which enabled them to negotiate about their stay with the park direction. The management of the park recognizes the importance of this community in the preservation of the specific ecosystem services. The Marujá community has consolidated experience of community organization in natural resource management and in communicating with the park direction. The creation of Marujá Resident Association (AMOMAR) helped them to gain recognition of the direction of the park and the importance of them stay in the territory. It also provided them with the right of exploring some of the forest resources and also the permission for economic ecotourism exploration. The community also participated in drafting the Management Plan for the Park, and currently participates in the Advisory Board.

The traditional community of Marujá is one of the most important in São Paulo coast region with 174 residents, and 90,6% lived there for long time ago. This community has created an internal code rules that contribute to the union in the management of tourism and some ecosystem services. This type of organization and rule code is focus of the case study and also is the main asset that has great potential to be applied in other places such as Superagui community. For the community the Island preservation is important for their survival, since a large portion of their income comes from tourism. Many residents offer their homes as guesthouses, and also have restaurants, bars, which host school classes, college students and researchers.

The challenge

The challenge faced by the Marujá community is to ensure that their culture and permanence as well as their way of management the ecosystem services remains in place. The Environmental Secretary of São Paulo State (SMA) is discussing the possibility of reclassifying the Marujá area for the Sustainable Development conservation unity category. Fear of the community, however, that most of the area they can use will be located outside the definition of the new reservation.

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.