

### Mobil prepares to enter territory of uncontacted native people

On March 26th 1996 Mobil signed a contract with Perupetro to undertake a series of exploratory activities to determine whether commercial deposits of hydrocarbons exist across much of Madre de Dios – an area with a unique cultural and natural biodiversity, even for Amazonia. It is now apparent that previous investigations were merely preliminary studies, though this was not made clear by Mobil to local organisations.

The Peruvian government approved the Environmental Impact Studies (EIS's) for Lot 77 (Las Piedras) and the eastern half of Lot 78 (Tambopata) – the area within the Tambopata-Candamo Reserved

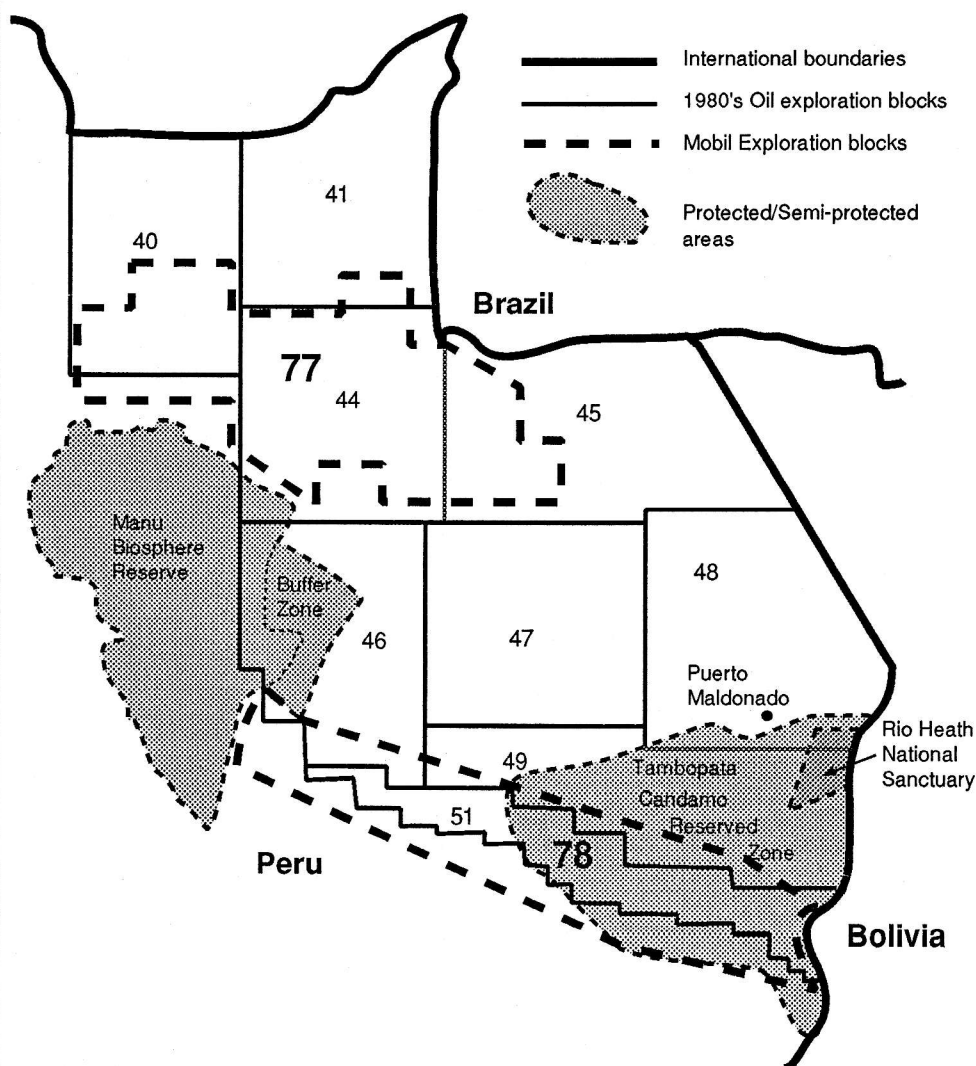
Zone but not the portion lying within the proposed Amarakaeri Communal Reserve. The EIS for this area has been submitted and is expected to be approved during May. Various environmental groups, including TReeS, have expressed concern about the depth of and manner in which the EIS's were carried out.

Helen Newing, of TReeS, has recently spent a week in Puerto Maldonado and met with many local community and environmental organisations to discuss the likely implications of Mobil's forthcoming field operations. These will consist of the following :

**\* Las Piedras** – work will begin in May cutting 400kms of seismic lines. An airstrip for helicopters will be cleared adjoining the native community of Diamante, where the Madre de Dios and Manu rivers meet on the edge of the internationally renowned Manu Biosphere Reserve. This area almost certainly contains uncontacted Amahuaca, Yaminhua and/or Mashco-Piro groups. When some of them were last contacted by Shell, during their explorations in Madre de Dios in the mid-1980's, many of them quickly succumbed to common illnesses.

**\* Bahauja-Sonene National Park** (proposed) – in August work will begin on cutting about 350kms of seismic lines in the Upper Tambopata, one of the most biodiverse regions known on Earth. There has been almost no human activity in this area for over 60 years.

**\* Amarakaeri Communal Reserve** (proposed) – work will also begin in August cutting about 350kms of lines



in an area where native people already face major problems with illegal gold-miners. The lines may extend to the Palotoa area on the edge of the Manu Biosphere Reserve. The native people have been trying for some years to obtain rights over their traditional ancestral hunting and foraging territories. At present their rights only cover the very limited lands of the native communities.

The exploration phase will take 2 years, where-upon trial wells will be drilled over a 5 year period, though additional EIS's may be undertaken before any wells are drilled. We understand that it is only with the extractive stage that a local social programme would be introduced. Based on Shell's earlier work in the area it is believed that there is a 1 in 20 chance of finding workable deposits. Mobil is supplying 34% of the funding, with the remainder split between Elf and Exxon.

Much of the ground work will be undertaken by sub-contractors and it is the cultural and environmental sensitivity of these companies which is of major concern. Despite all the contact with Mobil it is clear now that much relevant information that could be in the public domain is not and that it is far from clear as to how Mobil intends to monitor and control its sub-contractors.

The Federation of Native Communities of Madre de Dios (FENAMAD) and the Federation Agraria de Madre de Dios (FADEMAD) feel that they have not been consulted in any detail by Mobil and have now requested TReeS and other such groups to make public their concerns. TReeS has written to various organisations including the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; the Royal Geographical Society; Friends of the Earth; Survival International; etc, requesting that a campaign is launched to press Mobil to ensure that their activities in Madre de

Dios establish a 'best practice approach' and stay out of certain areas.

In this respect we would also ask TReeS members to express their concern by sending a summary of our letter to Mobil shown in the box at the foot of the page. However we would welcome members writing their own letters based on information given in recent TReeS Newsletters.

## **\*\* Funding Appeal \*\***

'To ensure that local people have some understanding of the potential implications for Madre de Dios of oil exploration and extraction activities, and can have same say in these developments – neither the Government nor Mobil have provided for this – TReeS is committed to funding 35-40 workshops across Madre de Dios during May, culminating in a regional Forum in P.Maldonado in June. The Workshops will be held in communities with experts travelling to them; TReeS hopes to arrange for an expert from Ecuador, where there has been much experience of severe environmental degradation in the Oriente jungle region, to participate as well. Communities will then send representatives to P.Maldonado for the Forum.

TReeS would welcome any new contacts from members who can assist in covering the costs of these events, a funding proposal is available. We are already grateful to the Earthlove Fund for making a major contribution to the costs – Workshops (\$5,700) / Forum (approx. \$10,000)

## **Centro Nape**

The Centre received very small-scale funding from TReeS during 1995 pending a FENAMAD Congress which was finally held in December. During the second half of 1995 those based at the

**Mr J.R.Donnaway, Mobil, P.O.Box 650232, Dallas, Texas 75265-0232, USA. Fax - (214) 905.7283**

I am writing to you to express my concern at the manner in which Mobil Inc. is going about oil explorations in the department of Madre de Dios, Peru. Both the native peoples organisation FENAMAD and the local farmers group FADEMAD have requested that we bring their concerns that you do not appear to be pursuing a "best practice policy for investigations in a rainforest area with tremendous cultural and natural biodiversity and, possibly, uncontacted native peoples" to your attention.

We would like you to confirm that –

- \* you will pursue a 'best practice' approach as determined by wide consultation within the local area and with appropriate local experts;
- \* you will *not* explore in areas where there is the potential to meet uncontacted native peoples, within any indigenous community territories, or any native territories which are currently awaiting government approval;
- \* you will support the immediate approval of the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve and the Bahauja-Sonene National Park;
- \* you and your sub-contractors will consult widely with all local organisations about all aspects of your activities within Madre de Dios, and respond accordingly to their wishes;
- \* you will ensure that all activities undertaken directly, or on your behalf, will conform strictly to national and international environmental and indigenous rights standards;

Given the recent tragic events in Nigeria I hope that we will not end up reading about something similar emanating from Peru in the near future.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Centre continued to treat local people, primarily with oje for stomach parasites; collected a further 108 species for the herbarium; planted a variety of traditional food crops; relabelled 850 species in the ethnobotany research plot; and received a 10hp pump from a Peruvian army work team to bring water up from the river to the Centre.

With clarification about the future of the Centre now received from the new FENAMAD committee, TReeS has secured a more sizeable donation to enable a greater variety of activities to be undertaken and the workers to receive a small salary. Helen Newing met with those running the Centre and was impressed by their continuing commitment and ideas for its future within the ultimate aim of achieving self-funding. However, further outside funding will need to be secured before this can be achieved.

It is still hoped that some copies of the 'Plant Manual' will be available later in the year. Copies can be reserved (no deposit needed) now by writing to TReeS.

## 1996 TReeS Membership Reminder

A 'Reminder' is enclosed with this Newsletter to those members who have not renewed their annual membership recently. If you have not renewed your membership since October 1995, we would be most grateful if you could do so as soon as possible.

**\*\* Unless members renew their memberships TReeS will not be able to continue to support the Conservation Co-ordinator in Puerto Maldonado \*\***

## Peru News

The Government declared 1996 the year of the '600,000 tourists'. Inflation reached 10.2% and economic growth at 6.9% for 1995. The foreign debt (\$25bn), 30% up on when Fujimori came to power and is 4 times annual export earnings, is of growing concern. The next Newsletter will comment further on this.

## TReeS 1995 Accounts and Membership

The TReeS accounts for 1995, as yet unaudited, indicate that the Society had an income of about £7,950, slightly above the 1993 figure, while expenditure was about £12,600. Almost exactly 71% of expenditure went on supporting activities relating to projects in Peru, 29% on the production of merchandise and on UK administration. The latter includes a very substantial increase in expenses on the duplication and distribution of documents. A large quantity of merchandise remains in stock. TReeS USA continued, principally, to look after administrative matters in N.America and reported a balance of just over \$2,000 at the year end. Total

global membership remains around the 450 mark.

## TReeS UK Libraries – Recent Deposits include:

A brief report on the activities carried out at Centro Nape in the second half of 1995; Pre-feasibility study and Proposal for Conservation and Development within the TCRZ according to the Classification of Land Uses (1992); An integrated approach to health care in the Peruvian Amazon – the Centro Nape Project, by D.Lacaze & M.Alexiades, a chapter from a Columbia University book entitled 'Medical Resources of the Tropical Forest'; a detailed socio-economic study of the native community of Infierno (1994) (in Spanish, with a selective summary in English); Peru – a Financial Times supplement; the letter from TReeS and several other organisations to Mobil commenting on their proposed explorations in Madre de Dios.

## TReeS Slide Library

Donations to the Slide library from anyone who has visited the Madre de Dios area are welcomed – especially slides of identifiable fauna and flora. The Library is cared for by Nick Squirrell The Drey, 6A Halves Cottages, Corfe Castle, Dorset BH20 5EY. Please send a SAE (30p) for a catalogue. Slides may be borrowed in return for a small donation.

## Resident Naturalist News

### The Explorer's Inn

#### Climate:

Month	Temperature °C		Rainfall		Humidity %
	Av.Max.	Av.Min.	Amount mm	Days of rain	
<b>Dec</b>	28.8	22.3	249	23	95.6
<b>Jan</b>	26.7	21.9	391	29	95.6
<b>Feb</b>	28.8	21.9	263	24	95.7
<b>Mar</b>	26.4	22.8	300	21	95.5

#### Recent Sightings:

The rainy season hit with vengeance in January since when most trails are very muddy. Most monkey species were seen including White Capuchins; good prints of Jaguar were found on Main Trail, of Tapir on the sandbanks of rio La Torre and Ocelot but no sightings were made; there is a Harpy Eagle nest off Tapir trail with an immature bird visible in it; no Giant Otters were seen in January but a group of 4 were again seen in February and March on Cocacocha, while one was also seen in the river a short distance down from the Colpa lodge; a S.American Otter was seen at the swamp on Main Trail and a Short-eared dog nearby; a 9-banded Armadillo from the hide; Black caiman three times on Cocacocha; and a Spectacled Caiman at Laguna Chica. Shinwagoo trees were in fruit, Cocoa ripe, Brazil-nuts falling and the Lica in flower.

### Current/Recent RN's and visitors include:

- **T.Doan** – radio-tracking Tegu lizards.
- **J.Partridge** – building hides and studying amphibians.
- **J.Devereux** – making a video for use in his Rainforest Centre in Wales.
- **H.Devereux** – studying abundance and movements of paca and agouti.
- **D.Ekblaw** – studying medicinal plants.
- **D.Pullen & J.Galvez** – monitoring primate populations and distribution.
- **E.Pipa** – updating the lodge displays.

**P.Sutton** visited from the USA to study lizards and recorded a new species for the TRZ – *Bachia Triseriale*, a Fossorial almost legless lizard.

### Tambopata Jungle Lodge (TJL)

#### Climate

	Av.Max	Av.Min.	Amount mm	Days of rain
<b>Dec</b>	29.2	19.2	195	15
<b>Jan</b>	27.4	23.6	327	24
<b>Feb</b>	28.8	23.5	196	17
<b>Mar</b>	28.0	23.7	378	26

- **C.Kirkby** – studying termite ecology and their value as a fertilizer.
- **P.Nicklin & J.Melton** – creating a medicinal plant garden at the lodge.
- **V.Karpauzli & V.Watson** – establishing an agro-forestry project.
- **A.Courage** – studying the territorial grouping's of primates.

Interesting sightings include Giant River Otters on lakes Sachavacayoc and Condénado, about 5 individuals on the latter; several sightings of young black caiman; a collared anteater swimming the river Tambopata close to Colpa lodge; a bird-eating tarantula; and a family of 5 Capybara downstream from the lodge. A tree platform near the lodge has been constructed.

Gold barges began operating again on the Tambopata when river levels fell, especially close to P.Maldonado and the Malinowski/Tambopata confluence. INRENA (office of protected areas) has stated that it will act when this and unauthorised hunting within the TCRZ occurs but in reality are powerless to do very much. The first recorded earthquake in P.Maldonado measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale woke everyone at 4pm on 10.3.96! A large section of the Colpa fell into the river but this only increased the surface area of the river cliff.

### New TReeS Merchandise

'Peru Reader' – 530 pages, with photos and maps, published by the Latin American Bureau. The book includes 70 contributions, many from well known authors, covering a wide selection of topics relating

to the fascinating history, politics and culture of Peru. **Special TReeS price** – £16 (usual mail order price – £17.50) while stocks last.

'Mammal, Reptile & Amphibian Tambopata Checklist' and 'Brown Capuchin monkey'

Greetings card – see enclosed sheet for details.

All other merchandise as per the enclosed Merchandise sheet.

### Forthcoming Events

**TReeS Meeting** – Saturday 25th May, 2.30-5pm, Green College, Woodstock Rd, Oxford. Helen Newing will report back on her recent trip to Madre de Dios, including details of Mobil's forthcoming activities and the responses to it. Huw Lloyd will describe his experiences as a Resident Naturalist. **Peruvian photos** from the southern Andes 1900-45 – an exhibition at Canning Ho., 2 Belgrave Sq., London SW1; 30th April – 24th May, 2-6.30pm Mondays, 9.30am-1pm/2-5.30pm Tuesdays to Fridays but not open on the afternoons of Fridays 3rd & 24th May.

'Amazon Alphabet' painting exhibition at the Natural History Museum, Tring, Herts; in September. The superb paintings of jungle wildlife are taken from the latest rainforest book from TReeS members Martin & Tanis Jordan. Available from all good bookshops.



Yuca (*Manihot esculenta*)

The work of TReeS is endorsed/supported by Earthlove Foundation, Helpage, OXFAM, Anglo-Peruvian Society, the Body Shop International PLC, several FoE groups and schools, and various small trusts and charities.

Patron – Norman Myers.

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**This Edition of the Newsletter has been sponsored by the specialist travel guide publisher and mail order guide and map supplier**

**\*\* Bradt Publications \*\***