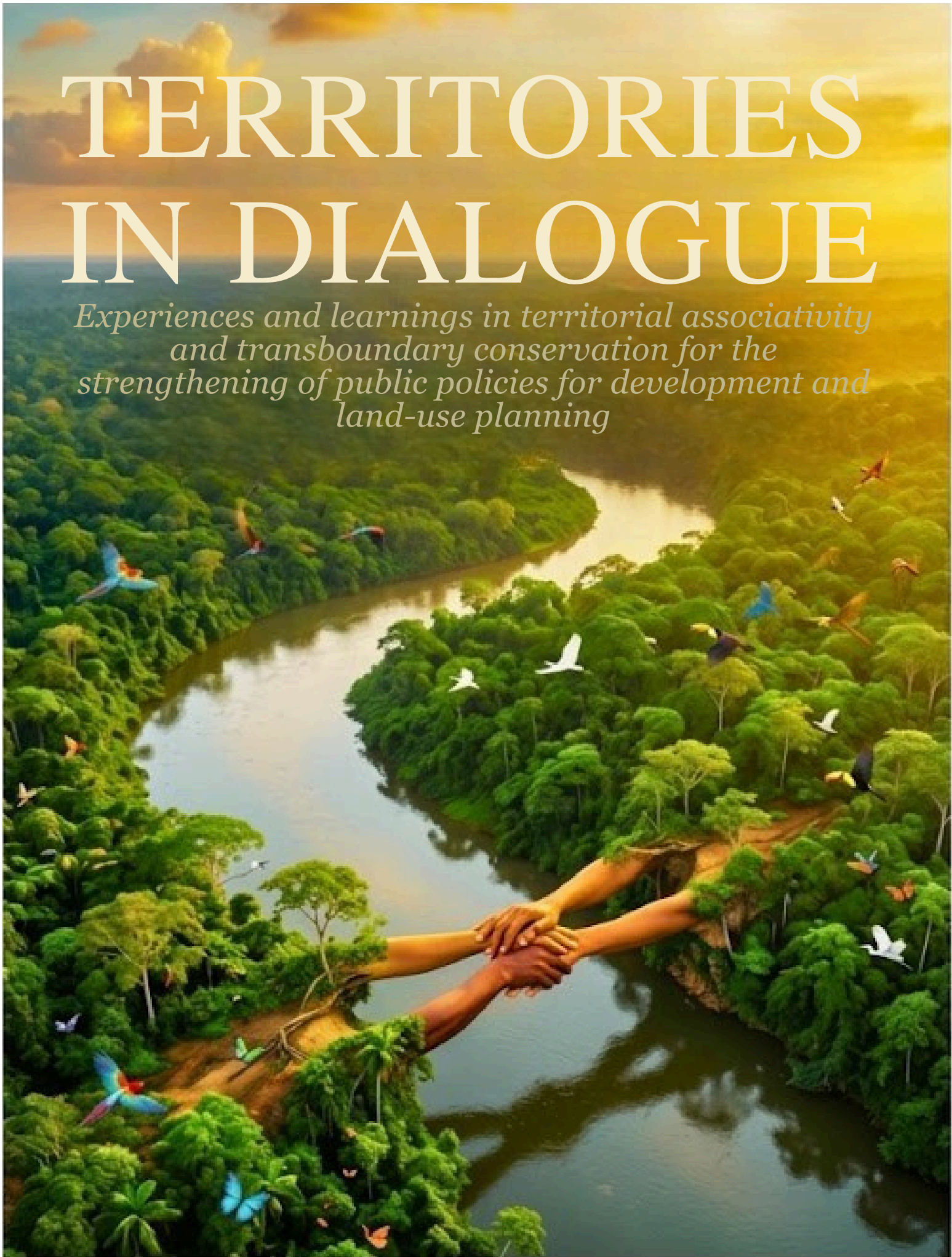


# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

*Experiences and learnings in territorial associativity  
and transboundary conservation for the  
strengthening of public policies for development and  
land-use planning*



# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

***This publication provides inputs for the regulation of border and transboundary territorial associations in Colombia and for the development of the country's transboundary programs and projects.***

Proceedings of the event Territories in Dialogue, held at Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History (ICANH)

Bogotá, Colombia, November 14, 2025

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Recommendations



# **PRESENTATION**

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Presentación

Territorial association in Latin America and the Caribbean is a key instrument for operationalizing conservation at the local and subnational levels. This approach harmoniously integrates culture, economy, and biodiversity through inclusive models aligned with international commitments, facilitating the joint management of needs and opportunities to promote autonomous and sustainable development.

At the global level, territorial association contributes significantly to:



Under the National Development Plan (PND) "Colombia: A Powerhouse for Life" (2022-2026), Territorial Economic Entities (EATs) are key components for decentralization. According to Article 29 of Law 2294 of 2023, priority is given to productive diversification and an economy for life, focusing on clean energy, innovation, human rights, and climate resilience. These schemes are articulated through strategic lines such as territorial planning around water resources, regional convergence to close social gaps (especially in PDET and ZOMAC zones), and budgetary participation in the General Royalties System.

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Presentation

In the Colombian context, territorial association is a guiding principle of territorial planning and development, implemented through the National Planning Department (DNP) under two main modalities:

- The establishment of Territorial Associative Schemes (EATs) among territorial entities to leverage economies of scale and foster competitive partnerships.
- Short-term collaboration to pool resources for specific projects or needs through investments in other jurisdictions.

Under the National Development Plan (NDP) “Colombia, World Power of Life” (2022–2026), EATs are key instruments for decentralization. According to Article 29 of Law 2294 of 2023, priority is given to productive diversification and a life-centered economy, with a focus on clean energy, innovation, human rights, and climate resilience.

These schemes are articulated through strategic lines of action such as territorial planning centered on water resources, regional convergence to reduce social inequalities (particularly in PDET and ZOMAC areas), and participation in budget allocations through the General Royalties System.

## Territorial Cooperation: Bridges for Conservation and Development

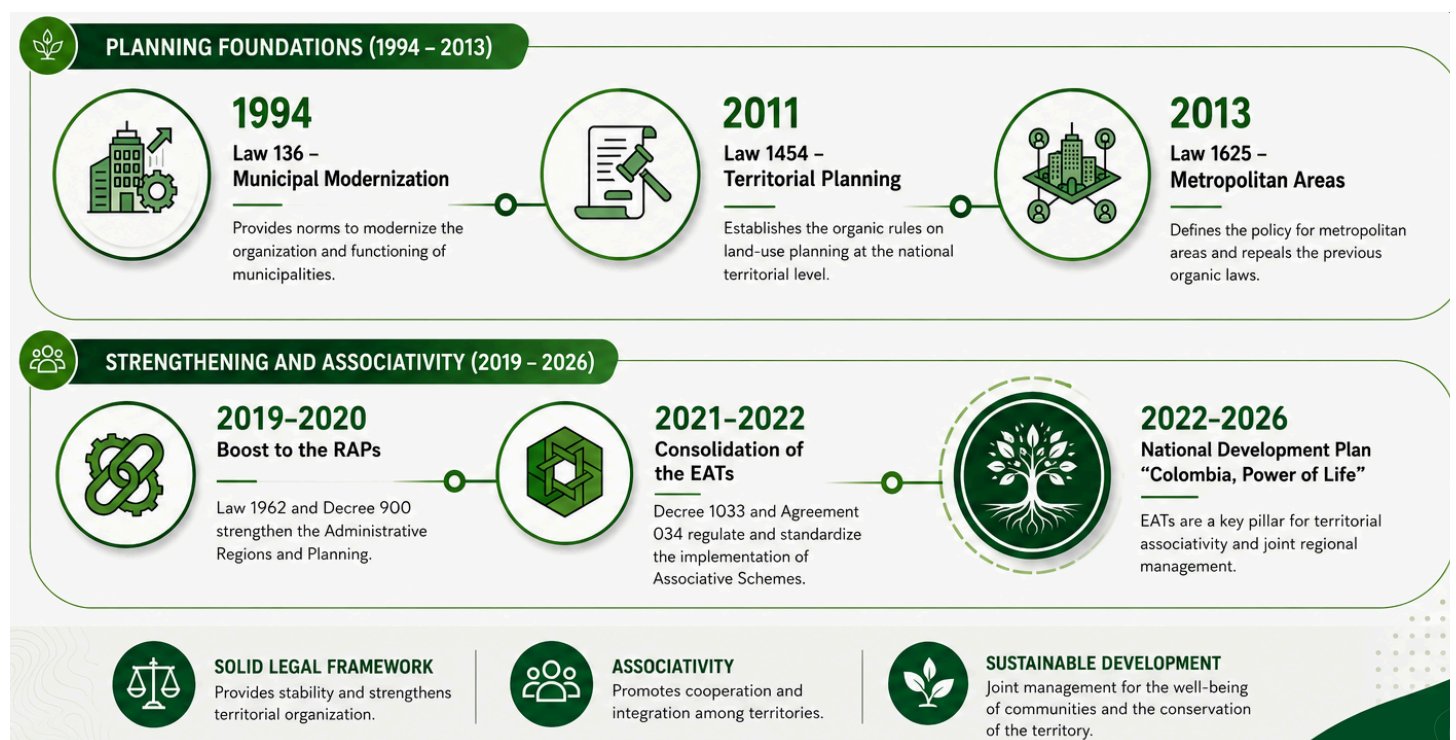


# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Presentation

The following timeline presents the evolution of the regulatory framework governing territorial association in Colombia between 1994 and 2026. It highlights the main legal developments that strengthened territorial planning, Regional Administrative and Planning Bodies (RAPs), and Territorial Associative Schemes (EATs).



# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Presentation

In addition, there are elements that unite the processes of "Associativity and Conservation", recognizing that in the territories biodiversity, nature, culture, and community learning, under the conditions that occur in the regions and in the border and transboundary areas, allow the development of bonds of brotherhood and recognition in the management and conservation of the natural resources found in these regions.

Associativity (group work, alliances) and biodiversity conservation are intrinsically linked, since collaboration among communities, businesses, and government strengthens actions for protection, sustainable use, and restoration, as seen in networks of private reserves, business projects, and public policies, strengthening ecosystem resilience and social well-being, especially with support for ancestral knowledge and sustainable agriculture. Associativity creates the structure so that conservation is not only a state responsibility, but a collective and coordinated effort that integrates the social, economic, and environmental aspects using the power of networks and alliances to protect and sustainably use biodiversity. The border issue associated with connectivity and partnerships requires efforts and work in the country, so that it can once again be placed on the public agenda and allow us to continue building pathways of partnership and management for the conservation of shared ecosystems among neighboring countries, as a strategy to strengthen processes of associativity and social construction for the well-being of the peoples of the Latin America and Caribbean region.

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Presentation

Territorial associativity in transboundary areas is a key strategy for the joint management of territories and ecosystems that extend beyond national borders. This approach allows for the coordination of governments, local communities, indigenous peoples, and other actors to protect biodiversity, strengthen ecosystem services, and promote local development. Transboundary conservation areas foster dialogue, cooperation, and trust among neighboring territories, improving the efficiency of environmental management and contributing to peace, regional integration, and resilience to common challenges such as climate change.

Recognizing these issues and incorporating elements associated with conservation through protected areas, a workshop was prepared and developed that seeks to contribute to the process of systematizing learning and recommendations of associativity and/or transboundary conservation processes in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Europe as a contribution to the creation and development of public policies for territorial associativity in border and transboundary areas, in regional urban and rural contexts and with a differential approach, whose specific objectives were:

- To promote the participation of local communities in processes of associativity and/or border and transboundary conservation in terms of development and land-use planning.
- To understand the learnings, challenges, and recommendations in processes of associativity and transboundary conservation, and
- Identify multi-scale inter-institutional architecture and management options for effective border management.



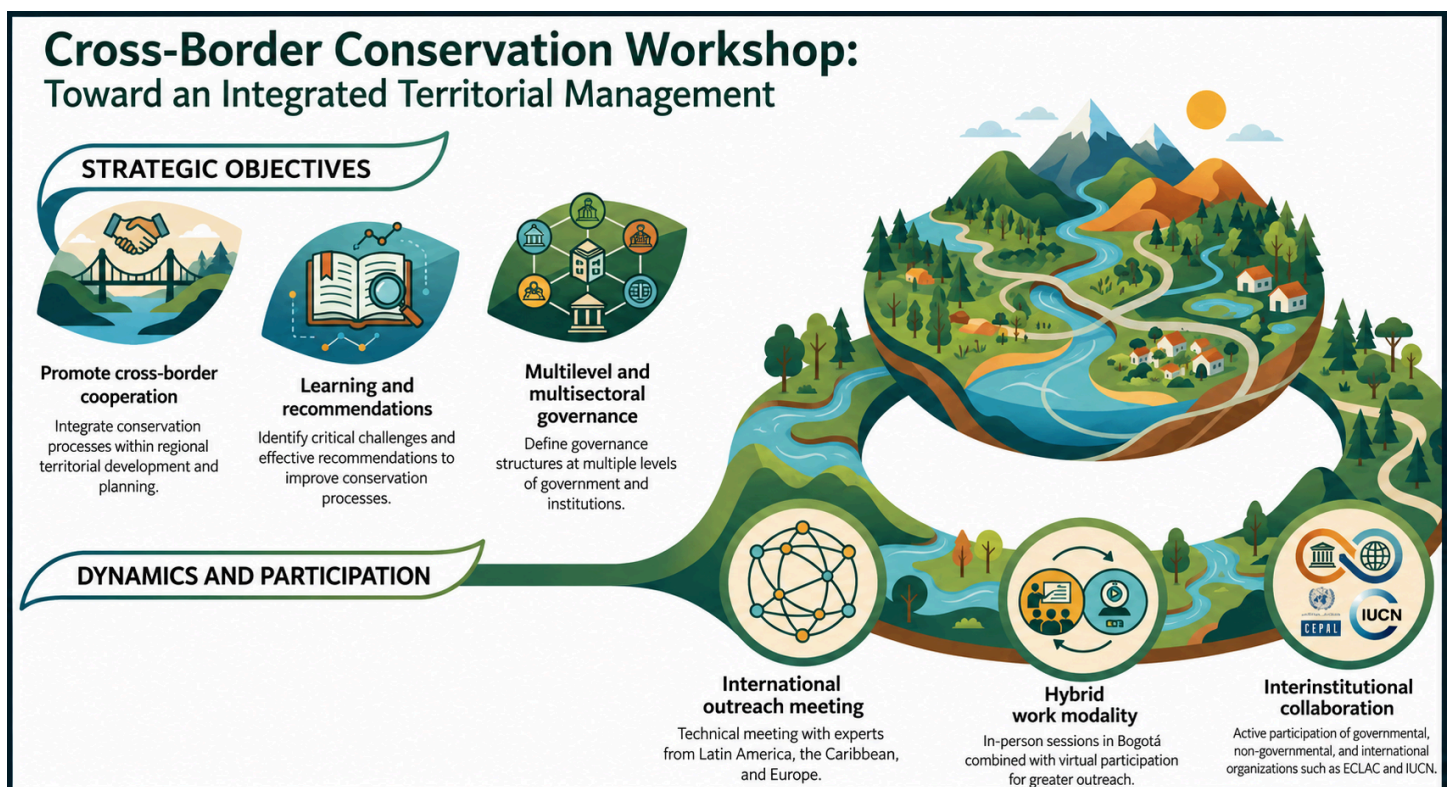
# **METHODOLOGY**

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Methodology

The workshop was conceived as a technical forum aimed at contributing to the systematization of lessons learned and recommendations from territorial association and transboundary conservation processes in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe.



# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Methodology

The event combined technical presentations, experience-sharing sessions, and dialogue spaces on border and transboundary management. Participants examined challenges and opportunities related to conservation, governance, and sustainable development. The event concluded with recommendations aimed at strengthening cooperation and territorial integration.

Time	Topic	Speaker / Institution
08:00 – 08:15	Registration	—
08:15 – 08:30	Welcome remarks	—
08:30 – 08:50	Opportunities and the need for cross-border transformation	Stefanía Petrosillo, Chair of the IUCN-WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialists Group
08:50 – 09:10	From limits to alliances: institutional framework and cross-border cooperation agenda in Latin America	Nahuel Oddone, Head of the international trade and industry unit at the ECLAC subregional headquarters in Mexico
09:10 – 09:25	Regional-scale recommendations for decision-makers in border development and land-use planning	Gisela Paredes Leguizamón, ILPES Amazonia
09:25 – 09:40	Experiences in the transboundary management of the Uruguay River basin	Daniel Macías, Committee for the Development of the Uruguay River Basin
09:40 – 09:55	Border management for sustainable development and peace	Alejandra Londoño and César Sandino, experts in border public policy management
09:55 – 10:10	Coffee Break	—
10:10 – 10:25	Cross-border management in the South American Chaco	Iván Arnold, NATIVA Foundation
10:25 – 10:40	Territorial associativity in Colombia	Ministry of the Interior
10:40 – 10:55	Human mobility associated with disasters and climate change	Diana Mendoza DNP
10:55 – 11:10	The sea and territorial association	Roberto Lastra
11:10 – 11:25	From the management of the Paya, Güeppí Sekime, and Cuyabeno protected areas to influencing public policies: Border Law. An experience of intercultural dialogue and inter-institutional coordination among Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.	Jefferson Rojas, National Natural Parks of Colombia

Table 1. Event Agenda

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Methodology

The following table presents the 30 representatives from public and private institutions who participated in the event. The diversity of organizations involved brought together stakeholders with different mandates, experiences, and perspectives, fostering knowledge exchange and constructive dialogue aimed at strengthening territorial management, enhancing interinstitutional cooperation, and identifying opportunities for the development of joint initiatives in border and transboundary contexts.

### LIST OF EVENT ATTENDEES

Coordination and Registration (Bogotá, Colombia)

No.	FULL NAME	ENTITY / ORGANIZATION	ROLE / AREA
1	Maria Elvira Rios	National Natural Parks	Member
2	Hugo Rafael Silva	Ministry of the Interior	Member
3	Sandra Viviana Córdoba	National Natural Parks	Member
4	Juan Carlos Arias	National Natural Parks	Member
5	Rosa Angelica Ladino	Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA)	Member
6	Sandra Milena Zúñiga M.	Ministry of the Interior	Member
7	Eliana Martínez Rueda	National Natural Parks	Member
8	Margarita María Mondragón	Ministry of the Interior	Member
9	Adriana Sinning	National Natural Parks	Member
10	Nadia Márquez	Ministry of the Interior	Member
11	Diana Patricia Mendoza C	National Planning Department (DNP)	Member
12	Estefanía Pretrosillo	IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)	Member
13	Sandra Cardona	National Natural Parks	Member
14	Katherine Mejia Leal	ICANH (Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History)	Member
15	Maria Neufer Muñoz	ICANH (Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History)	Member
16	Gisela Paredes L	National Natural Parks	Organizer
17	Iván Caicedo	National Natural Parks	Supporting organization
18	Luz Nelly Niño B.	Forest Foundation	Supporting organization
19	Ximena Borre	Colombian Polytechnic University	Attendee
20	Ricardo Martínez	National Planning Department (DNP)	Attendee
21	Laura Rincón	National Planning Department (DNP)	Attendee
22	Tatiana Jiménez	Colombian Red Cross	Risk Management
23	Catalina Velázquez Parra	Ministry of Housing	Attendee
24	Giselle Andrea Osorio A.	Ministry of Housing	Attendee
25	William Fernando Molina D.	Ministry of Mines and Energy	Attendee
26	Jairo Antonio Muñoz M.	National Planning Department (DNP)	Attendee
27	Fernando Oviedo	DIMAR (General Maritime Directorate)	Attendee
28	Liseth Castellanos	National Natural Parks	Attendee
29	Noryly Aguirre Otalora	National Natural Parks	Attendee
30	Juan Carlos Huertas	NGO Último Bosque	Attendee

Total Registered Attendees: 30

Tabla 2. Asistentes al evento



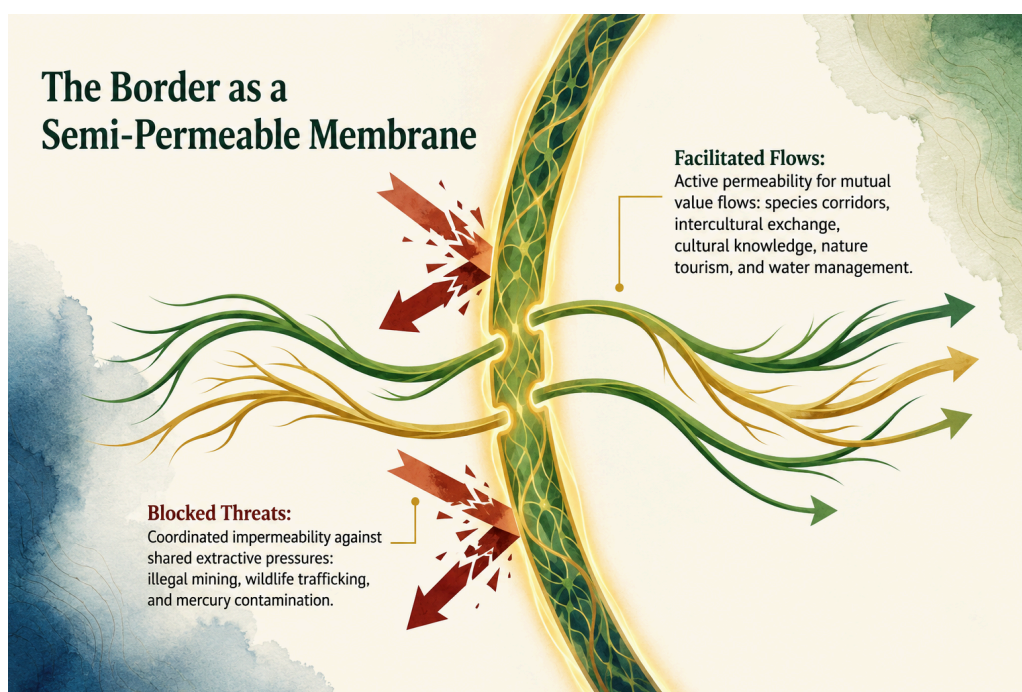
## **PRESENTATIONS**

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Block 1: Socializing processes of association and/or border and transboundary conservation in terms of development and territorial planning

From Borders to Alliances: Institutional Frameworks and the Cross-Border Cooperation Agenda in Latin America (Dr. Nahuel Oddone, ECLAC Mexico): Presented ECLAC's analysis of the shift from viewing borders as barriers to understanding them as spaces for regional collaboration. He highlighted the establishment of institutional frameworks, including steering committees and regulatory mechanisms, that engage subnational governments and social actors in promoting inclusive development aligned with the 2030 Agenda, with a particular focus on the shared management of resources such as water.







# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Block 2: Lessons Learned, Challenges, and Recommendations in Cross-Border Cooperation and Transboundary Conservation Processes.

In Block 2, the presentations addressed transboundary conservation and territorial management, highlighting institutional cooperation, natural resource governance, the importance of marine and coastal areas, and the integration of cultural heritage as key elements for the sustainable development of territories.

 Presenter / Institution	 Topic	 Key ideas	 Contributions / examples
<b>Dr. Stefania Petrosillo</b> UICN-WCPA	Opportunities and needs of transboundary conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature and communities do not recognize political borders.</li> <li>Ecological, social and political benefits of cooperation.</li> <li>Challenges: articulating interests among actors, sustaining political will, overcoming linguistic/cultural barriers and ensuring stable resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved ecological functioning and species survival.</li> <li>Optimization of shared problems.</li> <li>Strengthening legality and promotion of political stability and peace.</li> </ul>
<b>Dr. Daniel Macias</b> Comité Desarrollo Cuenca del Río Uruguay	Transboundary management in the Uruguay River basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint and equitable governance of shared water resources.</li> <li>Linking national and subnational governments.</li> <li>Integration at a large scale for sustainable regional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trinational Biological Corridor (Argentina–Brazil–Uruguay).</li> <li>Strengthens nature tourism, coordinates management plans and jointly controls environmental threats.</li> </ul>
<b>Dr. Roberto Lastra Mier</b> Universidad de Cartagena	The sea and territorial associativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marine–coastal territory as a cultural construct and historical connectivity axis.</li> <li>Key importance of ocean spaces for planning in Colombia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use planning.</li> <li>Scientific–technological development.</li> <li>Construction of a legal and cultural maritime identity.</li> </ul>
<b>Dr. Everaldo Herrera Alarcón</b> ICANH	Challenges of territorial associativity for Colombian archaeological heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Archaeological heritage as a key determinant of territorial planning.</li> <li>Local communities must be included in land use plans with environmental protection.</li> <li>Go beyond administrative limits; require community and institutional co-management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Qhapaq Ñan</b></li> <li><b>Cafetero Cultural Landscape</b></li> <li><b>Pre-Hispanic hydraulic system of the San Jorge River</b></li> </ul>

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Block 2: Lessons Learned, Challenges, and Recommendations in Cross-Border Cooperation and Transboundary Conservation Processes.

1. **Opportunities and Needs for Transboundary Conservation** (*Dr. Stefania Petrosillo, IUCN-WCPA*): Emphasized that nature and communities do not recognize political borders. She presented the ecological, social, and political benefits of transboundary cooperation.

Benefits: Enhanced ecological functionality, improved species survival, more effective management of shared challenges, legal harmonization, and the promotion of political stability and peace.

Challenges: The need to reconcile the interests of multiple stakeholders, ensure sustained long-term political commitment, overcome linguistic, cultural, and institutional barriers, and secure stable financial and human resources to support cooperation efforts.

## Opportunities and Benefits of Cross-Border Conservation



# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

2. **Experience in Transboundary Management of the Uruguay River Basin** (Dr. Daniel Macías, Committee for the Development of the Uruguay River Basin): Addressed joint and equitable governance of shared water resources through coordination between national and subnational levels of government. He highlighted the Trinational Biological Corridor (Argentina–Brazil–Uruguay) as a practical large-scale integration model that strengthens nature-based tourism, supports the coordination of management plans, and promotes joint action to address environmental threats.



# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

3. **The Sea and Territorial Associativity** (Dr. Roberto Lastra Mier, University of Cartagena): Presented the marine-coastal territory as a cultural construct and a historical axis of connectivity. He emphasized that in Colombia—a country with coastlines on two oceans—marine and ocean spaces have acquired strategic importance for land-use planning, scientific and technological development, and the strengthening of the country's legal and cultural identity.



# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

**4. Challenges of Territorial Associativity for the Management of Colombia's Archaeological Heritage and Its Integration into Territorial Planning** (Dr. Everaldo Herrera Alarcón, ICANH): Explained that archaeological heritage constitutes a key determinant of territorial planning, requiring local governments to incorporate its protection into land-use plans in harmony with environmental conservation objectives. He cited examples of shared regional management, including the Qhapaq Ñan, the Coffee Cultural Landscape, and the pre-Hispanic hydraulic system of the San Jorge River, all of which transcend administrative boundaries and require community and institutional co-management.



**Figure 1.** Hydraulic System of the San Jorge River.

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Bloque 3: Arquitectura y gestión interinstitucional multiescalar para la gestión fronteriza efectiva

**Regional recommendations for decision-makers in border development and land-use planning** (Dr. Gisela Paredes Leguizamón, ILPES Amazonia): She pointed out that the conservation of the Amazon cannot be addressed in a fragmented or strictly national manner, given that it is a shared watershed.

- **Priority guidelines:** Recognize the interdependence between biodiversity and cultural diversity, validating Indigenous peoples and local communities as key actors with territorial rights and autonomy.
- **Required actions:** Implement participatory protected area systems, incorporate dialogue between scientific and traditional knowledge systems, and move beyond extractive models to avoid reaching an irreversible ecological tipping point.
- **Governance:** Strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms such as the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) and consolidate multi-level governance to address transboundary threats such as illegal mining, wildlife trafficking, and mercury pollution.





## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

# TERRITORIES IN DIALOGUE

Experiences and Lessons Learned in Territorial Associations and Transboundary Conservation for Strengthening Public Policies on Development and Territorial Planning.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentations delivered across the different thematic sessions, the following technical and strategic conclusions were drawn:

**Ecosystem and Social Integration:** Territorial associativity and transboundary protected areas demonstrate that effective environmental management cannot be constrained by political-administrative boundaries. Shared natural resources—such as river basins, marine areas, and large-scale ecosystems like the Amazon—require joint governance frameworks built on mutual trust and shared responsibility.

**Biocultural and Differentiated Approach:** Territorial planning and transboundary conservation processes gain greater legitimacy and effectiveness when developed through a bottom-up approach that integrates diverse knowledge systems and safeguards the territorial, cultural, and archaeological rights of local and Indigenous communities.

**Multilevel and Multiscalar Coordination:** Addressing the legal, logistical, and financial challenges of border regions requires a robust interinstitutional framework. This entails aligning national policies and guidelines (such as the targets for Territorial Associative Schemes (EATs) under Colombia's National Development Plan) with subnational realities and international agreements on regional integration.



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