



## Iracambi Quarterly Report October – December 2011

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### **Community Training Project**

Just as the rains began, in November, and as everyone is getting ready for the summer vacations, we received the final disbursement from the InterAmerican Foundation and were able to take up the work again on this project, with Gustavo Toledo at the helm.

#### Environmental Protection Areas

The creation of the environmental protection areas in Miradouro has been set back by the political realignment as we reported earlier, and no longer depends on Iracambi. County officials and the town council are now responsible for finishing the job and we are confident they will succeed.

We also met with representatives of the county government of Divino to see how we can help them with establishing their own environmental protection area. Iracambi agreed with the local Rural Workers Union and our partners Centro de Tecnologias Alternativas that the first priority in Divino will be the Bom Jesus Environmental Protection Area (APA). In the Pico de Itujuru APA of Muriáe, Iracambi held a meeting with the Muriáe county authorities and the State Forestry Institute (IEF) to discuss setting up the APA management council. When Iracambi returned to Fervedouro to raise, once again, the question of setting up an APA there, county government told us that this is not a priority for them. In Rosário da Limeira, Iracambi has been helping organize the County Environmental Protection Committee as well as the revising its constitution.

Iracambi also participated in the discussions with the Anglo-Ferrous Mining company concerning environmental compensation for the mineroduto (slurry pipeline) that passes through the APA of the Serra das Aranhas.

#### Rural Enterprises

In Fervedouro, Iracambi facilitated a meeting between the communities participating in the Community Based Tourism project to monitor the progress of the project after the Ministry funding ended. Iracambi is also helping establish the Association of Tourist Guides in Fervedouro, as well as providing publicity material for community-based tourist circuits in Divino and helping set up the tourist circuit internet portal [www.serradosarrepados.com.br](http://www.serradosarrepados.com.br)

### Impact of Bauxite Mining

The Mining Commission has been meeting regularly, focusing on constructing a viable plan on alternatives to mining, to be presented publicly in a Pro-Life Forum held in early 2012, and a flier has been produced which explains the issues. The first print run has already been distributed and Iracambi is supporting a second print run, along with a second edition of the mining brochure we produced in 2009 in collaboration with CEIFAR.

Iracambi is also supporting a local theater group in putting on series of theater performances about the impact of mining activities in the area

### **Private Forest Reserves**

Iracambi is currently working with two ongoing projects in connection with strengthening the protection of forest plots in the buffer zone of the park. One, funded by SOS Mata Atlantica, is setting up a management plan for the Iracambi forest reserve which will serve as a basis for management plans in other private reserves in the region, and the other, funded by the Boticário Foundation, is focused on strengthening environmental legislation in the nine counties of the Serra do Brigadeiro.

### **Junior Scientists @ Iracambi**

The Junior Scientist program, launched in July, has had a highly successful semester. The program is based on the program of Citizen Science, mooted in February 2011 by Dale Beckmann, concentrating on ecosystem monitoring. Ninety carefully selected students from the schools in Rosário da Limeira and Belisário come once a month to Iracambi to take part in the program which monitors rivers, forests, soils and weather, using equipment from Vernier Software and Technology, some donated and the rest purchased. The semester closed out with a celebration in each school during which certificates were awarded to the students, poems and tributes were read, and a good time was had by all. Check out the project reports on GlobalGiving

<http://www.globalgiving.org/http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/brazils-junior-scientists-restore-rainforest-iracambi/>

as well as on the Facebook group

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/248953815146195/>

### **Fundraising**

#### IUCN-Netherlands Grant

To prove that persistence pays off, the proposal submitted two years ago to IUCN in the Netherlands to buy a plot of threatened forest land has now been approved. The plot is on Graminha ridge, above Iracambi and is one of six plots containing significant areas of forest along the ridge on the border of the Serra do Brigadeiro Park. They connect the Itajuru peak with the Serra das Aranhas and were originally to be included in the State Park before the government realized it didn't have the money to buy them.

With this grant, the conservation management of three of the six plots is now assured. Under Iracambi's management this area will become a private forest

reserve under permanent protection, and will be used for reforestation, research and ecotourism. The IUCN grant gives a big boost to our long-standing Forest Futures program which focused on the purchase of these plots.

### Global Giving

Iracambi is proud to announce that we have collected over \$16,500 in online donations through GlobalGiving for the Junior Scientist program.

### Partners of the Americas

Our long-standing friends and allies Partners of the Americas awarded us a grant of \$3000 for the Junior Scientist Program, bringing the combined funding raised over nine months to nearly \$20,000. This funding enables us to purchase equipment, pay salaries and transport costs, provide nutritious snacks to hungry Junior Scientists, and support the forest nursery. Com esta concessão, a gestão de conservação de três das seis parcelas agora está garantida. No âmbito da gestão do Iracambi nesta área se tornará uma reserva florestal particular sob proteção permanente e será usada para reflorestamento, investigação e ecoturismo. A concessão da IUCN dá um grande impulso ao nosso programa de floresta futuros longa que incidiu sobre a compra dessas parcelas.

## **Public Policy**

### NGO Forum

The Minas Gerais Forum of Environmental NGOs, reconstituted as Front for the Conservation of Biodiversity, met twice in last quarter with the State Secretary of the Environment to discuss issues of mutual concern. At Iracambi's request, the State Environment Secretariat will review the case of environmental licenses issued provisionally while operations are already taking place. It's an issue of special concern since it has been used as a ploy by some mining companies to start operating before the environmental licensing process is complete. Another important issue for the Forum was a workshop on fire protection in conservation areas.

### Serra do Brigadeiro Territory

We reported in earlier bulletins that Iracambi has led moves to try to revitalize the Serra do Brigadeiro Development Territory. The Federal Government has been unable to solve its self-inflicted problem of funding for the management of Territories, with the result that funding has been frozen indefinitely. Since the concept of territorial development no longer appears to be a priority of the federal government, the other members of the Territory have lost interest in the idea, so regrettably we have decided that we cannot justify devoting further time and energy to it.

### COPAM

Elections for the State Environmental Policy Council, on which Iracambi has a seat, were planned to be held in April but ran into a legal problem and had to be postponed. The new election is now expected to be held in 2012. In the meantime Iracambi continues to attend these important monthly meetings.

## **Amigos de Iracambi Brasil**

The new Board of Directors of the Association has been active in reorganizing the management of the Association and in establishing a presence outside Iracambi. Iracambi now has office space in the Cultural and Environment Center in Rosário da Limeira which gives us greater visibility as well as facilitating access to Iracambi for the people of Limeira.

## **Iracambi was there**

Iracambi took part in the Congresso Nacional de Reservas Particulares in Porto Alegre in October. Gustavo presented a poster on Public Policy and the creation of a network of Private Reserves around the Serra do Brigadeiro Park, and Iracambi led a discussion on the legal implication of creating reserves in areas of mining concessions.

Iracambi co-director Binka returned to the US in late September where she did a number of presentations - in Frederick Md, American University, Partners of the Americas and GlobalGiving in the Washington area, followed by the Taft School and Trinity College Hartford in Connecticut. From there she joined the Brazilian consul from Boston in visiting the Iracambi GIS team at Clark with a view to including I-GIS in an interactive museum display in Brasilia, spent a very happy few days presenting at Emerson College and Brandeis, and then flew to Colorado where she lectured at the Joseph Korbel School of International Relations and the Daniels Business School at the University of Denver, as well as at the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley. Escaping by inches a blizzard that closed down Denver airport, Binka made it to Deland, Florida, for a further few happy days presenting and catching up with a group of students who had been at Iracambi a few months earlier. Next stop was Medellin, Colombia, for the international conference of the Partners of the Americas where she had the opportunity to present at a state conference on forestry as well as participating in a panel on climate change – in what she devoutly hoped was reasonably clear Spanish as opposed to Portunhol.

## **Internet Presence**

Inspired by our success in fund-raising through the internet, we have upgraded our modest internet presence with a Junior Scientists Facebook group and our new Iracambi Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/iracambi](http://www.facebook.com/iracambi)) which we hope you will visit.