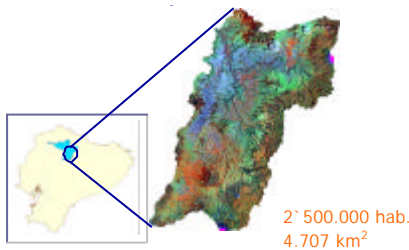


## STRENGTHENING WATER GOVERNANCE FOR THE UPPER GUAYLLABAMBA RIVER BASIN (Pichincha, Ecuador)

Since 2007, the Fund for the Protection of the Water of the Metropolitan District of Quito (FONAG) and Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano (FFLA) have worked together in the development of the first-ever Integrated Water Management (IWM) Plan for the river basin that provides water for the high-altitude capital city of Quito and the surrounding agricultural areas critical to the sustainable livelihoods of the rural populations. With financial support from the Overbrook Foundation and the Tinker Foundation, FFLA has led the governance component of this initiative which entails defining guidelines for the integrated water management process and creating a participatory, multisectorial and inter-scales decision making system.

Upper Guayllabamba River Basin



The Upper Guayllabamba River Basin is a complex space where different stakeholders converge with contradictory interests. This complexity is intensified due to the fact that Quito, the capital city and one of the largest and most densely populated cities in Ecuador, lies within this Basin. As a result, there is growing demand for water for all uses such as human consumption, irrigation, electricity generation, livestock, and industrial use, among others. This diversity of interests makes it difficult to achieve proper and coordinated water management.

Within this scenario, FFLA has pioneered an innovative process, bringing together authorities and decision-makers at local, regional and national levels, community leaders representing users of the water resource, local irrigation and drinking water associations, representatives of the public and private business sector, scientists, academics, and NGOs, in order to analyze the problems and find solutions that will help achieve an IWM at the Basin level.



This multisectorial group made up of more than 60 stakeholders has been working since April 2008. Results of a series of seven workshops of discussion and reflection include:

Group work – definition of vision



- ✍ Consensus-based vision for the future of the river basin and broad-based strategies to achieve it.
- ✍ Participatory situation analysis that has been printed and disseminated widely.
- ✍ Action Plan for the basin projected to 2025.
- ✍ Template for Multi-stakeholder River Basin Management Council.

The participatory process validated the importance of planning for water management at multiple levels. At the local level, in the San Pedro and Pisque sub-basins, FFLA has identified the strengths, weaknesses and needs of local communities and stakeholders and promoting mechanisms by which these realities can be heard, discussed and aligned as part of the higher level watershed management system.

During the last few months, the participatory process has focused on the agreement "rules of play" to ensure that the IWM concept is adequately incorporated in State water policies. In order to achieve IWM it is essential to establish a good governance system, in which the laws and regulations and mechanisms

developed ensure coordination and participation in decision making, implementation and evaluation so that the system works properly. Ecuador is facing an historic moment which could augur well for the incorporation of these new rules of play; the country is developing a Law on Water Resources, in accordance with the new rights to, and of, water as established in the New Constitution of 2008. In the third version of the new Law - still preliminary and written through a national participatory process – certain issues such as participation, inter-institutional coordination and responsibilities for IWM have been included. However, there still remains the challenge of incorporating other key governance recommendations that have emerged from experience and lessons learned with the country and at regional level.

Making the most of this opportunity, FFLA brought together key organisations interested in the topic, and generated a discussion forum to identify the following key issues that should be considered within the new Law:

- a) Include the principles and rights to water established in the Constitution.
- b) Ensure that institutional segregation concerning water management does not continue.
- c) Ensure that participation by stakeholders and civil society is not a token formal procedure, but is a reality enshrined in the legislation.
- d) Pay especial attention to resolving the problems facing community-based irrigation and drinking water systems.
- e) Provide for multi-level governance in water management, highlighting the roles of multi-stakeholder river basin councils.



In search of these goals, FFLA helped organise the national Workshop on *“Participation, Institutional Frameworks and Funding for Integrated Water Management: An Analysis of the Third Edition of the Water Lay”*. The event involved 65 participants in the exchange of knowledge and lessons learned about different water management experiences in the country.



The results of this workshop were disseminated amongst the participants and government agencies related to the topic. In addition, FFLA has participated in meetings with the National Forum of Water Resources<sup>1</sup>, where the recommendations and guidelines were validated and adopted in a national proposal sent to the Water Authority – the National Secretariat of Water (SENAGUA).

The next immediate step at the level of the Upper Guayllabamba River Basin Council – is to reflect, debate, and come up with proposals concerning:

1. The institutionalization of the Council and its operating structure.
2. The mandate and roles of the Council.
3. Technical and financial viability of the Council.

For more information visit: [www.ffla.net](http://www.ffla.net)

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<sup>1</sup> A social platform for the discussion of water policies, which has developed an important trajectory in the country.