

REC 0315 Wildlife Conservation Management

Course description:

The factors that control the patterns of wildlife use by humans represent one of the most complex examples of human-nature interaction, and are critical in guiding the management and conservation of wildlife populations. Throughout the world, hunting of wildlife populations is still an important source of food, recreation, handicrafts, tools, and ceremonial artifacts for a wide range of human cultures. A large number of people in the Neotropics strongly depend on wildlife species as a source of protein and income. At the same time, these patterns of wildlife use occur in a context of growing habitat destruction and human population growth, threatening both the well being of local human communities, and the persistence of wildlife populations. In this course, students will be guided through an analysis of the patterns of wildlife use by human communities, with emphasis on the factors that control these patterns, their ecological impacts, and the wildlife management approaches that have been used in different ecological settings. Students will learn basic tools commonly used for the management of wildlife populations and analyze data from real case studies to experience the complexity and the multidisciplinary nature of wildlife management in the tropics.

General objective:

The main purpose of this course is to allow students to develop a concept of how man manages wildlife populations in different scenarios around the world. This will be achieved through an analysis of the main factors that control the patterns of wildlife use by human communities and their ecological impacts.

Specific objectives:

- Students will learn about the factors that control the patterns of wildlife use by human communities and their main ecological impacts.
- Students will understand the main approaches that have been used for the management of wildlife populations, and some technical tools useful in different ecological settings.
- Students will be able to use simple computer software to simulate different wildlife use scenarios and propose management alternatives based on model results.
- Students will be able to proficiently discuss and critically think about the biological, socio-economic, and cultural aspects that need to be taken into account while analyzing or planning the management of wildlife populations in different ecological settings.

Course content:

- Biological basis for the management of wildlife populations
- Patterns of wildlife use by human communities
- Traditional approaches to wildlife management in different ecological settings
- Tools for wildlife management planning
- Wildlife management in tropical ecosystems - Ecuador