

# Current situation of the National Program for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Yacare in Bolivia

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Abstract: During the last five years, the harvesting quota authorized under the National Program for Conservation and Sustainable Use of *Caiman yacare* vary from 36,287 (in 2015) to 39,652 individuals (in 2017). The authorized quota in 2019 was 38,466 individuals. The National Program still benefits approximately 800 families of indigenous and peasant communities that belong to 19 Indigenous Territories, 25 indigenous communities and 14 peasant communities. As part of the updating of some management plans, new information has been produced on the population status of both *Caiman yacare* and *Melanosuchus niger*, (sympatric species in the Bolivian Amazon). With the focus of achieving an integral use of the species, the use of meat has been supported. In this framework there are some organizations such as Loreto, Bella Vista and Tacana I, who since 2009 have been trained to perform a good management of meat. Work has been done with the national authority on sanitary issues to have a regulation that allows obtaining sanitary registration to communities that produce yacare meat, complying with good handling and hygiene practices. Despite these advances, the sustainability of the program is threatened by the international decrease in the demand for wild hides, which in turn has produced a reduction in prices offered by national tanneries to local communities. This situation has discouraged hunting in recent years and there is a risk of losing one of the few incentives that exist for the conservation of extensive aquatic ecosystems.

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