

SIBD: The Integrated Database System of Zonisig

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1. Abstract

ZONISIG is a technical cooperation project between The Netherlands and Bolivia, carried out by DHV Consultants in association with ITC. Starting in January 1993, it is foreseen that it will terminate in the year 2000. The project's name "Agro-ecological Zoning and the Establishment of a Database and GIS-Network in Bolivia" relates to one of the objectives, which deals with the design and implementation of a geo-referenced natural resources database at national and regional levels to be used in agro-ecological and land use planning. Another objective is the training of a team of Bolivian professionals able to manage the databases to provide the information required by policy makers and land use planners.

At the national level ZONISIG works with the Ministry for Sustainable Development and Environment as counterpart organization, and at regional levels with departmental governments in the main agro-ecological zones of the country: the Tropical Amazon Region, the Altiplano Region, the Valle Region and the Chaco Region.

This paper focusses on the Integrated Database System, named "Sistema Integral de Bases de Datos" (SIBD), and on the methodological aspects of the zoning process and to the system structure.

SIBD is a knowledge-based and object-oriented software package accompanied by a manual. It is based on a methodological framework for agro-ecological and socio-economic zoning coupled to a cartographic scheme. Base maps, required in the zoning process, are converted to digital format and analyzed using GIS capabilities, with relevant attribute information retrieved from SIBD. These maps are linked to the different sections of the system.

The main goal of SIBD is to facilitate the collection, storage, organization, selection, retrieval and reporting of data on natural resources and socio-economic data. During the design process, existing national and international systems were analyzed for the different disciplines. The SIBD sections deal with: climate, soils, terrain, vegetation, land use, hydrology, farming systems, production costs, public transport, markets, and others.

SIBD and the cartographic database are linked to expert systems at regional levels for the land suitability assessment in physical, biological and socio-economic terms within the context of sustainable land use.

2. Introduction

ZONISIG is a technical cooperation project between The Netherlands and Bolivia carried out by DHV Consultants and ITC. Starting in January 1993, it will finish in August 2000. At the national level ZONISIG works with the Ministry for Sustainable Development and Environment as counterpart

organization, and at regional level with regional governments in the main agro-ecological zones of the country: the Tropical Amazon Region, the Altiplano Region, the Valle Region and the Chaco Region.

At the beginning of the project, a survey of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) (Aronoff 1989; Gutiérrez Puebla & Gould 1994) packages was carried out to select the most suitable for ZONISIG. Institutions working with GIS in Bolivia were visited, and technical, financial and institutional feasibility was evaluated. As a result of this study, the decision was taken to use personal computers in all offices, PC ARC/INFO™, ERDAS™ and ILWIS™ in the head office, and ILWIS in regional offices (Zuviría 1993). In addition to GIS software, FoxPro™ and the Automated Land Evaluation System ALES™ (Rossiter 1990 & 1995) were selected for all offices for attribute database management and to help in land suitability evaluation, respectively.

The design and implementation of a knowledge-based and object-oriented software package, named "Sistema Integral de Bases de Datos" SIBD (Zuviría 1996), is one of the project objectives. It deals with geo-referenced natural resources database at national and regional levels to be used in agro-ecological and land use planning. Another objective is the training of a team of Bolivian professionals enabling them to manage the databases and to provide the information required by policy makers and land use planners.

SIBD; structure is a methodological framework for agro-ecological and socio-economic zoning coupled to a cartographic scheme. The base maps required for the zoning process are converted to digital format and analyzed using GIS capabilities, together with attribute information retrieved from SIBD.

The main goal of SIBD is to facilitate the collection, storage, organization, selection, retrieval, maintenance and reporting of natural resources and socio-economic data on personal computers. During the design process, existing national and international systems were analyzed for the different disciplines (FAO-ISRIC 1989; SOTER 1993). SIBD sections deal with (agro)climate, terrain and soils, vegetation, land use, hydrology, farming systems, production costs, public transport, markets, other socio-economic aspects and maps. There is also a user-defined section for information not fitting in previous sections.

Special attention is paid to the fact that digitized maps are sets of spatial entities or layers of elements that, when combined in an appropriate manner, can create a map (Huxhold and Levinsohn 1995; Kraak and Ormeling 1996). Because these virtual maps required a virtual map library to store required files and relationships in a computer and assemble them, a special section of SIBD is assigned to this purpose.

SIBD and the cartographic databases are linked to expert systems at the regional level for land assessment (physical, biological and socio-economic aspects) taking sustainable land use as a basis for analysis.

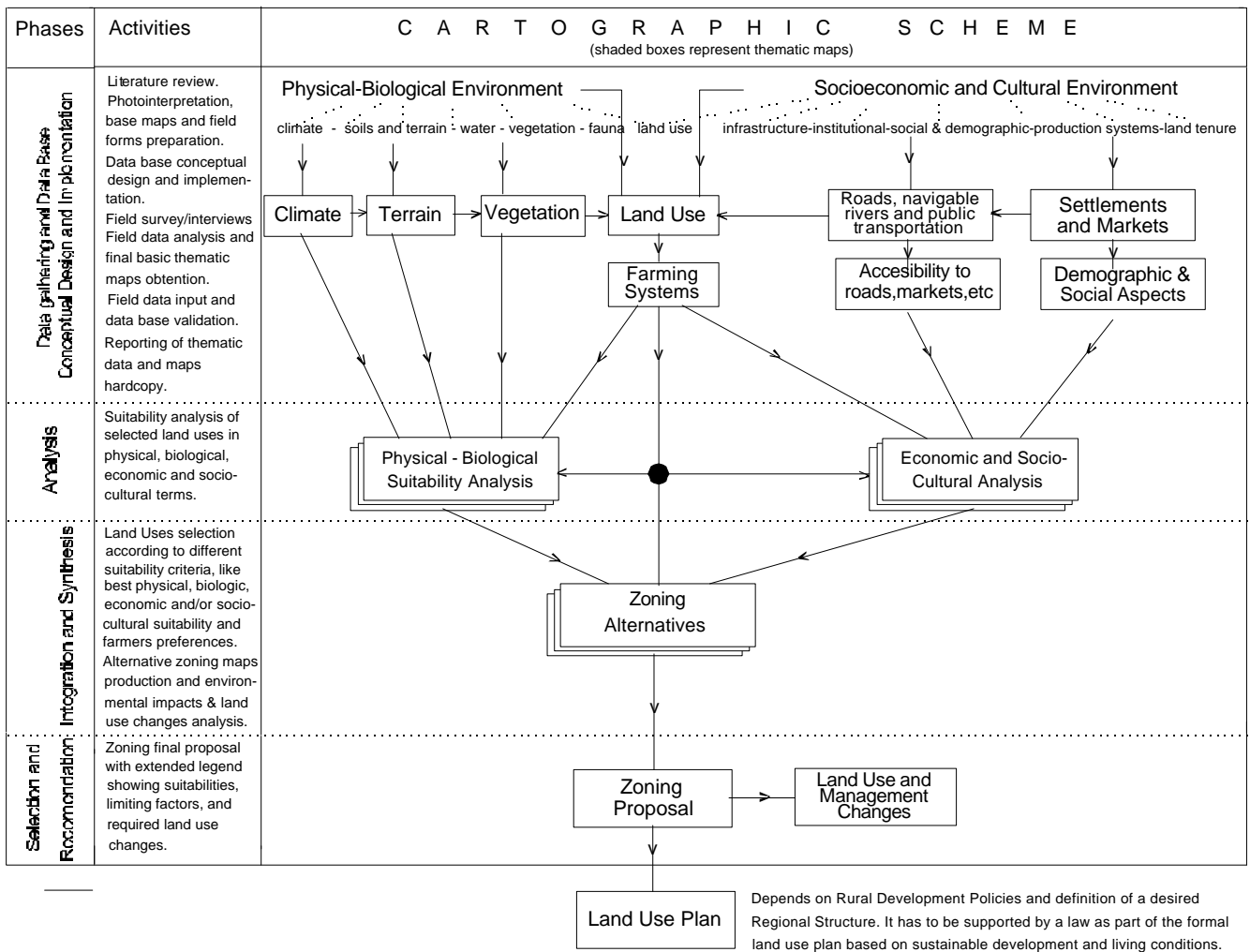
3. Agro-Ecological and Socio-Economic Zoning

The method for agro-ecological and socio-economic zoning is summarized in Figure 1. The role played by thematic maps, represented by shaded boxes, is briefly explained.

Agro-ecological zones are characterized by climate, terrain, soils and (semi)natural vegetation parameters that can be translated into entities of similar biophysical potential for agriculture (FAO 1997).

Socio-economic zones are characterized by land use and farming system parameters that can be translated into homogeneous socio-cultural and economic areas.

FIGURE 1: CARTOGRAPHIC AND CONCEPTUAL AGROECOLOGICAL AND SOCIOECONOMICAL ZONING PROCESS



The definition of agroclimates is fundamental for the selection of land utilization types (LUT) for the suitability analysis performed according to FAO (1976). Agroclimates are defined according to De Fina (1992) and Zuviría (1992) by taking major physiographic areas and, within them, elevation ranges linked to the agroclimatic parameters most related to the land uses.

Terrain units are areas within a certain agroclimatic zone with a distinct pattern of landform, parent material and/or origin. These units were defined by adapting the SOTER database and mapping guidelines (ISRIC 1993) to reconnaissance and semi-detailed scales, keeping emphasis on the soil-terrain relationships. The resulting terrain and soil map is the cartographic base to assess the physical suitability for selected LUTs and for (semi) natural vegetation and for land use mapping by further partitioning of terrain units, following the ITC approach (Zonneveld 1995).

The vegetation map is used to assess the biologic suitability of LUTs with a view to sustainable use of (semi)natural vegetation.

The current land use map is important for the zoning process. It reflects the integration among present physical, biological, socio-cultural and economic conditions within an area. The land use is also the starting point in the assessment of zoning alternatives. Roads and navigable rivers are classified to show public transportation possibilities. This information, along with data on market locations and their importance is used to create maps showing the accessibility of roads, rivers, cities

and/or markets. Settlements and surrounding areas are classified to show demographic and social aspects to be used in socioeconomic analyses of living conditions.

Suitability analysis is done in physical and biological terms and economic and socio-cultural settings are analyzed for each LUT. The resulting maps are combined and a final suitability table is obtained, showing suitability ratings and limiting factors, by making full use of GIS capabilities (Zuviría and Valenzuela 1994).

The land use map is converted into a farming systems map by linking physiography to dominant single or combined land use per farm, average farm sizes and product destinations (Fresco *et al* 1994), to be used together with suitability maps (Anaman and Krishnamra 1994).

Alternative zoning maps are produced following a multiple-goal approach by maximizing and minimizing selected development goals (Huizing and Bronsveld 1994; Barredo 1996). For each zoning alternative the required land use/farming system changes and environmental impacts are pointed out (Conesa 1995).

After discussions with cooperating organizations the final zoning proposal is agreed upon, to be supported by law as part of the formal land use plan, based on sustainable development and improvement of living conditions. At present, Pando has a fully legalized land use plan (ZONISIG 1996).

4. The Integrated Database System

The Integrated Database System, named "Sistema Integral de Bases de Datos" (SIBD) is a stand-alone object-oriented (Korth and Silberschatz 1993) software, designed and implemented by ZONISIG to facilitate the selection, collection, storage, organization, retrieval and reporting of natural resources and socio-economic information (Zuviría 1996).

The system's structure is based on the methodological framework for agro-ecological and socio-economic zoning. Thematic base maps required during the zoning process are linked to different sections of SIBD. During the design process, existing national and international standards were analyzed for the different disciplines (FAO-ISRIC 1989; ISRIC 1993; ZUÑIGA QUIROGA 1994).

SIBD sections, represented by boxes in figure 2, deal with: climate, terrain and soils, vegetation, hydrology, land use, farming systems, production costs, markets, public transportation facilities, socio-demographic aspects and maps. The updating needs, represented by overlaid boxes in figure 2, are permanent for maps, very high for land use and production costs, intermediate for vegetation, farming systems, markets and socio-demographic aspects, and low for climate, hydrology, terrain and soils.

The attribute information handled by the system is geo-referenced, linked to a point, line or area of the country. Consequently, it can be visualized and queried, resulting in maps and related attribute tables.

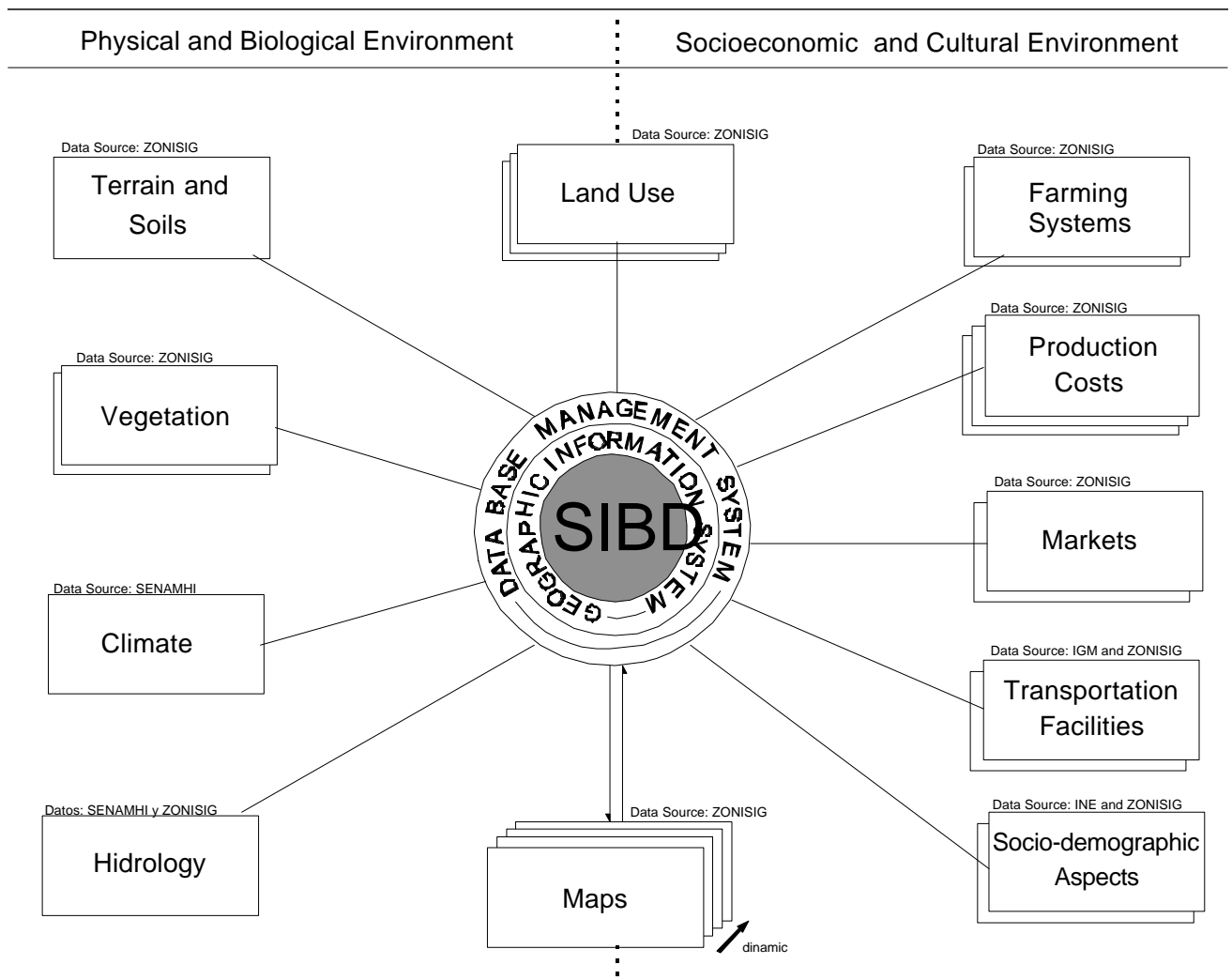
The procedures manual describes the role of each section in the zoning process, its logical structure and the characteristics of each attribute. Special attention was paid to the design of user-friendly interfaces linked to paper data entry forms, used during fieldwork.

The terrain and soils data entry form is shown in figure 3, and figure 4 presents one of the SIBD interfaces for terrain characteristics. Main characteristics of this interface, similar to those of other interfaces, are described hereafter.

The Main **Menu System (A)**, on top of figure 4, has six options for easy communicating with the keyboard or mouse. Shortcuts are implemented for all options and suboptions.

- The System menu options allow the use of a calculator, calendar/diary and to abandon the system.
- The SIBD menu option allows to select a desired section.
- Edit allows to cut, copy, paste and delete selected text.
- Application allows to add, copy, delete, find and browse records, filter and order databases, pick-list the display for some fields (Physiography and Lithology codes) and to report selected information.
- Utilities allows database indexing and packing, status bar display and to modify the visual environment.
- SIBD displays general information about the system itself.

FIGURE 2: The Integrated Database System Core Structure



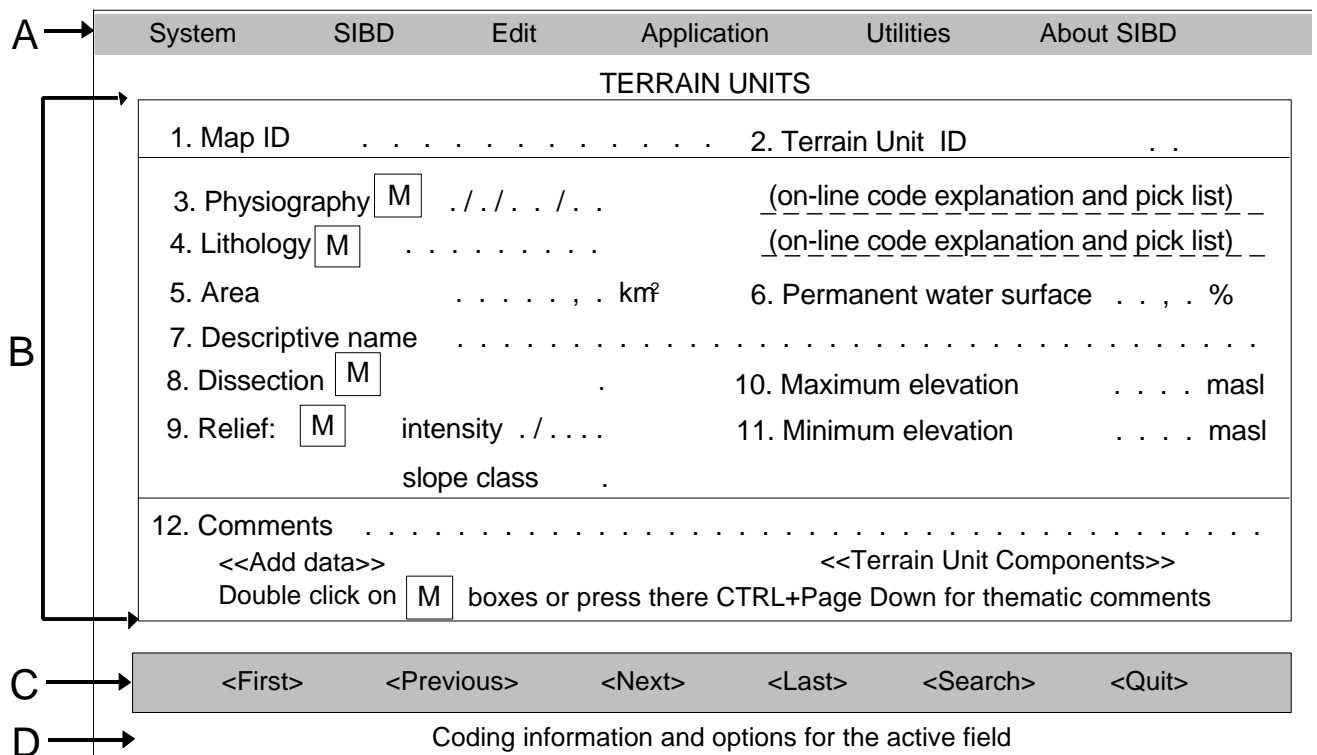
The **Central Body (B)** displays twelve items with terrain units attribute data. Each item has a reference number corresponding to the description in the procedures manual. In the lower part of this body are two push buttons to add records, to close this interface and open the terrain unit components. Boxes containing an "M" (Physiography, Lithology, Dissection and Relief) can be activated to obtain on-line comment. The description of visualized codes appears in the central body (Physiography and Lithology) and allows selection of additional options through pick-lists; it has the flexibility to consider new options.

The **Control Bar (C)** allows to visualize the first, previous, next and last record of the selected database, to search one or more records matching a specified condition, and to quit the interface.

The **Bottom Line (D)** shows the coding options and the description for the active item.

In addition, guidelines for data query and classification linked to suitability analysis are indicated in the procedures manual. Figure 5 presents the data entry form for production unit plots and land use types. Dashed boxes are for office use. Management levels are defined using conversion tables like the one presented in figure 6. Yield classes are defined for every land use type and management level after analysis of the production data. Suitabilities are defined following the FAO framework (1976) for selected land utilization types using ALES software (Rossiter 1990 and 1995). For terrain, soils, vegetation and production costs, queries are designed to export required data from the SIBD to ALES. Results from physical-biological and economic analysis are indicated in dashed boxes for cross-examination of the adequacy of the suitability models applied.

FIGURE 4: SIBD USER INTERFACE FOR TERRAIN CHARACTERISTICS



A = main menu system

C = control bar

B = central body

D = bottom line

FIGURE 5: DATA ENTRY FORM FOR PRODUCTION UNIT PLOTS AND LAND USE TYPES

FARM														
1. Farm ID . / . / . / (for details on farm items surveyed see SIBD manual)														
FARM PLOTS														
1. Farm ID . / . / . / 59. Plot ID														
1. Land Use Map ID						1'. Terrain Map ID								
2. Land Use Unit ID						2' y 13'. Terrain Unit/Component IDs . . . / .								
60. Distance to road . . . , . km						61. Travelling time to road . . . , . hours								
62. Single or Compound Land Use ID														
SINGLE LAND USE TYPES (SLUT)														
1. Farm ID . / . / . / 59. Lot ID														
63. Descriptive name of Single Land Use Type (SLUT)														
64. Plot surface occupied by SLUT hectares														
65. Soil Conservation Methods														
66. Physical-Biological factors reducing present yields														
67. Irrigation source and system														
68. Production destinations (up to 6)														
										%				
69. Proportion to each destination														
70. Places where (main) product is sold and/or exchanged														
71. Transportation means employed to deliver products														
72. Community ID where products are delivered (department ID/province ID/community ID) . / . . /														
CROPS AND FRUIT CULTURE								Management level	Yield Class	Land Use Suitabilities				
										Physical-Biological	Economic			
Pest controllers & fertilisers	Labour force	Machinery operations	Cultural operations	Yield kg/ha	Seeding/Planting system	Fruit trees density	PRODUCTION lot preparation	CALENDAR seeding/planting	harvest					
								tr/ha						
LIVESTOCK								Management level	Production/ Yield Class	Land Use Suitabilities				
(see additional data in farm data entry form)										Physical-Biological	Economic			
GRAZING SYSTEM		MONTHS PER YEAR GRAZING IN LOT		FEEDING		HEALTH AND REPRODUCTION		PRODUCTS						
FORESTRY								Management level	Production/ Yield Class	Land Use Suitabilities				
										Physical-Biological	Economic			
PREPARATION AND TREE SEARCH ACTIVITIES		ROADS / PATHS PLANNING		MACHINERY TO CUT & EXTRACT		LOWEST DBH TO CUT (cm)		CLOSING LABOURS		TIMBER VOLUMES m ³ /ha				
										SP.1	SP.2	SP.3	SP.4	Total
OTHER EXTRACTIVE LAND USES								Management level	Production/ Yield Class	Land Use Suitabilities				
										Physical-Biological	Economic			
Name of product														
Amount of product														
Measuring unit														
Comments														
.														
.														

data input on subsection corresponding to Land Use

office use

FIGURE 6: SIBD CONVERSION TABLE USED TO DETERMINE RAINFED AGRICULTURE MANAGEMENT LEVEL IN A STUDY AREA

Management Level	External Input Requirements for Rainfed Agriculture		
	Seeds, Pest Controllers and Fertilisers	Labour Force	Machinery
VERY LOW	it does not match requirements for the low management level		
LOW	at least one of the following: - certified seed - fertilisers (chemical) - manure (organic) - herbicides - fungicides - insecticides	Human, Animal and/or Mechanical	at least one of the following: - tractor - plough - harrow - clod breaker - manure spreader - other*
MEDIUM	at least two of the following: - certified seed - fertilisers (chemical) - manure (organic) - herbicides - fungicides - insecticides	Animal and/or Mechanical	tractor and at least one of the following: - plough - harrow - clod breaker - manure spreader - other*
HIGH	at least three of the following: - certified seed - fertilisers (chemical) - manure (organic) - herbicides - fungicides - insecticides	Mechanical	tractor and at least two of the following: - plough - harrow - clod breaker - manure spreader - other*
VERY HIGH	at least four of the following: - certified seed - fertilisers (chemical) - manure (organic) - herbicides - fungicides - insecticides	Mechanical	tractor and at least three of the following: - plough - harrow - clod breaker - manure spreader - other*

* specified in the corresponding section of the SIBD manual

5. The Zoning Process in the Department of Pando visualized through Maps

The agro-ecological and socio-economical zoning of the Department of Pando was completed in 1996 and in early 1997 a detailed report accompanied by maps was published (ZONISIG 1996 & 1997). Some of these maps, illustrating the zoning process, are presented and briefly commented.

The Department of Pando is entirely located in the tropical Amazon region of north Bolivia (**Map 1: The Department of Pando**). It comprises 63827 km² between 9°30' and 12°30'S and 69°35' and 65°17'W. The elevation ranges between 90 and 290 masl; rainfall fluctuates from 1700 to 1900 mm/year and the average temperature from 25.4 to 26.2°C. The main vegetation type is a thick forest and the population of about 38,000 inhabitants, is concentrated in the cities of Cobija, Puerto Rico and Riberalta and their surroundings (**Map 2: Population Density**). In the rest of the area population density is very low because of social, economical and political constraints (land tenure, deficient infrastructure, government policies, etc) and the limited natural resources.

Map 1-12. See at the end of this paper.

Terrain, vegetation and land use features were analyzed by means of remote sensing (Landsat TM data from 1986) and field data, and a combined map showing physiography and (semi)natural vegetation (**Map 3: Terrain Units**) was used as a spatial basis for the land-suitability assessment of selected Land Utilization Types (FAO 1976) taking present land use as a starting point to assess zoning alternatives (**Map 4: Land Use; Map 5: Timber Extraction Areas**).

Thematic maps resulting from the classification of relevant land attributes were produced and used during the zoning process (Map 6: Geomorphologic Units; Map 7: Floristic Types; Map 8: Brazil Nut Trees Density; Map 9: Rubber Trees Density; Map 10: Timber Volumes).

Close relationships were found between travelling times to the main cities, rural settlements characteristics, present land use, and terrain features, and a map showing travelling time estimates was produced (**Map 11: Travelling Times to Cobija, Riberalta and Puerto Rico**).

The map of the land use plan (**Map 12: Land Use Plan**), legalized by the president and accompanied by a land use plan, was produced after the integrated analysis of zoning alternatives; all of them oriented to link sustainable development to social and economic development and to minimize conflicts.

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