

Building indigenous fire  
management in South America.  
The experience of Parupa  
international network

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# Introduction

- Indigenous peoples in different biomes have long been using fire for several ends. For many years, these practices have been ignored or forbidden in protected areas and other fire-related State & Government policies. More recently, the “zero fire” paradigm is being questioned, as fire management is increasingly acknowledged as a conservation ally, and so is traditional ecologic knowledge, including indigenous fire practices.
- 2015-17: Researchers (Jay Mistry, UK & Bibiana Bilbao, VE), Project (British Academy Support). Objective: build case on need to integrate indigenous fire practices into fire management (governmental) policies.

# Main activities

Focus in Venezuela, Brazil and Guyana

- Meetings to share experiences & perspectives
  - Gather secondary data
  - Incentive indigenous videos on fire management
  - Assess fire extension & impact via remote sensing
  - Focal groups & interview decision makers
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- Focus here: Meetings (3). 3 x 3 actors' involvement



# Meetings (3 x 3 x 3)

## 3 Meetings:

- Parupa Science Station, Kavanayén (Pemón village territory), Gran Sabana, Venezuela. 8-11<sup>th</sup> July 2015
- Brasilia, Brazil. 11-17<sup>th</sup> March, 2017
- Campo Grande, Brazil (Wildfire), 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019

## 3 Actors' profiles:

- Academia: Researchers from diverse backgrounds
- Indigenous peoples: elders, knowledge holders, etc.
- Policy practitioners & field operators

## 3 Countries:

- Brazil, Venezuela, Guyana

# Parupa Meeting 1

## RED INTERCULTURAL Y PARTICIPATIVA DEL MANEJO DEL FUEGO

Primera Reunión

ESTACIÓN CIENTÍFICA PARUPA, VÍA COMUNIDAD  
INDÍGENA KAVANAYÉN, GRAN SABANA, VENEZUELA

8 – 11 Julio 2015

Con el apoyo de:





# Parupa Meeting 1



# Parupa Meeting 1





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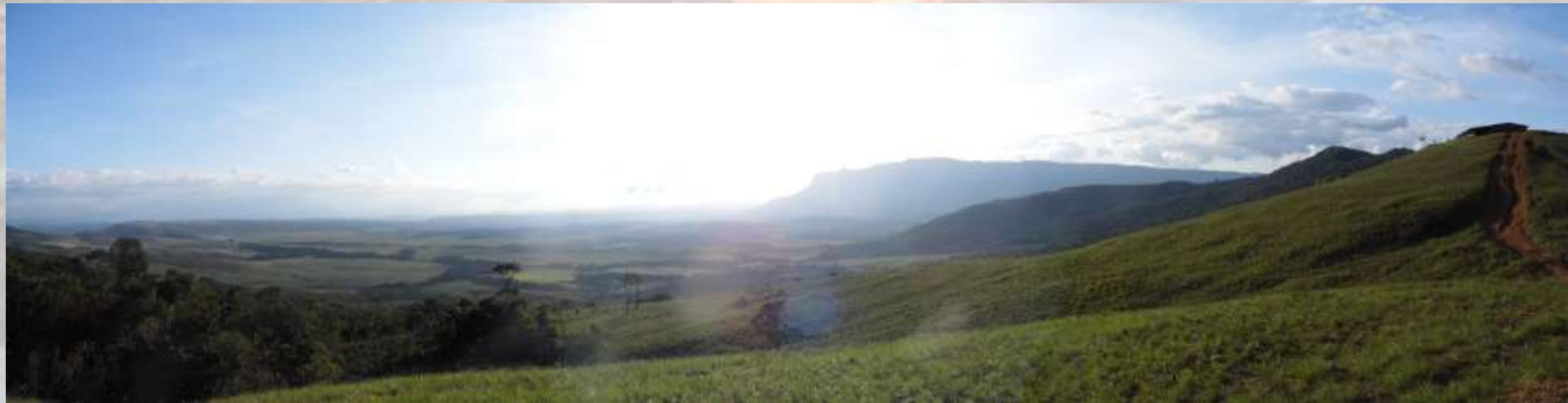


# Parupa Meeting 1





# Parupa Meeting 1





# Parupa Meeting 1





# Parupa Meeting 1



# Paradigms & challenges

- Indigenous peoples protect forests; however, fires threaten forests: hence, need to prevent & control fires.
- But:
  - a) fire belongs to some ecosystems (savannas...)
  - b) Indigenous management & cultural practices
  - c) Indigenous fire brigades vs culture?
- Policies & funding focus on prevention & firefighting.



# Need to change paradigm?



# Parupa Declaration

- Respect indigenous fire practices & knowledge.
- Promote indigenous empowerment & participation in fire management decision-making and increase autonomy in/vis-à-vis policy implementing, including funding.
- Stimulate institutions to support indigenous fire management nationally & internationally, such as to curb deforestation and carbon emissions.
- Promote indigenous audiovisual reporting to inform and strengthen traditional fire practices.



# Parupa Meeting 2

## Brasilia IFM week. 11-17<sup>th</sup> March, 2017





# Parupa Meeting 2 (Brasilia)





# Parupa Meeting 2 (Brasilia)





# Parupa Meeting 2 (Brasilia)





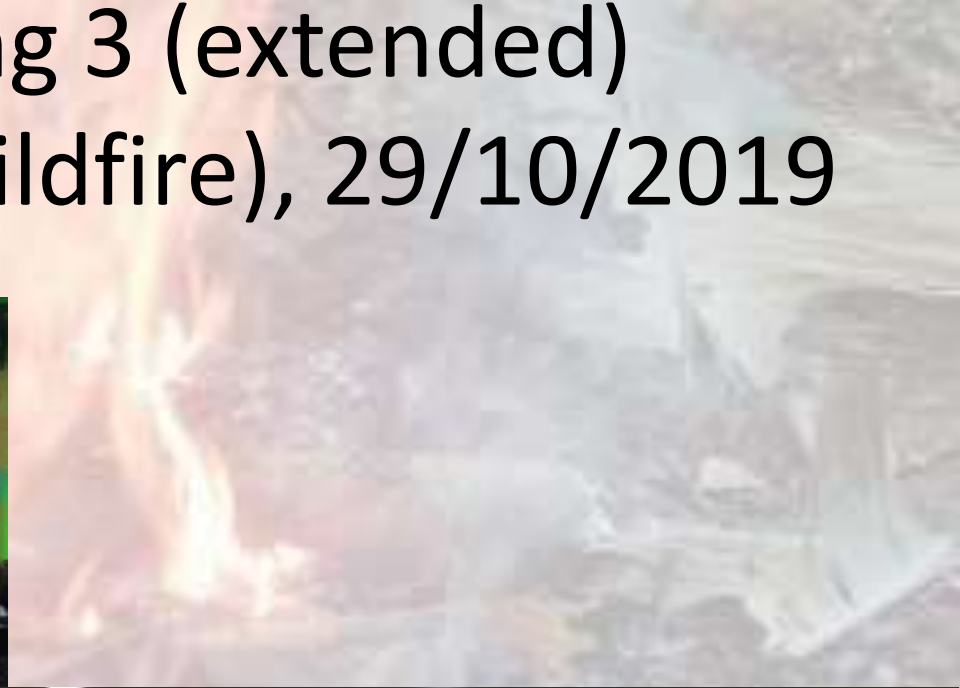
# Parupa Meeting 2 (Brasilia)

## Progress & challenges

- Ecosystem & cultural diversity. Amazonia, Cerrado, Transition areas. Indigenous, maroon & other TPs.
- Progress potential via cross-cultural dialogue and policy makers' awareness building.
- Challenge: from top-down to bottom-up policy building.
- Need for cross-cultural, trans-disciplinary & inter-institutional collaborative research.

# Parupa Meeting 3 (extended)

## Campo Grande, (Wildfire), 29/10/2019





# Thoughts & way forward

- Richness & complexity of international & multi-profile networking. Needs funding & endurance.
- Institutional drives: national and/or global agendas.
- Trans-boundary regions sharing indigenous peoples: local indigenous empowerment can make difference.
- Recognised relevance of TEK + wider indigenous access to academia: new opportunity for cross-cultural dialogue. Need for indigenous bio-ecology researchers.

## In Brazil:

- Law project National Integrated Fire Management Policy
- 2018 Public Research Call: Upcoming results
- IFM survived recent political & environmental backlash

## Challenges:

- Indigenous demand for year-round & longer contracts
- Fair & sustainable remuneration of brigades

# Hope: Diversity!







THANKS!

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