

INTER-INDIGENOUS PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

A PRELIMINARY REPORT

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 Ottawa, Canada**

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- World Bank
- Inter-American Dialogue
- United Nations Association of the United Kingdom
- Smithsonian Institute

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1. FOREWORD

This report outlines some, of the many Indigenous partnership and development project opportunities available in Latin America. The findings are based on field research by the author in Belize, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Guyana and Bolivia during the period from April 1994 - March 1995. As well, numerous meetings were held with multi-lateral agencies such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank, the Inter American Development Bank (IDB), in New York, Washington and elsewhere. Additional information was gathered through presentations made at two Apikan/UNDP Round Tables on Indigenous Trade and Development, held in Washington, DC (11-Oct-95 in the IDB Conference Room) and New York (7-Dec-95 at UN Headquarters).

In addition, information was provided and support given by many organizations, especially, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, Aboriginal Business Canada, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), particularly the NGO division, Hon. Christine Stewart, Secretary of State for Latin America, UNDP New York, UNDP/PRODERE, UNDP Field offices throughout Latin America, Canadian Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canadian Embassies and High Commissions, particularly in Guyana, Chile and Argentina, Plenty Canada, Unaaq, Inuit Circumpolar Conference and Panah Panah (a Miskito Indian NGO in Nicaragua), Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank, UNFAO, Inter-American Dialogue, United Nations Association of the United Kingdom, Smithsonian Institute and others.

Direct financial support was provided by Aboriginal Business Canada, CIDA, UNDP/PRODERE (Govt. of Italy) and UNDP.

Unless otherwise noted, the opinions expressed in this report are those of the author. I fully acknowledge the tremendous support I have received, but take full responsibility for errors and omissions.

March 1995

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- 2 **UNDP/RBLAC Apikan Indigenous Network—Round Table on Indigenous Trade and Development—Report on Proceedings and Follow Up Recommendations and Actions**
- 3 **Preliminary Report on Apikan/UNDP/PRODERE Central American Scoping Mission**

Appendices are contained in the hardcopy version.

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3. INTRODUCTION

This report contains preliminary information on forty-nine opportunities for international indigenous partnerships. The projects are from nine countries in South and Central America. The opportunities identified are simply the ones that have been brought to the attention of the author and Apikan Indigenous Network during seven months of research. Some opportunities have more detailed information than others. Additional information on these opportunities, plus information on additional opportunities is being gathered as part of Apikan's ongoing work.

This report is not meant to be all inclusive, but simply to identify specific opportunities and give an indication of the scope and breadth of opportunities available for inter-indigenous partnerships. The report is being tabled at the **Indigenous Peoples of the Americas Partnership Conference on Trade and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean**, in Belize City, Belize, March 22-25, 1995.

The purpose of this report is to;

- Provide initial information on specific opportunities for inter-indigenous partnerships
- Stimulate discussion on possible partnerships
- Provide information on the breadth and range of possible inter-indigenous partnerships
- Stimulate thinking on the potential impact of inter-indigenous partnerships

This report is organized with a short overview of sectoral opportunities for inter-indigenous partnerships in Latin America. This is followed by brief outlines of forty-nine specific project opportunities in nine different countries. As noted in the foreword, the information has been gathered through collaboration with many agencies and organizations. The objective during this initial stage of research was not to obtain detailed information about each project (although as you will discover, some projects have sufficient detail to allow the preparation of a development plan), but to simply identify potential opportunities. Background information on the Scoping Mission and other research activities is contained in attached appendices.

The opportunities and benefits are largely presented from a Canadian perspective, as the readership of this preliminary report will be largely Canadian Indigenous groups. Part of the purpose of this report is to stimulate interest in inter-Indigenous partnerships amongst the Canadian Indigenous community, and amongst more business focused sectors of the Canadian government and industry. Every project opportunity, whether it is directly stated or not, has significant benefits for the non-Canadian Indigenous partners.

The report is meant to be a starting point only. It is hoped it will stimulate peoples to decide to explore specific opportunities and will eventually result in inter-indigenous projects that will be beneficial to all partners involved.

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4. SECTORAL OPPORTUNITIES

Inter-Indigenous project opportunities have been identified in a number of specific sectors and areas. Some have much more distinct business and trade themes and offer more lucrative financial returns, while some are more related to general development. All offer potential benefits to all partners. We are sure additional sectoral opportunities exist, they simply were not brought to our attention during our initial research stage.

Fisheries/Mining/Forestry/Petroleum

Estimates place Indigenous land claims at over one quarter of the land base in Latin America. The recent launch of the United Nations Decade of the Worlds Indigenous Peoples will likely see an increase in Indigenous land claims, as well as an increase in the rate of settlement of outstanding Indigenous issues. Many Indigenous peoples already have negotiated settlements to large, resource rich, areas of their land. For instance, the Indigenous peoples on Nicaragua's Atlantic coast have control over a land base larger than El Salvador, Kuna in Panama have resource rich lands in the San Blas area.

These Indigenous lands are often very resource rich, containing valuable forests, fisheries, minerals, petroleum and other resources. Often there is a history of exploitive development of these resources, where Indigenous peoples obtained little benefit and many problems from harvesting and development activities. Often too, Indigenous peoples need to be on guard against national governments who are not honouring Indigenous land agreements. Many national governments are still awarding development permits to Indigenous lands to non Indigenous interests. Indigenous peoples are concerned that if they do not take control of developing the resources on their lands, national governments will be successful in awarding them to non Indigenous interests, and the benefits to Indigenous peoples will be minimal.

Generally, Indigenous leaders and peoples we met with are interested in development provided they are full and active participants in the process, and it proceeds in a manner with which they are comfortable. While Indigenous peoples are not ready to establish clear cut forestry programs, or other environmentally damaging developments, most are interested in sustainable development on their lands, provided they participate directly in management and share equitably in the benefits. Many want partners who are sensitive to their needs and are able to work with them to develop opportunities in mutually beneficial and sustainable ways.

Canadian Indigenous peoples have successful experience in maximizing local benefits from resource development. These skills can be applied to opportunities in many areas of Latin America. In fact, most Indigenous peoples we have met with, have expressed much interest in working with Canadian Indigenous interests on development initiatives.

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Agriculture

Many Indigenous peoples are currently involved in agricultural activities. Many face problems related to credit, price stability, marketing and transportation infrastructure. There are opportunities to provide innovative solutions to these issues.

Crafts

When many people think of Indigenous trade, they immediately think of crafts. Indigenous peoples have established worldwide reputations for the quality and uniqueness of their crafts. Often however, producers receive very little of the final selling price of their product. Often too, with a little investment in product development, producers could realize much more for their products.

Opportunities in the craft sector relate to marketing, co-production, product innovation, importing and wholesaling.

Manufacturing

Only one manufacturing opportunity was identified, that being furniture production in Nicaragua. However, it is likely that additional opportunities will unfold as more and better inter-indigenous relationships are developed.

Institutional Development/ Training/Education/Technical Support

Indigenous peoples consistently identified technical support and institutional development as priority needs. They are interested in institutional development, assistance with training and education objectives, assistance in planning (particularly with economic development strategies), and other similar areas. Canadian Indigenous peoples have excellent experience in these areas. This sector offers excellent opportunities to gain international experience and establish international relationships for Canadian Indigenous peoples.

5. OPPORTUNITIES BY COUNTRY

This section will briefly outline specific opportunities for international Indigenous partnerships. The opportunities that follow are by no means all the opportunities available in each country. They are simply the ones that have been brought to the attention of Apikan and its partners during the limited research that has been undertaken during the previous seven months.

Most opportunities are presented in a brief summary format only. This is partly due to limitations on available time and resources, and partly because it is expected that the opportunities will be further defined as peoples indicate interest and begin working together on them.

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Apikan, along with the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, the UNDP and others are actively working to establish international infrastructure that will support and facilitate inter-indigenous partnerships. Peoples have been consistent in expressing frustration at the ability of existing infrastructure to respond to Indigenous development initiatives.

5.1 ARGENTINA

Apikan Indigenous Network and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP), visited Argentina in January 1995 as part of the Canadian Prime Ministerial Trade Mission to South America. During this visit, with assistance from the Canadian Embassy, meetings were held with the President of the WCIP, who lives in Argentina, the National Indigenous President of Argentina, the National Indigenous Women's leader, several local chiefs and with the local UNDP office. Based on these meetings the following potential opportunities were identified.

5.1.1 CRAFT PRODUCTION & MARKETING

Argentinean Indigenous leaders are interested in technical assistance in product development and marketing of their local handicrafts.

Little is known of this opportunity, but working together on it could lead to opportunities in other sectors, and will certainly strengthen relations amongst the collaborators.

5.1.2 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Argentinean Indigenous leaders expressed a great deal of interest in working with Canadian Indigenous groups. They identified institutional development and governmental relations as one of the key areas.

Work in this area will develop and strengthen relationships and provide opportunities to identify other development opportunities in the region.

5.1.3 PETROLEUM EXPLORATION

The Argentinean Indigenous leaders indicated there are petroleum resources on some of their lands. They are concerned that they currently have no role in the development and commercialization of this resource. They expressed interest in working with Canadian Indigenous interests to look for development opportunities, and to develop strategies of increasing Indigenous benefits from the development of petroleum resources. They also expressed a desire to work with Canadians to develop mechanisms to increase Indigenous involvement in the petroleum industry. They also expressed considerable interest in being involved in the environmental management of the industry.

Opportunities exist in this sector for Canadians to provide technical support to assist Argentinean Indigenous peoples to negotiate more involvement in the industry. As well, opportunities could exist for Canadian Indigenous companies to joint venture with Argentinean Indigenous interests in petroleum exploration and development.

5.2 BELIZE

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Apikan has been active in Belize for several years, working directly with the Xunantunich organization and hosting two conferences on Indigenous partnerships and development (1994 and 1995). In addition, Apikan personnel spent several days in Belize in September 1994 as part of an Apikan/UNDP/PRODERE Scoping Mission designed to identify Indigenous partnership opportunities.

5.2.1 BELIZE EXOTIC FRUITS

Opportunity

There are a number of exotic fruits that grow in Belize that may have international specialty market potential. These include, Sour Sap, Sweet Sap and Mamey. These fruits are well known and liked locally, but they have never been commercially grown for the international market. Given the success of some of the exotic agricultural products that have been launched in recent years (Kiwi fruit, Wild Rice, other tropical fruits) there may be an opportunity to develop markets for some Belizean exotic fruits.

Benefits

Developing production capacity and markets for these fruits will provide additional income generating opportunities for local farmers, and will improve the flow of foreign currency into Belize.

Location and Liaison

Moises Cal, Liaison Officer United Nations Development Program PO Box 42 c/o Ministry of Economic Development Belmopan, Belize CA Phone: 501-8-22526 or 22527 Fax: 501-8-23111	The idea for this opportunity was put forward by Mr. Cal in a meeting in his office on Friday, Sept. 16, 1994.
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Special Considerations

Initial research into this opportunity will need to focus on market opportunities and production potential and production and distribution economics.

Technical Resources Required

1. Person to conduct pre-feasibility study of opportunity.
2. Persons and/or organizations with experience in developing production and markets for exotic agricultural products. (The Wild Rice industry in Saskatchewan, Canada, is an example of a very successful launch of an exotic agricultural product. Saskatchewan Indian Agriculture Program and Kitsaki Development Corporation's experience in this industry may be of use to this Belizean opportunity.)

Development Plan

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1. Contact Moises Cal for more specific information on potential products and to determine most appropriate Belizian group(s) to work with on this opportunity.
2. Work with Belizian group(s) to prepare proposal and secure financing for pre-feasibility study.

Draft Terms of Reference—Pre-Feasibility Study

- ◆ Determine inventory of potentially marketable exotic fruits
- ◆ Determine technical feasibility of commercial production of potentially marketable exotic fruits
- ◆ Conduct market pre feasibility study for products that have commercial production potential
- ◆ Prepare a development strategy for products that have commercialization potential

5.2.2 CULTURAL CENTRE—FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

There is an opportunity to assist in the development of a business plan and operating strategy to establish a Cultural and Friendship Centre in conjunction with the Xunantunich farming project (Sec. 5.2.3). This centre could develop and market eco-tourism products and act as a training centre where programs/courses could be given by local and international interests. For instance, David Magaña, President of the Xunantunich Organization, envisages a setting where Universities and institutions may arrange to deliver off campus programs and courses related to the region and to Xunantunich's activities. Magaña sees eco-tourism products as potentially including, rain forest activities/tours, cultural history visits to Xunantunich and other sites, and local cultural experiences.

Opportunities for Canadian interests include, in addition to an opportunity to gain international experience, a chance to provide consulting and technical support and marketing support to the project. It is also possible that opportunities could evolve to market the product back into Canada

5.2.3 FARMING PROJECT

The Xunantunich Organization is developing a small farming project to allow local Mayans to regain access to agricultural opportunities. The project is a community based initiative, building upon existing land holdings of community members. Lands owned by community members will be made available for farming by other community members interested in agriculture for their own consumption and for profit.

Five individuals in the community, who together own approximately 100 acres of agricultural land, have agreed to allow their land to be worked communally in two to four acre plots. This will rekindle the agricultural capacity which once existed in the area (San Jose Succotz was once a main agriculture producer for the Cayo district). As the land base is expanded through reinvestment of profits and fund raising, the original one hundred acres will revert back to the use of the current owners.

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Technical assistance is required to fully articulate the project and raise financing. As well, as noted above (Sec. 5.2.2), there is interest in incorporating other revenue generating opportunities from eco-tourism and training into the plan.

This project provides an opportunity to gain experience and exposure to Latin American development in an English speaking country. Through contacts and experience gained on this opportunity, it may be possible to identify additional opportunities that could have a more attractive revenue potential. For example, opportunities to assist in marketing products (eco-tourism, training and agricultural products) into Canada may evolve, as well as opportunities to work on similar projects elsewhere.

5.2.4 HWY. 7 CONSTRUCTION OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunity

There is a \$100 million plus, multi agency effort to upgrade the southern highway (Highway 7) in Belize. This highway runs from Belmopan in central Belize to Punta Gorda on the southern Atlantic coast, and passes through Mayan & Garifuna territory and communities enroute. This project is a joint effort between the UK Office of Development Assistance, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Govt. of Taiwan and the Govt. of Kuwait. The United Kingdom Office of Development Assistance is currently beginning an impact assessment on this project.

Based on the Canadian experience with similar infrastructure, there should be opportunities to develop joint venture businesses and bid on contracts related to this initiative. Linking local Indigenous groups with Indigenous construction company(s) from North America may enable local groups to successfully obtain contracts. This would ensure that local business capacity is developed, and maximize the direct economic benefits accruing to local interests, from the construction of the highway.

Note: It may be necessary to also involve other construction firms with international experience. This can be determined as the opportunity is further explored.

Benefits

This strategy, if successful, would maximize benefits that would accrue to the local Indigenous economy. In addition to employment and labour opportunities, it would allow the local Indigenous economy to participate directly in the contracts and share in any profits. More importantly, it would develop contracting capacity in the local community. It would enable the local groups to have the capacity, experience and critical mass to capitalize on business development opportunities that will become available with the upgrading of the highway.

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Location and Liaison

The actual construction project will take place in Belize, CA

Moises Cal, Liaison Officer United Nations Development Program PO Box 42 c/o Ministry of Economic Development Belmopan, Belize CA Phone: 501-8-22526 or 22527 Fax: 501-8-23111	Sr. Cal is a local Mayan and will be able to assist determining additional contacts and in establishing contact with them. He will also be able to assist in organizing additional contact with local Indigenous interests. This was discussed in a meeting with Mr. Cal on Friday, Sept. 16, 1994 in his office in Belmopan.
Jerry Colley, Senior Engineering Advisor United Kingdom Office of Development Assistance Barbados Phone: 809-436-9873 Fax: 809-426-2194	Mr. Colley is in charge of an conducting an impact assessment on this project. This project has not yet been discussed with him.
David Magaña, Chairman San Jose Succotz Belize, CA Phone: 501-93-2285 Fax: 501-93-2446 Sr. Magaña is also the Director of the Xunantunich Women's Organization	This project has been discussed with Sr. Magaña in a meeting on Friday, Sept. 16, 1994 in a meeting in San Jose Succotz, Belize. Sr. Magaña is a local Mayan leader and will be able to provide assistance in identifying key Indigenous people Belize.

Special Considerations

This opportunity represents a new approach to conducting development business in the region. It is expected that local and international stakeholders will need to be educated as to both the feasibility of this approach, and to the potential long term benefits it can provide.

Also, the various Indigenous groups in Belize have not (to the knowledge of this writer) previously had an opportunity to collaborate on a development project. Both Dr. Palacio and Sr. Magaña felt that this collaboration could be achieved. Dr. Palacio has put forward the idea of holding an Indigenous Economic Development Workshop in Belize to bring together the various Indigenous groups to discuss issues such as this project.

Technical Resources Required

1. Initial development will require someone with capacity to develop proposal and secure financing.
2. In order to undertake further development of this opportunity, someone with experience in structuring and negotiating similar joint ventures will be required. In addition, expertise will be required to identify and access necessary financial resources to undertake further development of this opportunity.

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Development Plan

1. Identify Belizian Indigenous interest willing to take a lead role in this initiative¹.
2. Prepare a proposal to undertake a pre-feasibility study of this opportunity.
3. Identify potential funding sources for pre-feasibility study.
4. Submit proposal and secure financing.
5. Conduct Pre-Feasibility Study
6. Additional work to be determined in pre-feasibility study.

Draft Terms of Reference—Pre-Feasibility Study

- ◆ Determine current status of project planning and development
- ◆ Determine current status of local Indigenous preparation for this opportunity
- ◆ Determine status of project and contracting procedure
- ◆ Determine key considerations of all stakeholders in project
- ◆ Determine potential Canadian Indigenous partner
- ◆ Initiate contact between Canadian and Belizian Indigenous interests
- ◆ Develop framework agreement between all Indigenous partners.
- ◆ Research to determine appropriate international joint venture partner if necessary
- ◆ Prepare joint venture negotiating strategy² including framework for negotiating agreement.
- ◆ Prepare terms of reference and financing proposal for a detailed feasibility study³

5.2.5 INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

This opportunity was identified by Unaaq International and they are proceeding with its implementation in Belize. They will be making a presentation on this initiative at the Belize conference.

¹Contact Belizian Indigenous persons identified above as starting point in this determination.

²If there is reluctance on the part of national and international interests to enter into negotiations with local Indigenous interests, this strategy will include an educational process to draw attention to the benefits that this approach will hold for all stakeholders.

³The detailed feasibility study is expected to include negotiating the actual joint venture, and negotiating contracting arrangements with the implementing party(s).

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5.2.6 INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL MEDICINAL PLANT KNOWLEDGE

Opportunity

There is a tremendous resource of knowledge of traditional Indigenous knowledge related to the medicinal uses of plants. This knowledge is usually maintained by one or two Indigenous people in each community, and is in danger of being lost. Also, this knowledge is often obtained and exploited by non Indigenous people and organizations, who do not return benefits to the source of the knowledge, the Indigenous peoples.

In addition to the cultural value of maintaining the knowledge, there also is a possibility of developing a commercialization strategy⁴ for this knowledge, to ensure benefits accrue to local indigenous peoples.

Benefits

- ◆ Increase focus on importance of Indigenous cultures and knowledge
- ◆ Sharing of local knowledge
- ◆ Commercialization potential
- ◆ Increase focus on benefits of bio diversity
- ◆ Secondary agricultural development

Location and Liaison

This workshop would be held in Belize, CA.

Moises Cal, Liaison Officer United Nations Development Program PO Box 42 c/o Ministry of Economic Development Belmopan, Belize CA Phone: 501-8-22526 or 22527 Fax: 501-8-23111	Sr. Cal is a local Mayan and will be able to assist determining additional contacts and in establishing contact with them. He will also be able to assist in organizing additional contact with local Indigenous interests. The idea for this opportunity was put forward by Mr. Cal in a meeting in his office on Friday, Sept. 16, 1994.
David Magaña, Chairman San Jose Succotz Belize, CA Phone: 501-93-2285 Fax: 501-93-2446 Sr. Magaña is also the Director of the Xunantunich Women's Organization	This project has been discussed with Sr. Magaña in a meeting on Friday, Sept. 16, 1994 in a meeting in San Jose Succotz, Belize. Sr. Magaña is a local Mayan leader and will be able to provide assistance in identifying key Indigenous people Belize. He has also offered to host this workshop and the Belize Indigenous Economic Development Workshop in San Jose Succotz.

Special Considerations

⁴One focus of the workshop will be to determine if the practitioners are interested in any commercialization potential. If they are, various commercialization strategies can be discussed.

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There is currently an ongoing project in Belize involving a non-Indigenous woman and Indigenous medicinal uses of plants. The person(s) developing this opportunity should be aware that there is not a consensus of opinions surrounding this project.

A report commissioned by the UNDP; Conserving Indigenous Knowledge: Integrating two systems of innovation An independent study by the Rural Advancement Foundation International deals extensively with Indigenous traditional knowledge related to the medicinal use of plants. A copy of this report can be obtained from;

Marcel Viergever,
Bureau for Policy and Programme Support,
UNDP
One UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
Phone: 212-906-5347
Fax: 212-906-5313
E-Mail: marcelv@undp.org

Technical Resources Required

1. Person to articulate project and secure financing.
2. Technical resources anticipated for execution include;
 - a) Local person to organize conference
 - b) Expertise in patent/protection of indigenous knowledge
 - c) Expertise to assist to determining desire to develop commercialization strategy

Development Plan

1. Determine local organization interested in taking a lead role in project
2. Prepare proposal for conference to bring together sources of Indigenous knowledge concerning the traditional medicinal uses of plants
3. Obtain financing for project
4. Identify Indigenous experts in traditional medicinal uses of plants and inform of conference and invite
5. Identify persons/organizations to provide technical assistance
6. Organize and hold conference
7. Develop and finance implementation plan for workshop recommendations.

5.2.7 LANGUAGE TRAINER TRAINING

Traditional Indigenous languages are dying in Belize, as in other areas of Central America. There are still a number of fluent speakers of these languages, however, they do not have the training skills required to develop and deliver training programs to other Indigenous

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people. People indicated that Indigenous language training is essential if these languages are to survive.

There may also be an opportunity to develop a Belize Indigenous Language Institute that could assist in the preservation of local Indigenous languages. If successful, this could be duplicated elsewhere, or a Central American Indigenous Language Institute developed that would act to preserve the language of Indigenous peoples from throughout Central America.

Canadian Indigenous peoples have successful experience in training language teachers and facilitating the redemption of native languages.

5.2.8 XUNANTUNICH VIDEO DOCUMENTARY

The Xunantunich Organization is recognized for the quality of its leadership and its grassroots focus. It has developed several training and income generating initiatives. UNDP/PRODERE in Belize and others have indicated that this would be an excellent case study model to highlight in an educational video, that could then be used for institutional development and other training purposes.

This project offers an opportunity for a Canadian Indigenous business specializing in video production to explore international production. It could lead to further opportunities in video production and/or technology transfer opportunities in the establishment of local capacity, and/or investment opportunities in Latin American production.

5.3 CHILE

Apikan Indigenous Network and the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP), recently spent a short time in Chile as part of the Canadian Prime Ministerial Trade Mission to South America. During this mission, with assistance from the Canadian Embassy and the local UNDP office, meetings were held with a number of Chilean Indigenous leaders and organizations. As well, a meeting was held with José Alwyn, Director of the Indigenous Institute at the Frontier University in Temuco. Based on these meetings a number of potential opportunities were identified.

5.3.1 ARTS & CRAFTS PRODUCTION & MARKETING

Apikan has recently received a letter from the Mapuche Inter-Regional Council in Chile, requesting assistance with capacity development in the areas of management, marketing and production.

This request came about as a result of meetings held during the recent Prime Ministerial Trade Mission.

5.3.2 EASTER ISLAND FISHERIES

There a potential to work with local Indigenous peoples on Easter Island to commercialize the fishery in the surrounding waters.

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5.3.3 FAIRTRADE PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Currently, some Indigenous peoples in northern Chile are producing products for the European cosmetics industry. In addition, there is a range of agricultural and craft production opportunities with Indigenous peoples throughout Chile.

There is an opportunity to provide technical support in marketing and product development, with a focus on introducing Chilean producers to FairTrade opportunities. As with other similar opportunities, this could lead to identification of other business development potentials.

5.3.4 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nearly all Indigenous peoples met with in Chile expressed a strong interest in working with Canadian Indigenous interests, particularly in the area of institutional development and strengthening. There is concern about Chile's admission to NAFTA and the potential it has to further marginalize and exclude Indigenous peoples.

Currently, two Mapuché individuals from Chile are part of an International Indigenous Youth Leadership training program being delivered in Canada by the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. In addition, a Treaty Six group in Alberta is developing a project to strengthen their ties with the Mapuché people in Chile.

Technical support and institutional development should result in opportunities to participate in other business development opportunities in Chile.

5.3.5 MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

Chile has a large base of precious and base metals. The Canadian mining industry is a major player in the Chilean industry. Local Indigenous leaders expressed concern that they are receiving little or no benefit from the mining industry. This has caused some to be very negative about mining, verbally opposing mining development during our meetings. Others, however, are interested in how Canadian Indigenous businesses, such as La Ronge Band's Kitsaki Development Corporation, have been able to use mining activity as a springboard to economic growth, while at the same time increasing their involvement in the environmental management of the industry.

There are some exciting opportunities to provide technical support and possibly to participate in joint ventures in this sector.

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5.4 GUATEMALA

Through the involvement of two Apikan associates (Simon Brascoupé and Wayne Dunn) on the Board of Directors of Plenty Canada, which has projects in Guatemala, Apikan has developed a limited knowledge of the situation in the country. In addition, Guatemala was one of the countries visited during the Apikan/UNDP/PRODERE Scoping Mission during Sept-Oct 1995. With the assistance of UNDP/PRODERE, meetings were held with many national Indigenous leaders and organizations and several days were spent in the field in the Ixil area of northwestern Guatemala. Also, Apikan has developed a close working relationship with Guatemala En Vivo and Enlace Guatemala, through work with their Minneapolis based manager, Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin. Byron Ponce, the FAO Food Security Consultant in Guatemala has also been a valuable source of information.

5.4.1 CRAFT PRODUCTION JOINT VENTURE

Several Guatemalan craft production organizations expressed interest in working with Canadian Indigenous peoples on product development. They are interested in exploring concepts such as combining Canadian furs, leathers and beadwork with Guatemalan weaving and textiles. They feel it may be possible to develop unique products that would sell on the world market.

5.4.2 CRAFT/TEXTILE IMPORTING WHOLESALING JOINT VENTURE

Nearly everywhere we went in Guatemala during the Scoping Mission, people complained about lack of access to foreign markets and currency, and to the necessity of dealing through too many middlemen, which left little return for the producers.

After discussing this with several craft related organizations from various parts of the country, an interesting concept emerged, which warrants further investigation. It involves establishing a joint venture between Guatemalan Indigenous interests and a Canadian Indigenous company, to import and wholesale craft and textile products into the North American market.

Importing and wholesaling are necessary activities in the distribution system for crafts and textiles and it is nearly impossible to eliminate them. The next best option is to position the producers so they can participate directly in this aspect of the distribution system. Also, this direct connection with the market will help to educate producers as to the needs and demands of the marketplace, allowing for production more targeted to market demands.

This opportunity is currently being pursued by a National Canadian Indigenous interest and Guatemala Enlace, which is made up of producer groups throughout Guatemala.

5.4.3 FAIR TRADE AGRICULTURE

Fair Trade agriculture has already proven to be a viable option for many Guatemalan producers. Organizations such as Enlace Guatemala and Max Havelar Foundation are

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marketing coffee, crafts and other products throughout Europe and North America. UNDP/PRODERE has been instrumental in developing FairTrade coffee production in the Ixil area.

Support with institutional development (especially related to Women in Development) and marketing has been identified as a preferred area of assistance.

In addition to the international experience and contacts this opportunity can provide to organizations providing assistance, the networking that will happen could lead to additional opportunities. As well, experience in FairTrade marketing and products will be gained which could translate into new marketing strategies and options for Canadian Indigenous products.

5.4.4 INDIGENOUS INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nearly all of the Indigenous leaders and groups expressed interest in support from Canadian Indigenous peoples as they strive to develop their institutions and infrastructures under some very trying conditions.

Guatemala is not an easy country to work in, so much use should be made of the experience and knowledge of UNDP/PRODERE, Guatemala En Vivo, Enlace Guatemala and Plenty Canada and their successful institutional development experience in Guatemala.

5.4.5 INDIGENOUS SCHOOL LINKAGES PILOT PROJECT

The local Administrator for the school district in Chajul, Guatemala, along with the UNDP/PRODERE field workers, identified an opportunity to link Canadian Indigenous schools with Mayan schools in their area. To this end, a visit to a local school was arranged during the Scoping Mission. We discussed how there could be a small seed fund for student exchanges, but the majority of the money could be raised by the students themselves. They could do this by importing and selling local Guatemalan crafts. This would give Canadian students some business experience and provide foreign currency income for the Guatemalan students and their families.

By starting this type of relationship between students, we will facilitate the personal, family and cultural ties that will result in lasting linkages.

5.5 GUYANA

Apikan, at the invitation of the Guyana UNDP office, undertook a mission to Guyana in February 1995. The mission involved meeting with many of Guyana's Indigenous leaders, participation in a national seminar on Amerindian development, a meeting with the Canadian High Commissioner and staff, a visit to the Iwokrama Rain Forest project, two community meetings in the hinterlands and meetings with representatives of various development organizations operating in the area.

Guyana offers an excellent opportunity for inter-indigenous partnerships involving Canadian Indigenous peoples. There are many reasons for this; a common language and history (both

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countries are members of the Commonwealth), Canada has a history of positive involvement with local indigenous peoples, the resource base is similar (mining and forestry), etc.

5.5.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER EXCHANGE

Amerindians from throughout the country, along with government and international community members, all stressed the lack of capacity to identify, articulate and undertake business projects. Many people talked of opportunities that have been lost due to lack of management and economic development capacity.

There is an opportunity for an International internship program to train Guyanese Amerindian Economic/Community Development Officers. This could be coordinated with the new National Amerindian Coordinating Committee, which Amerindian groups in Guyana are establishing with the support of the UNDP and the Canadian High Commission. A preliminary vision for the project would see several Amerindians selected to travel to Canada and undertake formal and on the job training in Community and Economic Development. The on the job training would include placement with successful Native Economic Development Organizations in Canada and be supplemented with formal classroom training. Following a placement period in Canada, the Guyanese and their Canadian counterparts could return to Guyana, where the Canadians would be able to work with their Guyanese counterpart as they applied their training to actual development projects. In addition to providing skills and support to Guyanese Amerindian development efforts, this would broaden the skills of the Canadians involved, and could lead to some interesting linkages and joint projects. It would also give the participants valuable international experience.

This would offer direct training and networking opportunities to Indigenous Economic Development Workers by giving them an opportunity to work directly with a qualified Canadian Indigenous Economic Development worker. It will also give Canadian Indigenous interests an opportunity to work with and develop strong relationships with Latin American Indigenous groups. This will give Canadian groups priority access opportunities to business and economic opportunities in Latin America.

5.5.2 FAIRTRADE AGRICULTURE

A number of Amerindians in Guyana (both in the national meeting and at community meetings in the Hinterland communities of Annai and Sarama) discussed problems with access to markets for their agricultural products. It appears that a significant contributor to the problem is lack of transportation infrastructure. Other problems identified include, over-dependence on mono culture crops (i.e. peanuts), lack of access to market opportunities and lack of price stability (price is very low at harvest and people must sell at depressed prices to repay debts and then later the price rises substantially when they often need to purchase their crop back for food and seed stock).

Very brief discussions were held with some community leaders in Annai about potential crop diversification, exploring FairTrade opportunities and the Pana Pana Rice Stabilization program. There may be an opportunity to build on the experience of Plenty Canada (a Canadian Indigenous NGO) and Pana Pana (a Nicaraguan Miskito NGO), with a rice price stabilization program on the Rio Coco river. There may also be opportunities to develop

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products that will fit into the FairTrade marketing system. Other Canadian experience, such as that of the Saskatchewan Indian Agriculture Program and the development of the Wild Rice industry, may also be beneficial if applied to this situation.

5.5.3 FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

Estimates place officially controlled Amerindian lands in Guyana at up to 20%. Much of this land is virgin forest. While Amerindians are not prepared to allow wholesale clear cut harvesting, some are interested in exploring sustainable forestry options, providing they are full participating partners in the process and are ensured an equitable distribution of benefits.

In addition, many existing forestry concessions in Guyana include traditional Amerindian lands. New companies applying for forestry concessions are beginning to stress their ability to work with Indigenous peoples. Peoples expressed interest in technical support to assist in negotiations with these interests. There may also be opportunities to work with local Amerindians to develop new forestry opportunities, ensure sustainable management is practiced and to capture additional benefits from existing forestry operations.

5.5.4 GOVERNMENTAL LINKAGES

The Guyanese national government has recently established a Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. Minister de Souza, a Guyanese Amerindian, is currently piloting a review of the Amerindian Act through parliament. The Canadian High Commission is interested in having Minister de Souza learn more about the Canadian Aboriginal Business Development Program, and how it has assisted Canadian Aboriginal businesses.

This is an opportunity to strengthen the official linkages between the Canadian and Guyanese governments. It seems very likely, that a bilateral relationship that had a focus on Aboriginal business development would be mutually beneficial and would result in opportunities for both Canadian and Guyanese Aboriginal businesses.

5.5.5 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Guyanese Amerindians, at the National Seminar on Amerindian development, made a number of presentations on the need for institutional development. In fact, at the meeting, representatives of the various Amerindian organizations in Guyana made a decision to form a steering committee to develop a National Amerindian Coordinating Committee. Many presentations centered around the need for institutional development and capacity development at the national, regional and community level.

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), based in Winnipeg, Canada, made a presentation it's Sustainable Livelihoods program at the workshop. This presentation created local interest in the program. Follow-up discussions with IISD representatives and Apikan have focused on the benefits of an IISD/Canadian Indigenous NGO partnership to deliver programs and institutional development to Amerindians in Guyana and elsewhere in Latin America.

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5.5.6 IWOKRAMA INDIGENOUS OPPORTUNITIES STUDY

Iwokrama is a Global Environment Facility and Commonwealth Secretariat project to establish a world class rain forest research centre in Guyana, and identify sustainable development opportunities in the rain forest.

The Iwokrama has the potential to provide significant benefits to the Amerindian community, both directly, and through the application of research carried out at Iwokrama. There appears to be a commitment on the part of all concerned to maximize Amerindian benefits from Iwokrama, but there does not appear to be an articulated strategy on how this will be accomplished. A Strategy for Maximizing Amerindian Benefits from Iwokrama should be prepared, and the local Amerindian community should be fully involved in the process.

Canadian Indigenous interests have the experience and knowledge to assist in developing this strategy, which could result in some mutually beneficial development opportunities.

5.5.7 MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

As previously noted, Amerindians legally control a significant amount of land in Guyana (estimates place it at up to 20%). Much of this land is known to be rich in base metals, precious metals and gems. Currently there is a lot of activity in this sector.

There is confusion and concern about mineral vs. surface rights on Amerindian lands, and local peoples have had some exasperating experiences with miners. Participants at the national seminar recounted stories of claim jumping and problems with land registry peoples not being aware of Amerindian lands.

There seems to be an opportunity to work with Guyanese Amerindians on the development of a strategy related to the mining industry. It was not clear how much interest there is in participating in this sector, but it is a major industry in the country and does have a major impact on many Amerindian communities.

A starting point may be discussions with Amerindians and Canadian Indigenous peoples about various strategies that Canadian Indigenous peoples have been used to work with (or against) the mining industry. If there is interest, technical support could be provided to assist Amerindians to prepare a strategy on how they wish to interact with the mining industry.

5.5.8 SCHOOL LINKAGES

Other countries, particularly Guatemala, have expressed interest in establishing linkages with their Indigenous schools and their Canadian counterparts. As noted previously, Canadian Indigenous peoples and Guyanese Amerindians share common language and similarities in history and other areas. Discussions in both countries have found people to be very enthusiastic about linking Indigenous schools and youth in Canada with their Amerindian counterparts.

It seems that Guyana is an ideal country to pilot an Indigenous school linkages project. Canada already has a significant presence in the country and the Canadian High Commission is noted for its support of Amerindian peoples and issues. Also, there is a large

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Canadian business presence in Guyana, which may translate into additional financial and moral support for an initiative of this type.

A school linkages project would provide youth from both countries with valuable education and experience in international matters. It will also establish closer ties between their parents and will likely result in additional, mutually beneficial initiatives.

5.6 HONDURAS

5.6.1 TOURISM/FISHERIES/FORESTRY

Apikan recently received a telephone call from the UNDP Resident Representative in Honduras, advising of development opportunities in fisheries and eco-tourism with Indigenous peoples in Honduras. He indicated that Honduran Indigenous peoples had rights to coastal lands rich in tourism and fisheries potential. They are worried about losing their rights to the land if they don't begin to move forward with sustainable development initiatives to utilize the resources. He has asked Apikan to visit Honduras to see if development partnerships can be formed with Canadian Indigenous interests.

Plenty Canada and Pana Pana work with Miskito Indians on the Nicaragua-Honduras border have also revealed opportunities in Honduras. They have advised that there are opportunities in fisheries, forestry and eco-tourism in Honduras.

UNDP Honduras is sending two Honduran Indigenous people to the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas Partnership Conference on Trade and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (March 22-25, 1995, Belize City, Belize). UNDP Honduras has also invited Apikan to meet with them and discuss inter-Indigenous partnership opportunities in Honduras.

5.7 NICARAGUA

Nicaragua is one of many countries in Latin America that has formalized a large Indigenous land area. The Autonomous Atlantic Region, created by the Nicaraguan National Parliament, created an autonomous Indigenous region that is larger than El Salvador. This resource and opportunity rich area is divided into Northern and Southern Autonomous zones. The Autonomous regions are controlled by elected parliaments and governors, with responsibility for resource management clearly spelled out. Both regions are actively looking for development partners to enable them to generate sustainable income flows and take advantage of their resource rich territories.

The Apikan/UNDP/PRODERE Scoping Mission spent time in Nicaragua in September 1994, meeting representatives of the national and regional governments, including the National Minister of the Autonomous Atlantic Region, Brooklyn Rivera and the Governor of the Northern Autonomous Region, Marcos Hoppington. They also met with many community and organizational leaders in both the north and south regions to discuss inter-indigenous partnerships for business and trade development.

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Shortly after the mission, Indigenous leaders from the Atlantic region established an Indigenous Development Corporation for the Autonomous Atlantic Region (CIDE). This Corporation, which is chartered by the National government, has a broad mandate and authority to undertake business, trade and investment in the region. Apikan has held a number of meetings with the President of this corporation and they are actively seeking development partners.

5.7.1 ATLANTIC REGION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & LAND TENURE STRATEGY

As noted above, the Atlantic region of Nicaragua is an opportunity and resource rich region. Resource opportunities include, forestry, fisheries, minerals, oil and gas, agriculture, eco-tourism, manufacturing, etc. Prior to the recent Civil War, the region had a healthy and vibrant economy, although it was largely owned and controlled by foreigners.

The Civil War largely destroyed the economy and infrastructure, but the resources and opportunities remain. Indigenous leaders recognize that, in order for long term, stable and sustainable development to flourish, they need to formulate a regional economic development strategy and land tenure plan. Leaders such as Brooklyn Rivera, National Government Minister of the Autonomous Atlantic Region, Alfonso Smith Worman, National Deputy and President of the World Indigenous Parliament and Marcos Hoppington, Governor of the Northern Autonomous Region, have all written Apikan stating that this issue is a top priority and requesting Canadian Indigenous assistance.

The Autonomous Region act clearly spells out the role of the Autonomous region in controlling and implementing development. However, the leaders are concerned that if they don't begin to make sustainable use of the resources and develop their economy, they may lose the opportunity, and thus lose essential control of their land base. They are also concerned about proceeding too rapidly with development and suffering the effects of unsustainable and unplanned development.

Indigenous leaders in Nicaragua have identified the development of a Sustainable Economic Development and Land Tenure Strategy as one of the top priorities of the region. They have been adamant that they do not wish development to stop while they are finalizing their strategy, as they need the income, but they want to ensure that systems are put in place to ensure sustainable use of their resources.

Canadian Indigenous organizations have considerable experience in developing and implementing sustainable economic development and land tenure strategies, and would seem to be ideal agencies to assist in coordinating and undertaking this initiative. It would also position them well to work in partnership on the many opportunities that are available in the region.

5.7.2 ATLANTIC REGION FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT

The Atlantic region of Nicaragua has an inshore fishery that is estimated at \$50 million per year. At present much of this is un-harvested, or harvested by pirate boats with negligible benefits to the local economy. In 1994 Apikan was approached by Sam Mercado, a

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Development Officer with Plenty Canada, who is originally a Miskito from Nicaragua, about locating a partner to assist in developing the fishery. Meetings were set up with Unaaq Inc., a Canadian Inuit owned fishing company, Mercado and Seaku Fisheries an Inuit company that is 50% shareholder of Unaaq.

As a result of these meetings, a small mission to Nicaraguan was undertaken in May 1994, involving Unaaq, Seaku, Plenty Canada (Mercado), and UNDP/PRORAAS. This mission confirmed local interest and potential opportunity for development. Further exploratory work was undertaken during the Apikan/UNDP/PRODERE Scoping Mission in September 1994. At this time, Bluefields Indian and Caribbean University, which has a Marine Biology Department and a Marine Business Program, expressed interest in collaborating on the project as well.

Further work has been done, resulting in a consortium of Canadian interests, led by Seaku, with support from Apikan, undertaking further work in Nicaragua and Canada. The group has met with a number of private and public sector interests in Canada, including fisheries marketing companies and CIDA Inc.. All have expressed keen interest in the project. A further mission to Nicaragua is planned for late March, early April 1995.

This project is being viewed as a pilot project by many countries. Similar opportunities have been identified in Honduras, Panama, Chile and Venezuela.

5.7.3 ATLANTIC REGION FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

The Autonomous Atlantic Regions of Nicaragua have a large forest area, comprised of various hardwoods and other tropical vegetation. Prior to the civil war the forestry industry was a significant factor in the regional economy. After the civil war, a number of international companies expressed interest in forestry development in the region. They have not had the support of the local peoples and the regional governments, because their development plans did not properly provide benefits to the local peoples and ensure proper environmental management. Several attempts at logging have been halted due to opposition from the Autonomous region.

CIDE has authority from the National and regional governments to undertake sustainable forestry development activities in the Atlantic region. They are actively seeking partners who share their development principles and vision. They have also expressed interest in exploring other sustainable development options for the forest areas. (CIDE may be able to benefit from some of the sustainable development research happening at the Iwokrama project in Guyana)

This is an excellent area of opportunity for Canadian Indigenous participation. CIDE has expressed a preference to work with Canadians Indigenous businesses on this and other opportunities.

5.7.4 ATLANTIC REGION FURNITURE PRODUCTION

During the Apikan/UNDP/PRODERE Scoping Mission a small furniture production operation was visited in Bluefields, and a several individual furniture makers were met with as well. They all made very nice furniture, largely from local mahogany.

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Based on discussions during the mission and subsequent discussions with representatives of CIDE, it seems there may be an opportunity to establish a small furniture production operation in the region. It may also be possible to arrange for the production to be labeled as a FairTrade product, creating a unique positioning in the marketplace.

One issue that has been raised and needs to be addressed is the ability of the furniture to withstand drier climates. Anecdotal information indicates that there may need to be a curing operation set up, which could add significantly to the capital cost of taking advantage of this opportunity.

5.7.5 ATLANTIC REGION MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

Gold has long been a contributor to the economy of the Atlantic Region. Prior to the civil war, there apparently were several active gold mining operations. Many local Miskito families still supplement their income with gold panning and by operating small mining operations. Many international mining companies have expressed interest in the area, with many applying to the National government for exploration permits. As with other resource development, communities are very opposed to development that does not provide local benefits.

CIDE has expressed interest in working with mining interests who are committed to respecting the environment and local concerns and values.

5.7.6 ATLANTIC REGION PETROLEUM EXPLORATION

Anecdotal evidence has suggested that there are potential petroleum reserves in the Atlantic region of Nicaragua. It seems that several US based companies had interest in the area prior to the outbreak of the civil war.

CIDE has expressed interest in working with petroleum companies who are committed to respecting the environment and local concerns and values to explore this opportunity.

5.7.7 BLUEFIELDS UNIVERSITY LINKAGES PROJECT

The Bluefields Indian and Caribbean University (BICU) was established in Bluefields, Nicaragua in the early 1990s to provide post secondary education to local peoples. A related mandate is to foster the development of managerial and professional capacity amongst the local population. The University has a number of programs including, Law, Education, Marine Biology, Marine Business, etc.

During the Scoping Mission, meetings were held with the Vice President and the Dean of Law. Both expressed a very strong interest in linking with Canadian Universities, especially those dealing with Native issues.

Some ad hoc attempts have been made to facilitate connections, and at least one, the Atlantic Canada Centre for Environmental Studies at St. Mary's University in Halifax, has established contact. The proposed Atlantic region fisheries project may offer another opportunity to facilitate connections with Canadian Universities.

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BICU offers an opportunity for organizations such as the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College and other Canadian Indigenous education interests to establish or expand international linkages. This should result in many mutual benefits.

5.7.8 NORTHERN MISKITO COCOA BEAN

The north Atlantic region of Nicaragua was a large cocoa bean producer in the past. (The Rio Coco, which is the major river in the country and is the border between Nicaragua and Honduras got its name from cocoa bean production in the region) There are currently thousands of acres of abandoned cocoa plantations in the area.

After the onset of the civil war the companies that purchased local cocoa bean production started looking elsewhere for supplies. When the war was over, they had established supplies in other locations and did not return to the Rio Coco region.

Preliminary research conducted by Plenty Canada and Pana Pana indicates the capacity to immediately supply several hundred tonnes of cocoa beans (by simply cleaning up some old abandoned plantations and harvesting existing production--little of the existing production has been harvested recently, due to lack of access to viable markets) and a willingness to establish new plantations necessary to meet any available markets.

Prior to the Scoping Mission, Apikan made contact with Whole Earth Foods Ltd., a FairTrade firm based in London, England. They are currently purchasing cocoa beans from the Kekchi Maya in southern Belize and a group in Africa to produce and market a chocolate bar called, Mayan Gold. They pay a FairTrade price for the cocoa beans (currently they are paying in excess of \$.60/lb. and the world price is about \$.25/lb.) and market the product as a FairTrade product. They indicated an interest (which they have subsequently had to temporarily withdraw) of purchasing up to 50 tonnes of cocoa beans from the region.

During the Scoping Mission, meetings were held with several cocoa bean producers and a visit was made to an abandoned cocoa bean plantation. There is very strong interest in any initiative that will provide markets for local cocoa production.

There seems to be an opportunity to facilitate connection with other FairTrade markets for cocoa beans and/or look at other market opportunities (perhaps even creating a FairTrade marketing organization in Canada that could build upon the experience of organizations such as Whole Earth Foods Ltd.)

5.7.9 PUERTO CABEZAS-WASPAN ROAD MAINTENANCE

USAID is completing a 4 year project in the Puerto Cabezas and Waspan regions where they rebuilt hundreds of kilometers of road entirely by hand. Everything, even pile drivers used for constructing over 300 bridges was powered by hand. This project has reestablished an important infrastructure (transportation system) that is necessary for many income generating opportunities.

Now, there needs to be a road and bridge maintenance program put in place, or the infrastructure will deteriorate and costly upgrading will again be necessary. Contracts for maintenance could be let to local communities along the route, the same communities who

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provided the labour to do the original work. This is an excellent opportunity to build upon work that has already been completed, maintain a very important infrastructure and develop contracting skills in local communities.

Assistance is needed to articulate the project, secure financing and determine the level, if any, of management support that will be needed to undertake the contracts. Although this project will not likely produce any immediate dividends for the organization providing the assistance, it could provide an opportunity to participate in an international initiative and gain experience and contacts. Eventually there could be further road construction work in the region, and there could be further opportunities at that time.

5.7.10 VARIOUS ATLANTIC REGION AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities exist in the Atlantic region for various agriculture development projects. Potential agriculture products include;

- Coco Beans
- Cashews
- Rice
- Beans
- Citrus Fruits
- Pineapples
- Watermelons
- Avocados
- Exotic Fruits

In addition, there has been interest expressed by a cosmetics company (The Body Shop) about potential products from the rain forest.

Additional research needs to be undertaken to explore these opportunities and determine which warrant further development. There is an opportunity to assist with articulating this project and providing technical assistance during its implementation.

Panama

Panama was one of the countries visited during the Central American Scoping mission in Sept/Oct. 1994. The UNDP National office provided support and advice, and coordinated a number of meetings with Indigenous leaders and organizations and representatives of the national government.

5.7.11 CARVING TECHNIQUES TRAINING

The Government of Panama has a department mandated to develop the arts and crafts business. They are currently working with a number of products, including soapstone carvings and ivory nut carvings. They are interested in connecting with Canadian Inuit regarding training in soapstone carving techniques, as well as in techniques for carving ivory

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nuts. They expect ivory nut carving techniques will be similar to those used by Inuit for carving animal ivory.

5.7.12 DARIEN & KUNA FISHERIES

The Indigenous peoples living in the Darien region and the Kuna land claim area both expressed interest in developing their fisheries. They felt there was commercialization potential that could accrue to them and a partner(s) from the development of this resource. Currently, little benefit goes to local peoples from the fishery. There are currently land claim agreements in place for the Kuna lands and negotiations are underway for Darien lands. It is likely a similar approach could be taken here as the one planned for Nicaragua, with similar benefits.

5.7.13 ECO-TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples all identified eco-tourism as one of the sectors offering lucrative and sustainable opportunities for Indigenous peoples. The owner of the Hotel Ejecutivo (one of the top local hotels) is planning on developing some eco-tourism products and expressed interest in collaborating with Indigenous peoples.

The San Blas Islands, the Darien Gap, and other areas seem to have eco-tourism opportunities that could best be developed by Indigenous peoples. Local Indigenous peoples, have access to these potential eco-tourism opportunities, but often lack financial, management and marketing capacity to develop them. A number of individuals whom we met with during the Scoping Mission expressed a preference in working with other Indigenous peoples to develop these opportunities.

5.7.14 KUNA/DARIEN BUSINESS & INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Kuna organization, Association Napaguna, during a meeting with Apikan and UNDP representatives, identified three priority areas in which they would like to work with Canadian groups;

- Developing business and institutional capacity,
- Marketing strategy and development
- Developing infrastructure to facilitate access to capital for business and trade development.

5.7.15 MARKETING STRATEGY FOR PANAMANIAN CRAFTS

In Panama, every craft association and Indigenous group involved in crafts expressed the need to conduct a marketing strategy, determine what are the best products they can produce and what are the best marketing methods to maximize return to the producers

The terms of reference for the marketing strategy should include an examination of the feasibility of establishing an Indigenous owned, International Indigenous Craft Centre in a major European city. There could be individual areas for crafts from Indigenous groups all over the world. If the logistics could be worked out, and the concept proved profitable, it may have franchise possibilities in other locations. The concept of having one or more major corporate partners in this initiative should be explored as well. This would provide

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management and marketing capacity, access to a business network and improve access to start up capital.

5.7.16 MINING PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

Mining is a major industry in Panama. Conversations with a local mining executive indicated that lack of a good working relationship with Indigenous groups (and lack of the technology to know how to develop a good working relationship) is costing the mining industry millions of dollars. At least one Indigenous group (Cecilia Sanchez, President of the Indigenous Association of Panama) said they are interested in maximizing their benefits from the mining industry.

Some Canadian Indigenous groups have very successful experience in capturing significant benefits from mining development, and have expressed interest in sharing their knowledge in this area.

5.8 VENEZUELA

5.8.1 FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT

Although Apikan has never been involved in a mission to Venezuela, the WCIP has identified the potential for a fisheries development project with Indigenous peoples living on the Venezuelan coast.

5.9 OTHER

Two other project opportunities that are not related to specific countries were identified.

5.9.1 INDIGENOUS ELECTRONIC BULLETIN BOARD

Pablo-Jose Mandeville, UNDP Resident Representative in Panama, suggested the establishment of an electronic system to link Indigenous peoples, markets and opportunities. Similar ideas have been put forward by many others. Aboriginal Business Canada has expressed interest in the concept, at least on a national basis. Gary Peters, of Unaaq International is currently working on a World Wide Web networking initiative for Indigenous Schools, that may have some application for this opportunity.

There seems to be an opportunity to pull together a lot of what is currently on line, with Indigenous organizations, FairTrade groups and others to establish a home page for Indigenous issues, products, concerns, networking, etc.

5.9.2 LANGUAGE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT-GRADE SCHOOLS

Indigenous peoples in many countries have lamented the loss of their language and discussed ways of reviving and/or maintaining it. They have expressed interest in what Canadian Indigenous peoples have done to integrate Indigenous languages into the mainstream school system, and the results they have achieved.

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Canadian experience has shown that developing and implementing Indigenous language programs in the local grade school system, has a significant impact on language retention and cultural continuity. In some areas of the world this is a radical new concept, but in many areas of Canada it has been proven to work well. For instance, the Lac La Ronge Band has a curriculum resource unit that has developed many curriculum units where teaching based on local Indigenous culture and language is used to teach mainstream educational concepts. Many NWT schools are also using similar methods.

There is an opportunity to utilize Canadian curriculum development expertise in this area to develop and implement local programs with Indigenous peoples throughout Latin America.

6. FOLLOWING UP

It appears that there are many other similar project opportunities in almost all other Latin American countries. Nearly every time Apikan is on a mission in a new country or region, new project opportunities are communicated by local Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous peoples have been nearly unanimous in their expressions of interest in inter-indigenous partnerships. Similarly, they have expressed a consistent desire to play a more positive role in the economies of their lands and regions. They have also been consistent in their concerns about development being, sustainable, respectful of people and the environment, and under the control of the peoples most effected.

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It is clear from the opportunities identified, there are numerous project opportunities that will benefit the life of Indigenous peoples, both in Canada and in Latin America. What has also become clear, is that there is no international infrastructure that is designed to support bottoms up Indigenous development. Various meetings and gatherings with indigenous peoples and their organizations have consistently cited the inability of the existing development infrastructure to respond to grassroots projects and opportunities. These meetings also demonstrated support for the establishment of a facility to support biodiversity and indigenous peoples development (for further discussion on this and other initiatives, please see the attached UNDP/APIKAN report on the Indigenous Trade and Development Round Table Report on Proceedings and Follow UP Recommendations and Actions). The UNDP has expressed interest in establishing an Indigenous Peoples Development Facility.

Multi-Lateral agencies, donor countries need to come together and support initiatives that will facilitate a bottoms up approach to the identification, articulation, financing and implementation of Indigenous projects.

Much work needs to be done to follow up on these opportunities and options. We welcome discussion, input and suggestions. Please feel free to contact us with your thoughts and ideas.

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