

DM2009 Project Summary

Project Number: 4270 Booth Number: 51

Recuperation of Water Systems on
Vulnerable Pre-Hispanic Andean Terraces

COUNTRY: Peru
ORGANIZATION: The Cusichaca Trust (CT)
FUNDING REQUEST: \$198,800

OBJECTIVE: To strengthen and improve the capacity of local authorities and farmers in the Chicha-Soras Valley (2,350 families) to respond to climate change—specifically reduction of water available for irrigation during the annual dry season (April to November). Farmers will benefit from increases in crop yields (30 percent) and family incomes (20 percent).

RATIONALE: The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recognizes Peru as the world's third most vulnerable country to climate change. Mountain top glaciers have shrunk by over 30 percent. Current water-management techniques are inadequate. Predicted reductions in water available for farming could be damaging for highland communities and devastating for coastal populations, which rely upon water from the Andes to survive. Patterns of development and expansion of coastal and highland civilizations in the Central Andes have fluctuated over 5,000 years, mainly in response to climate changes. Highland pre-Hispanic cultures managed agricultural systems perfectly designed for drier climates, including amunas (integrated water management systems) and andenes (agricultural terraces). The project will work with farmers in the highland regions of Ayacucho and Apurimac to rehabilitate terraces, to restore water management practices, and to instigate commercial activities to stimulate the highland economy. An important component is to promote these practices widely using the Chicha-Soras Valley as a working model.

INNOVATION: The project will recover and adapt proven strategies of late pre-Hispanic cultures to conserve water in order to manage the predicted effects of current climate change. Locally available materials and labor will reduce costs, increase social capital, and encourage maintenance.

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