

The Peruvian Forest: Description

The Peruvian forest area is roughly divided into the following categories:

- 1) "Open use" areas: About 1% of the total forest area is called open use areas and are providing most of the timber at this time. Open use areas are mainly located in the Amazonic, near the cities of Pucallpa and Iquitos.
- 2) "National forests": 17 areas have been identified for evaluation and study. Pichis Palcazu is one important area where detailed evaluation was done, with the assistance of CIDA and other agencies.
- 3) Native community forests: Located throughout the jungle area.
- 4) Private forests: These are located in the high jungle. Local and/or foreign contractors can apply to the Government Forestry Department of Peru's Ministry of Agriculture. The Government provides 2 years for a feasibility study be carried out and plans must be submitted for Departmental approval. The study must include plans for reforestation. Frequent visits must be made to clear planted areas of natural growth (which occurs very rapidly under rain forest conditions).

Forest Species

All of the Selva (jungle) forests are heterogeneous and include up to 2,000 different species. It is significant that only 20 to 30 species are now used commercially. There is little current use for the remainder. Although it is thought that about 100 species can eventually be used commercially in applications such as veneer/plywood, lumber for furniture stock, poles, railway ties, pulp and participle board. Approximately 90% of the wood used in veneer industry is "Lapuna".

Extraction

Most of Peru's logging is located in the Pucallpa region and it is mainly in forest classified as "open use areas". Projects in these areas have been developed by individual contractors working either independently or being partially financed by mill operators. Selective harvesting is practiced and most logging takes place at distances no farther back from the rivers than a forest tractor can haul logs (approx 2 miles) although certain operations have used skidders over distances of 10, 15, even 40 km. This type of harvesting is necessary due to the absence of intense