GENERAL DIRECTION OF CONTROL OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

SUPERIOR AUDIT OFFICE OF THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY

THE SUPERIOR AUDIT OFFICE OF THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY

It is the entity that controls the State's economic and financial activities. The institution has functional and administrative autonomous. (National Constitution, Art. 281)

The Law N° 276/94 defines its organic and functional structure.

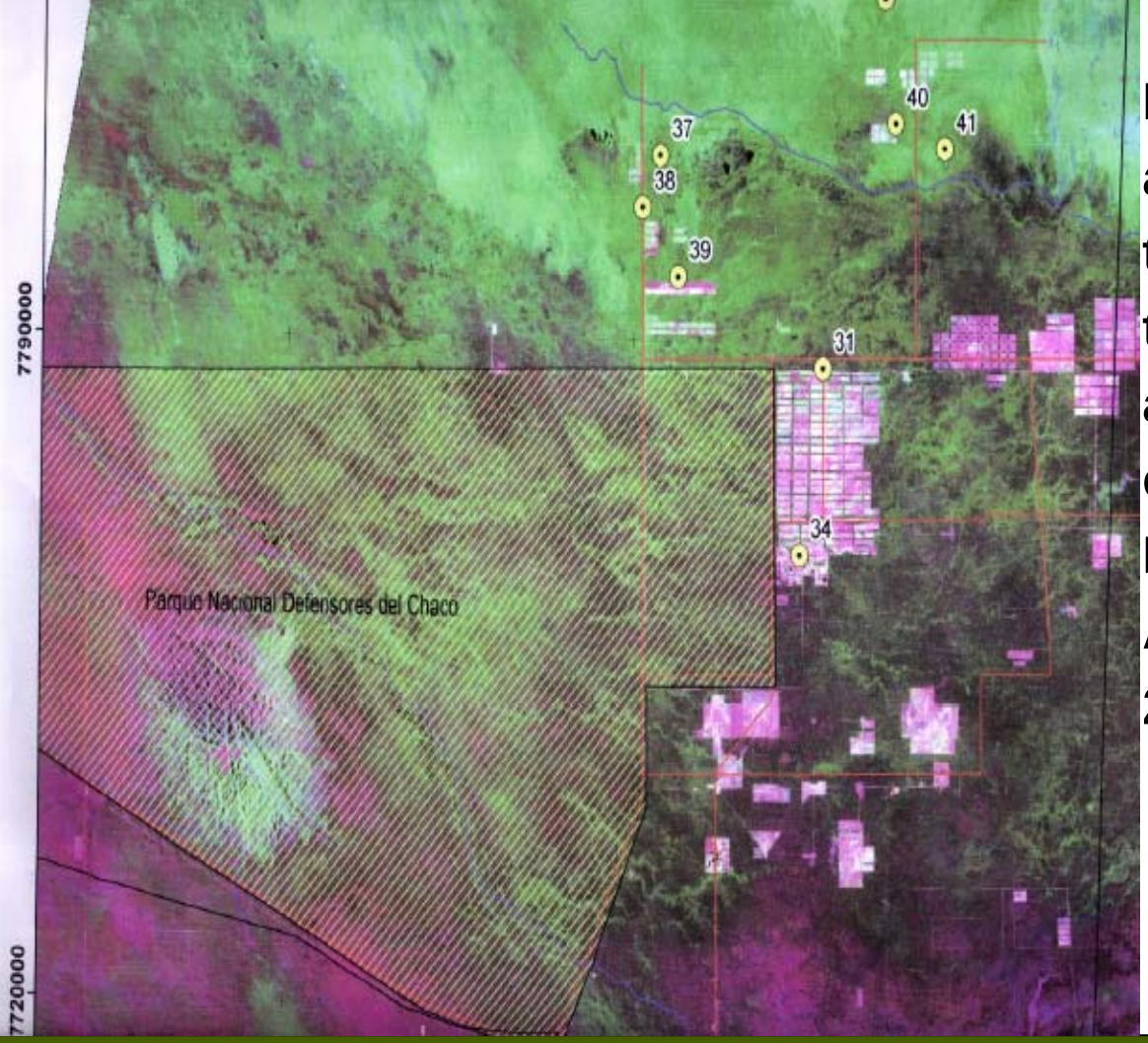
Superior Audit Office of the Republic

GENERAL DIRECTION OF CONTROL OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Created in 1996, in order to accomplish the constitutional mandate established in the Art. 7º, which guarantees the right to a healthy and ecologically balanced environment to all citizens.

AUDITS RELATED ON THE PROTECTION OF PROTECTED AREAS

The work is based on several audits performed on wildlife protected areas of Paraguay. Since 1997 we performed nine specials exams including protected areas; three of them contained recommendations. This areas were: Köi and Chororí Hills Natural Monument, San Rafael National Park, Defensores del Chaco National Park, Ybyturusu Natural Resources Protected Area, Médanos del Chaco National Park, Cerro Corá National Park, Río Negro National Park, Cabrera Timane Natural Reserve and Chovoreca Natural Monument.



Result of the performance audits to the Secretariat of the Environment (SEAM) on the control, management, authorizations and the effective protection of the Natural Resources of the Alto Paraguay (years 2001 to 2006).

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Audits related to the Protection of Natural Resourses

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY

In the heart of South America

The Secretariat of the Environment (SEAM) requested the Superior Audit Office of the Republic of Paraguay an environmental audit in Alto Paraguay district, with special emphasis on "*in situ*" exams in order to verify the administration of natural resources and conservation strategies in this area.

Use of Natural Resourses

TYPES OF AUDITS

1 special exams were carried out on:

- **Performance**
- **Regularity**

METHODOLOGY

STAGES OF THE AUDITS		
PLANNING	DEVELOPMENT	CONCLUSION
• Laws and normative revision • Antecedents revision • Meetings with authorities.	• Assessment of emitted documents and procedures made by the Environmental Secretariat, National Forest Service, National Institute of Rural Development, Government of Alto Paraguay and Municipalities of the area • **Consultations to specialists** • **Technical and juridical criteria**	• Communication of the observations • Emission of the Report • Report is been analyzed by de Public Ministry with the SAI of Paraguay.

FINDINGS

1. The Secretariat of the Environment (SEAM) required environmental impact study for 119 devolvement projects of 226 files previous evaluations of the possible impacts, for their evaluation within the frame of Law Nº 294/93 “Environmental Impact Assessment”. Among them 118 were projects that included deforestation in their plans. The Law Nº 422/73 “Of Forest” prohibits the forest devastation and the irrational use of forest products. Against this background the administrative act that authorizes the deforestation is not legal.

2. The SEAM didn’t have an Environmental Policy until 2005. That even subsequent to implementation of the National Environmental Policy. The SEAM did not recommend to the producers any alternative of sustainable and environmentally friendly development production, even knowing that the region of Alto Paraguay is the last best conservation region of the country. It had a saline soil with accelerated processes of desertification and one of the richest biodiversity opportunities for sustainable use of this resources.

FINDINGS

3 The SEAM has not either considered integrally the hídrogeographic aspect within the frame of the Law Nº 294/93 “Environmental Impact Assessment”, in relation to the productive projects in the Alto Paraguay, that affect the water resources.

4 The SEAM does not count with a data base of environmental quantification in order to quantify the loss of the environmental patrimony and to consider the socioeconomic meaning of the activities of authorized devolvement projects.

5 The audit found that the SEAM had regulations, with opposite dispositions to legislations of superior rank.

6 Only two National Parks of five Protected Areas, had their own infrastructure and park’s keepers personnel, but in both case were insufficient for their conservation and management objective.

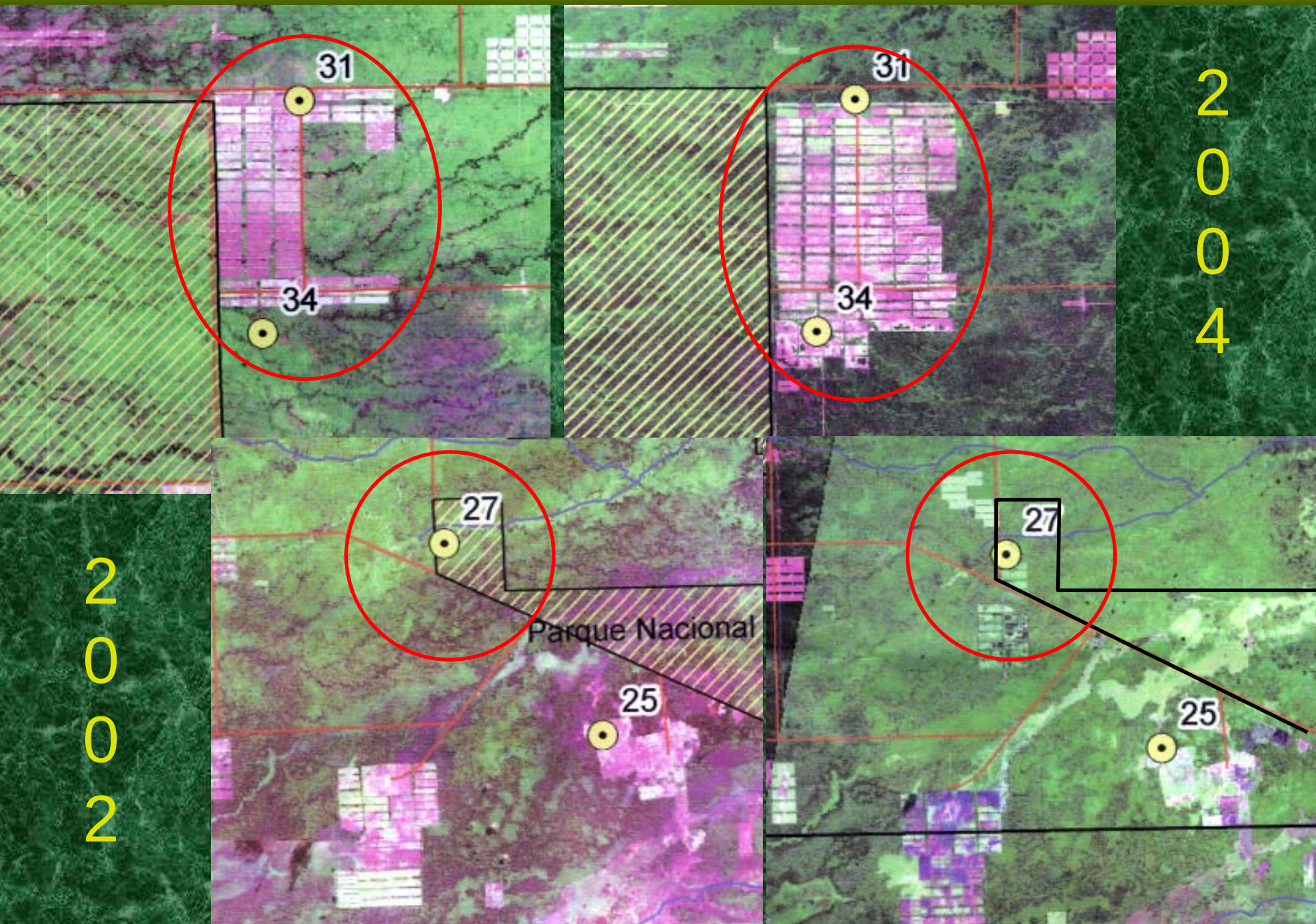
FINDINGS

7 Only one National Park had an approved Management Plan that is a legal requirement of the Law, every protected area need to have one.

8 The audit found that a small portion of the Negro River National Park has a deforestation act made by an private land keeper for cattle devolvement plan. After investigation we found that the deforestation processes had the corresponding Environmental License approved by the SEAM. This finding was possible thanks to the comparison of LANSAT satellite images of the years 2002 and 2004.

9 The audit considered that when the SEAM licensing deforestations for cattle activities, was approved the lost of the forest resource and subsequent destruction of the natural habitat of diverse species of flora and wild fauna that were not considered and nor quantified, constituting a biological and financial lost for the Paraguayan government.

EXAMPLE OF GIS TECHNOLOGY USE



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The SEAM must offer alternatives of sustainable use of the forests; for it, was recommended that only approve plans of sustainable and compatible use with the forest.

2. The SEAM must elaborate the Terms of Reference that define techniques for estimation of the environmental and natural resources patrimony. In addition it must coordinate with the Central Bank of Paraguay (BCP) the inclusion of the environmental assets within the national accounts that the BCP handles, of such way to define the plan of environmental countable accounts.

3. The SEAM must elaborate and implement a Management Plan for each Protected Area of the Department of the Alto Paraguay.

4. It was recommended to the Secretariat of the Environment to elaborate a list of species susceptible to be appropriate in sustainable use programs, on the basis of the scientific knowledge, that allows a minimum security of which their use is sustainable and it does not harm the survivable of the species in time.

AUDITS IMPACTS

1. The Secretariat of the Environment has emitted a Resolution by which it forces all the productive projects which could affect the wild life, to have previous opinion of the SEAM Department of Wildlife, in order to evaluate if the activity will damage significantly or not the resource and to have a scientific and technical criteria in which to base its decisions.

2. The SEAM already has approved the Management Plan of the Medanos del Chaco National Park, has begun the judicial mensuration of the Negro River National Park and the Cabrera Timane Natural Reserve. Also they have already designated parks keepers for these areas although in insufficient number.

3. The SEAM has re elaborated a new list of endangered species, but not one of usable species under sustainable use programs.

4. It is in study of the **Public Ministry** the beginning of legal actions against the SEAM for the authorize deforestation no allowed by the Law.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH
MUCHAS GRACIAS
AGUYJE' PE' EME

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Superior Audit Office of the Republic
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