

Project Update: February 2008

February 20th, 2008: Thanks to our Rufford Small Grant, the Chulumani Conservation Garden has been able to advance considerably in its work. Despite the torrential downpours and frequent landslides along the road from La Paz to Chulumani, in the past two months we have completed long-awaited flora and fauna surveys (focusing on plants and birds), developed a proposal for infrastructure development (for example we have developed a plan for trail improvement and building and outdoor classroom space), and completed plans for our eco-bathroom and eco-chicken pen and our small, student-friendly weather-station. In early March we will hold our first implementation planning workshop with all the project technicians and in early April we will begin infrastructure implementation. Now that schools are back in session, we will begin outreach to them as well as preparation for the Conservation Garden's Grand Opening, scheduled for late September.



This photo shows the house-museum and the surrounding multi-strata agroforestry system of the Chulumani Conservation Garden. The grounds visible around the house are the site of the Conservation Garden's educational activities.



This photo shows the typical landscapes around the town of Chulumani, where the Conservation Garden is located. Unsustainable agricultural practices such as repeated burning for weed control and parcel expansion, the unmanaged use of fertilizers and irrigation, and monocropping with traditional-use coca (*Erythrium coca*) are resulting in the extreme fragmentation of secondary forest and primary remnants, eradication of seed banks and loss of topsoil and other biodiversity habitats.