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Benefit Sharing Mechanisms: Beyond Market-Oriented Solutions

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Session: Basin [Andes] and Benefit Sharing Mechanisms

Key Message

Literature has focused on payment for hydrological environmental services mechanisms. However, CPWF and CONDESAN research has found that there is a predominance of mechanisms that do not directly follow a market approach but build from traditional practices of water management and benefit sharing.

Summary

To the Andean people, water is much more than a resource. Water is a living being, a provider of life and animation of the universe. It is even considered a divinity that creates and produces. Sustainable use involves the application of knowledge and skills about the management of the environment as a whole, and not only focused on the resource as such, derived from centuries of learning.

Therefore, any intervention oriented to improve the water and soil management must be based on a holistic approach that combines cultural, environmental and social elements. An intervention that takes these elements into account will be able to establish sustainable institutional arrangements for sharing the benefits that result.

Scientific research in recent years has placed considerable emphasis on payment schemes for environmental services, however, what the CPWF has found is that these schemes are not always the required mechanisms for the majority of the basins. The ANDES BDC is conducting intensive research to provide communities and stakeholders with alternative mechanisms for benefit sharing, building from their own experience.