



REPORT ON THE COMET-LA PHOTO COMPETITION: PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS IN YOUR TERRITORY

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RATIONALE

Taking into account the great success of the drawing competition organised by COMET-LA in 2013 among youngsters from the three study cases included in the project, and what this recognition for their creative talent meant for them, it was decided that a new competition would be carried out in 2014. This time it would be a photo competition, with no age limit for participants, with the aim of raising the awareness of the population on the importance of taking care of the environment and of bearing in mind the different stages of the project.

This competition was an opportunity for the inhabitants and other people involved in each of the study cases to show, in photographs, how they view their own territory, their customs, their systems of governance (socio-ecological system), the problems each of the communities is facing (prospective structural analysis) and the best practices employed to fight them (actions to face future scenarios).

The photo competition was also intended to contribute to the dissemination of the project among the population of the study cases, as well as to create a photographic archive of their environment, which would later be kept in their respective photographic libraries.

On the other hand, photographs by winners and runners-up will be exhibited during the Final Political Conference. This will allow us to cover another of the competition's objectives: showing decision-makers the study cases from the point of view of their inhabitants.

GOAL

As already stated, the main goal of this competition was to raise the awareness of the population on the importance of taking care of the environment, informing about the socio-ecological systems in the COMET-LA case studies, their problems and the best practices carried out by their communities, both at local and at international level (during the final conference).

METHODOLOGY

The competition rules were drafted, adapting them to the specific needs of the three countries, and they were all analysed by the local coordinators of the competition.

A poster inviting people to participate was designed, printed and distributed in each of the places where the competition was to be held: Comaltepec, in Mexico; the Community Councils of the Upper



and the Lower Dagua, and of the Lower Calima, in Colombia; and Bahía Blanca, Monte Hermoso, Pehuen Co, Ingeniero White and Villa del Mar, in Argentina. The poster was published on the project's website and Facebook account, together with a press release.

COMET-LA

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

CONCURSO DE FOTOGRAFÍA COMET-LA

“Fotografiando los sistemas socio-ecológicos de tu territorio”

¿Te gusta la fotografía?

¿Quieres ganar esta cámara de fotos digital?

Cuéntanos con imágenes cómo ves tu comunidad, sus paisajes, sus gentes, su medio ambiente, los problemas que la afectan y las buenas prácticas que se desarrollan para intentar solucionarlos

Puedes presentar tus fotos tanto en formato digital, como en papel
Fecha de realización del concurso: Mayo - Junio 2014.

Entrega de premios: Entre el 26 de junio y el 10 de julio de 2014, durante la visita del equipo internacional del COMET-LA a Latinoamérica

Consulta las bases en la web www.comet-la.eu

Las fotografías ganadoras se exhibirán en la conferencia final del proyecto en México y se publicarán en la web del proyecto COMET-LA (Gestión comunitaria de los desafíos ambientales en Latinoamérica) www.comet-la.eu

MÉXICO COLOMBIA ARGENTINA

El concurso se desarrollará en Santiago Comaltepec (México) - Alto y Medio Dagua / Bajo Calima (Colombia) - Estuario de Bahía Blanca (Argentina)

Poster on the competition

Participants were asked to submit a series of 3 photographs, each one relating to one of the following topics:

- First picture: Characteristics of the socio-ecological system of your community: what the main natural resources and the systems organising them are like, who the users of those natural resources are, or the community's customs and practices with regards to natural resources.
- Second picture: Problems affecting the socio-ecological system where you live: images showing uses or interactions with a negative impact on natural resources that are essential for the well-being of the population or the community.
- Third picture: What your community is doing to fight these problems: images showing how the population or the authorities are tackling problems affecting natural resources.



In order to promote participation, and to avoid limiting the competition to photographers with specific equipment, photographs could be submitted either as a file or on paper, complying with the following requirements:

- Digital photographs: minimum size of 2,560 x 1,920 pixels, maximum file size of 6 Megabytes (Mb) and minimum resolution of 200 p.p.i.
- Paper photographs: size of 30x45 cm, photographic paper on a rigid black cardboard support (passe-partout) of 40 x 50 cm.

Each of the competitors sent a signed form accepting the rules and giving their authorisation for the COMET-LA project to use the photographs, always for non-commercial purposes and mentioning the name of the photographers.

Prizes and certificates were awarded during the visit of COMET-LA's international team to the three study cases, in June and July 2014. The winners of the first prize in each of the countries were given a digital reflex camera, so that they can develop their hobby.

[The competition in Mexico](#)

The local team presented the competition to the members of the community and gave some brief instructions on how to use a camera and take pictures, as not all of the members of the community have access to this technology.

Dissemination was done with posters and adverts in Chinantecan and Spanish, both on the radio and on PA systems.

As Internet access is limited, the participants got together and shared the 2 e-mail accounts available in the community to submit the photographs to the competition. There were 5 participants, who sent 3 or 4 pictures for each of the topics defined, which meant each of them submitted 3 or 4 photographic series to the competition. Unlike in the other two study cases, where participants focused on the biological aspects of their socio-ecological systems, most of Comaltepec's competitors reflected their mode of governance, their customs and practices, highlighting their importance within the socio-ecological systems.

Judith Olivera won the first prize and was given a reflex camera. The other four participants were awarded with certificates.

It is worth mentioning that this camera was used in the benefit of the community. Nestor Hernandez—a communal land owner from Comaltepec—participated in the field work in Argentina and carried with him Judith Olivera's camera, in order to inform the community and show them pictures of the field work carried out in Bahía Blanca, as well as to provide the assembly with more visual information on the socio-ecological system and the stage on futures scenarios in the Argentinean study case.



Photographs by Judith Olivera. Characteristics of the socio-ecological system



Photographs by Judith Olivera. Problems suffered by the socio-ecological system



Photographs by Judith Olivera. Best practices carried out by the community

The jury was composed of partners of the COMET-LA project and of Comaltepec's local authorities.

The winning pictures were shown during the meeting with the internal actors and will be kept in Comaltepec's photographic library, just as the other photographs submitted to the competition.

[The competition in Colombia](#)

The local team printed the posters and distributed them to the Community Councils. Several of the project's co-researchers expressed their interest, so the Colombian COMET-LA team explained the rules to them during a meeting.

There were 15 competitors, each of them submitting a series of 3 photographs on the required topics. The jury selected 8 runners-up during a first stage. Later a vote was held to select the winning photographic series, the one submitted by Maria Eugenia Moreno, a co-researcher in the project.

The jury was composed of partners of the COMET-LA project and representatives of the District Council of Buenaventura, the Education office and the Culture office, the Javeriana University and the Fundapav foundation. When the prizes were awarded, the jury explained they had selected the series of photographs that better reflected the cause and consequence chain, that is to say, what the socio-ecological system is like, what its main problem is and the solution applied.

The winner was given a reflex digital camera and a certificate, and the runners-up also received their certificates.

Elisabeth Alfonso highlighted how important this kind of dissemination actions, workshops and activities are for the population, and mentioned the winner as an example, as her participation in the project as co-researcher has helped her develop her confidence, self-esteem and leadership skills.



Photographs by Maria Eugenia Moreno:

Water springs, our community's pride and paradise (characteristics of the socio-ecological system); Landslides (problems); and Recovering nature as a source of oxygen for our community (best practices)

The photographs selected during the first stage were exhibited during the meeting with internal and external actors in Buenaventura, in July 2014. All the photographs submitted to the competition will be kept in the Community Councils' photographic libraries.

[The competition in Argentina](#)

The local team printed the posters and distributed them to the participating municipalities. The poster was also published on the project's Facebook account in Argentina, and information was disseminated about the competition through media such as the TV programme *Hola Pehuen!*

Eight people submitted their photographs on time and in compliance with the rules, while other submissions were rejected because they were sent too late. Some of them are of a very high technical level, and this meant it was difficult for the jury to select the winning series.

The jury was composed of partners of the COMET-LA project and members of Pehuen Co's International Rotary Club. As in the Colombian case, when the prizes were given, the jury mentioned that, apart from the photographic qualities of the photos, they had also taken into account their coherence.

All runners-up pictures were exhibited during the visit of COMET-LA's international team to Bahía Blanca, at the beginning of July. The names of runners-up and of the winner were announced during the visit, and the first prize and runner-up certificates were awarded. The winner, Martin R. Sotelo, thanked the jury and stated he would use the reflex camera as a working tool.



Photographs by Martin R. Sotelo:

Bio-builder: the digging crab, the true builder of the estuary (characteristics of the socio-ecological system); Print, beach pollution (problems); and Animal rescue (best practices)

The photo exhibition was very appreciated by the stakeholders who participated in the future scenarios workshop and several of them asked for the exhibition to be taken to other COMET-LA municipalities in Argentina, as it could contribute to the dissemination of the project.

RESULTS

Nearly thirty people have participated in COMET-LA's photo competition, capturing the way they view the territories included in the study cases.

Competitors have reflected in their images the topics studied in the workshops throughout the project, showing they have embraced the concepts explained in the different stages.

All the pictures are kept in the communities' photographic libraries, and they may use them for non-commercial purposes, always mentioning the name of the photographer. The COMET-LA project has also been authorised to use them, under the same conditions. The photos will contribute to the dissemination of the socio-ecological systems in the three study cases.

All the pictures submitted by winners and runners-up were exhibited in Mexico during the Final Political Conference, in november 2014, in order to show decision-makers the characteristics of the socio-ecological systems, their problems and the best practices carried out by their communities.

These pictures have also been published on the project's website and the Facebook account for dissemination purposes.



El equipo internacional del proyecto COMET-LA (Gestión Comunitaria Participativa de los Desafíos Ambientales en Latinoamérica) reconoce como **ganadora del primer premio** del Concurso de fotografía COMET-LA: **Fotografiando los sistemas socio-ecológicos del COMET-LA**, en México, a

JUDITH OLIVERA

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Maria del Mar Delgado
Coordinadora del proyecto COMET-LA



The exhibitions and the award of first prizes and certificates



Pictures of the exhibition during the Final Political Conference.