

Perceptions on Sustainable Livestock Training in the Biosphere Reserve La Sepultura, Chiapas, Mexico

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ABSTRACT The perceptions on sustainable livestock training given to farmers from different communities of the Biosphere Reserve La Sepultura (BIRESE) were analyzed. The research was conducted from January to December 2011 through a socio-anthropological study based upon an evaluative diagnosis, with semi-structured interviews, ethnography, observations, and collection of training materials. The information was synthesized in tables, considering the points of view of livestock farmers, representatives from the institutions supporting the training and the training team. The analysis focused on the background, topics, methods, results and expectations of the training. Results showed that farmers and representatives of the different institutions perceived few changes in livestock systems as a consequence of the training given in the context of BIRESE. However, farmers stated that there were some changes in the system, for example, the increase of production as an indirect result of the training received. Both the farmer groups and the representatives of the institutions are optimistic for the future and acknowledge that cattle raising can be done in an environmental friendly way. The reason of this perception is the permanent presence of actors promoting sustainable livestock. Farmers consider adopting the acquired practices as a very important issue, although they refer to lack of financial resources and technical assessment as the main limitations for its implementation. It is concluded that the perceptions on training are very similar among all actors involved in the BIRESE, which can be considered as an advantage for the initiatives or processes to be encouraged at short and middle terms in relation to sustainable livestock.