Third Millennium Alliance’s mission is to preserve the last remnants of Ecuador’s coastal Pacific Forest and to empower local communities to restore what has been lost.
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Letter from the Executive Director

2016 represented my third year as Executive Director of Third Millennium Alliance – and what a rollercoaster of a year it was! We started the year with a booming new internship program, a couple of great new staff members, and an exciting conservation corridor project, but we’re then hit with the massive 7.8 magnitude earthquake in April. Thankfully, although we had a close call with some staff and interns in Pedernales, TMA suffered no major injuries and very little infrastructure damage. This left us available for immediate and much needed earthquake relief work in our local community of Camarones. Thanks to our generous network of supporters, we were able to step in immediately following the earthquake to provide essential supplies to the families of Camarones and neighboring Tabuga. Throughout the rest of the year we helped co-teach a bamboo construction workshop, installed a bio-digester, initiated the reconstruction of a potable drinking water in Camarones with other international organizations, and will shortly be installing Victory Gardens in Camarones to help families produce more food locally. We happy to say that today Camarones is now fully back up on its feet and stronger than ever!

Despite the fact that earthquake activities took center stage for most of the year, this year we were also able to continue expanding our conservation impact in the Jama-Coaque Reserve. We successfully purchased another 30 hectare property this year along our growing conservation corridor, which brings the total size of the Jama-Coaque Reserve to 560 hectares (1,385 acres). The purchase was made with support from our partners SavingSpecies and IUCN Netherlands. With their continued support, we will be continuing our conservation land purchases over the coming years. Our research and education work in the Jama-Coaque Reserve also continued to grow this year. We launched a new expanded internship program, which brought more students to the Reserve than any other year. We also welcomed our first study abroad program during the summer with Texas State University. The increased level of activity in the Reserve resulted in a lot of positive energy in a time of need, a number of interesting biological discoveries, and continued to improve our recognition as one of Latin America’s most elite research and education centers.

Each year we continue to grow and increase our conservation impact in the Critically Endangered forests of western Ecuador. I am confident that our unwavering commitment to conservation, restoration, and education in the Pacific Equatorial Forests of Ecuador will ensure that we remain one of the most respected, successful and influential conservation organizations working in Ecuador.

Ryan L. Lynch, MSc.
Executive Director
February 8, 2017
Our Values

Our Mission: To preserve the last remnants of Ecuador’s coastal Pacific Forest and to empower local communities to restore what has been lost.

Our Vision: Third Millennium Alliance envisions a culture in which local communities recognize both the practical and intrinsic benefits of forest stewardship and manage the land accordingly, creating both economic and environmental sustainability in the region.

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn”
- Ben Franklin

➢ TMA believes that a hands-on approach to conservation that engages local communities and educates the next generation of conservationists is the key to long-term project success.

➢ TMA has a successful track record of conservation in JCR because we have diligently promoted the environmentally and socioeconomically sustainable management of the forests with community members from Camarones.

➢ TMA uses a five-pronged approach to conservation that unites ecosystem conservation, research, education, forest restoration, and community outreach.
Our Approach

The Jama-Coaque Reserve is located at the nexus of dry and wet forests within the Tumbes-Chocó-Magdalena Biodiversity Hotspot. Only 2% of native forests still remain in the region, rendering it among the most threatened tropical forests in the world and one of the areas most at risk for biological extinction on the planet. The long-term survival of these threatened forests and the species that call them home requires a dynamic and multifaceted conservation approach.

TMA prides itself in its comprehensive multi-faceted conservation approach. The key to our success is the combination of a hands-on conservation plan, active on-the-ground research, engaging education, the extensive use of habitat restoration, and an active community outreach program. Together these five aspects of our work make us one of the most dynamic conservation organizations working in Ecuador.
Our Work

Conservation

We successfully purchased another 30 hectares of forest this year with funding from our partners IUCN Netherlands and SavingSpecies. The property was owned by Bolivar Campos, who was one of the more active farmers and deforesters in the Camarones valley. The purchase was made as part of our ongoing conservation corridor project that is aimed at connecting the Jama-Coaque Reserve with our neighboring Bosque Seco Lalo Loo Reserve. The addition of this property brings the total number of hectares protected in JCR to 560 (1,385 acres).

The below map illustrates the 5-year conservation plan for the Jama-Coaque Reserve (dark orange). We are concentrating our conservation activities within the border of Important Bird Area EC010 (dotted red). Conservation partners (pink) protect 325 hectares. In 2017-2018, TMA plans to continue land buying activities on the North side of the Reserve (Phase 1 – yellow) to connect with our conservation partners. Once Phase 1 is complete, TMA plans will begin conservation land purchases on the South side of the Reserve (Phase 2 – blue). When all conservation land purchases are complete, upwards to 63% of IBA EC010 and the headwaters of two complete watersheds will be owned and managed by Third Millennium Alliance.
Research

With the hiring of our new Director of Research Mike Ellis in March, we began the re-design of our research program in the Jama-Coaque Reserve. After years of carrying out research projects across all disciplines (mammals, reptiles, amphibians, etc), the focus of our in-house research this year began to concentrate on birds. Not only had we reached the extent of our in-house expertise in these other fields, but we also saw the advantage of focusing our attention on birds moving forward. Mike is a passionate Ornithologist and Ecuador is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world when it comes to number of bird species. Ecuador also has a very active and growing bird-centered tourism market, which we hope to dive into over the coming years as our reputation in the bird world continues to grow.

In addition to our expanding bird research, we also continued our micro-climate study and weather station data collection. The climate sensors that we put out in 2015 have now been collecting humidity and temperature data across the Camarones Valley and the Jama-Coaque Reserve for more than a year. The sensors are placed in habitats that range from pasture, to degraded forest, to primary forest, so we are able to see the direct impact deforestation activities have on local climate. We have not yet analyzed the data, but it is absolutely clear that temperature is drastically higher and humidity is drastically lower in pasture than in the forest. This information provides us with solid data that demonstrates how our conservation activities protect local climate, which has a direct impact on wildlife as well as local communities. With farmers complaining of drought conditions more each year, this data has the power to educate people on the importance of leaving and restoring forest in the area. This type of education work is a growing focus of our work with local farmers.

2016 Rainfall in the Jama-Coaque Reserve. Total rainfall was approximately 33 inches.
**Internship Program**

This year we launched a brand new multi-length internship program in the Reserve. After years of offering only a 2-month internship, this year we designed and opened 5 distinct internship length options. The goal of this re-design was to attract more students to our program, and thus increase revenue. The two internship tracks available remained Tropical Ecology and Agroecology/Permaculture, both of which have their own experienced internship manager on site at all times.

The 5 internship lengths created for our 2016 calendar included:

1-month: Taste of the Tropics; aimed at giving students a quick preview of tropical ecology  
2-month: Academic Internship; aimed at offering a more thorough academic experience  
3-month: Quarter Abroad; aimed at credit seeking students at quarter system schools  
4-month: Semester Abroad; aimed at credit seeking students at semester system schools  
6-month: Professional Apprenticeship; aimed at post-graduate students looking for job experience

In 2016 we set a new annual record with total number of interns participating in our tropical internship program. Thirty-seven individuals took part in our internship, which was broken up into 21 Tropical Ecology interns and 14 Agroecology/Permaculture interns. We also had our first two photojournalism interns join us to tackle the task of documenting our work with photo and video. We had 9 interns elect to join our optional paid Permaculture Design Certification course. The most popular internship program for this year’s students was our 1-month Taste of the Tropics internship, which was a brand new program this year.

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**1 Tropical Ecology**

- Ornithology: Habitat selection & effects of fragmentation on 21 raptor species.
- Primatology: Demography & population status of two threatened monkey species.
- Botany: Germination rates & seed bank analysis across habitat types.
- Mammalogy: Distribution & abundance of mammals using camera traps.
- Reforestation: Habitat restoration of degraded pastureland.

**2 Agroecology/Permaculture**

- Principles of Permaculture, techniques & methods of design. Optional PDC.
- Plant propagation, grafting, & seed saving.
- Soil science, fertility, management, & compost techniques.
- Creation of a food forest & how agroforestry is used to sustainably produce food.
- Grey water systems & water treatment.
- Appropriate technology & natural building.
**Restoration**

This year, Luis Ochoa, who was the previous owner of the 76 hectare property we purchased in 2015, finished his 2-year balsa plantation harvest contract. With his timber activities now completed on that property, the task of restoring the landscape falls on TMA. The area that he previously clear-cut and planted Balsa on is about 15 hectares in size. That 15 hectares is now largely open, with only a scattering of think balsa trees and scrubby understory. Thankfully the aggressive non-native pasture grass has not yet arrived to this property, which means our restoration activities should be easier than previous years on our finca of madera property.

Using a new approach to reforestation for TMA, our team planted quick growing plants on the deforested patch of the Ochoa property immediately after they we’re done cutting out the trees. Rather than planting slow growing hardwoods as a first step to reforestation, we decided to start with naturally growing native trees (i.e. Inga) and plants such as banana, yucca, and cacao. This new design uses the principles of succession as the foundation for reforestation. The idea is that rapid growing gap specialist species prefer to grow in pastures, whereas hardwood species prefer to grow in shade. Rather than trying to get a hardwood to grow in an environment it’s not evolved for; we decided to follow nature’s example by first planting quick growing species. In 2017 our team will continue our restoration work on the Ochoa property, including more planting of native tree species.
Financial Overview

In 2016, overall support and revenue increased to an all-time high, while expenses also increased. Our revenue for the year was relatively evenly split between donations, our internship program, and grants. Our ability to diversify our revenue source in this way is a great sign for our continued growth as an organization – it makes us more financially stable and helps us plan for the future. The increase in revenue earned from donations and our internship program are particularly positive as those funds are not earmarked for specific expenses like land purchase. In order to continue our growth as an organization, we need to continue investing in hiring and maintaining passionate and skilled employees. I attribute a large portion of our recent growth trend to the fact that we've finally started investing in the employment of three full-time and long-term directors: Myself as the Executive Director, Nick Slobodian as the Director of Agroecology, and Mike Ellis as the Director of Research.

Our expenses this year we're also relatively evenly split between human resources, field operations, and land buying. We spent more on payroll and running our field operations this year than any other year in our history, which is a clear sign that we are growing as an organization. The increased and record high expenses this year also suggests that we need to expand our revenue generating activities. In order to keep up with our current growth rate, and ensure we don't lose any employees in the future, we will need to expand our fundraising and donor base significantly. 2017 will be a critical fundraising year for TMA as we transition from small organization to a mid-sized organization.

As always, we are extremely grateful for the support of many generous donors who believe in the mission of TMA. With your support we will continue to grow as an organization and increase our conservation impact in threatened Equatorial Pacific Forests of western Ecuador.
## REVENUE

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## EXPENSES

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Noteworthy 2016 Highlights

1. Texas State University (TSU) – We partnered with TSU this year to run a month long study abroad trip in Ecuador. The trip was led by two TSU professors (and Ryan contracted as an in-country professor) and was made up of 14 students. The group visited JCR for the first week and then traveled to the cloud forests of the Eastern Andes and then on to the Amazon. With a successful trip carried out with TSU we realized the potential advantages to carrying out more study abroad trips with other universities in the future. Not only did we gain more research contacts and supporters, but we also earned a significant amount of money by acting as the in-country host for the study abroad group. There is a good chance TSU runs this study abroad trip every year with us, but we will also be pursuing more university relationships over the coming months.

2. Intern alumni bring National Science Foundation (NSF) to JCR – Two past interns (class of 2014) returned to JCR this August to carry out a pilot study for their Masters degree work. Both students pursued graduate school after taking part in our internship and were successful at obtained NSF funding for their continued studies. NSF academic grants are some of the most difficult grants for students to get, so we’re excited to see two TMA internship alum achieve that level of success. And we’re even more excited that they have both elected to carry out their thesis work in JCR with us! Having NSF-level work carried out in JCR opens a whole new level of recognition for us, so we’re excited for the years to come!
Wildlife News

1. After nearly a full year with Mike Ellis on staff as our Director of Research we have dramatically increased the number of bird species found in the Jama-Coaque Reserve and the surrounding IBA. We currently have 264 species of bird in the Reserve, including 21 species that are internationally threatened. This number of threatened species makes the Jama-Coaque Reserve the IBA with the most threatened bird species of any of the 109 IBA's in the country. Keep up to date with

2. Past intern Alex Wendt published a small scientific journal article after finding a new lizard species in the Reserve during his internship. The species had never been found in the province of Manabi, so the finding was scientifically important and worth publication.

3. Thanks to a generous donation by one of our previous interns, we now have 16 brand new camera traps in JCR. We put the camera to use immediately along our conservation corridor as well as in the tree canopy. With some interesting photos and video already captured, we’re excited to see what the year ahead has in store for us.

4. Explore some of the wildlife found in the Jama-Coaque Reserve via the following two citizen science website. We ask our interns and staff to load photos of flora and fauna found in the Jama-Coaque Reserve to our iNaturalist account, and Mike has been maintaining our bird list on the website eBird. Click the below images to visit the websites:

[Visit: iNaturalist](#)

[Visit: eBird](#)

[Visit: iNaturalist](#)

[Visit: eBird](#)
Our Partners

*TMA wouldn’t be as successful at protecting threatened forests and wildlife without the support and partnership of the following organizations:*

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>AMPHIBIAN SURVIVAL ALLIANCE</th>
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<td><img src="image12" alt="VERIFIED CONSERVATION AREAS" /></td>
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Our Team

Who makes up the Team?
TMA’s staff is a select group of dedicated people who believe in working together to protect the threatened forests and wildlife of coastal Ecuador. Although the work is frequently difficult and wearing, our commitment to conservation does not waver.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Isabel Davila
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Jerry Toth
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Jerry@tmalliance.org

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Bryan@tmalliance.org

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ARCO Construction

Jonathan Fishleder
Earthwatch Institute

Bruce Farnsworth
Photographer

Jose Chavira
Communications Manager

Jonathan Escolar
Marketing and Advertising

Matt Gries
Cearnal Andrulaitis

Paul Hamilton
The Biodiversity Group

Shahin Enayati
Made Noble Corporation

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Mike Ellis
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Betty Estupinan
Director of Administration

Jennifer Navarra
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Uver Vaca
Manager of Field Operations

Edilberto Marquez
Head Park Ranger

Dany Murillo
Field Assistant

Katherine Theus
Director of Development
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