

Contenido Automatizado

Cali

COP16: The natural wealth of Valle del Cauca, a region that shines for its biodiversity



The beauty of the fauna of Valle del Cauca. Amphibians are part of the biodiversity.

FOTO: Regional Autonomous Corporation of Valle del Cauca (CVC)

Its access to the sea, its moorlands, forests, lagoons and wetlands, and its diverse fauna, make it an ecological jewel. The community and the authorities are defending this natural heritage, which will host the COP16.



CAROLINA BOHÓRQUEZ RAMÍREZ

Periodista

12 de septiembre 2024, 09:43 P.M.

Actualizado:12.09.2024 21:53

+ Ver Más

Unirse a whatsapp



This orange sky with yellow flashes tints the waters of the Pacific of **Valle del Cauca** with the same color. The sea of the island of Punta Soldado, 40 minutes from Buenaventura, serves as a mirror to the firmament, also painted in fuchsia. The water is calm, while in the distance and deep inside, a couple of fishermen in their old boat wait patiently for luck after casting their nets. From their boat, they can see huge trees interspersed with dense **mangrove forests**, where the sun tries to peek through a crack or two.

Temas Relacionados

OTRAS CIUDADES 08:22 A.M.

La grave denuncia que hacen las universidades sobre reducción de presupuesto desde el Gobierno para investigaciones



MEDELLÍN SEPTIEMBRE 12 DE 2024

Fue capturado un hombre que realizaba misteriosos rituales para proteger a los integrantes de una organización ilegal en Medellín



MEDELLÍN 12:00 A.M.

La dura situación financiera de Afinia: la filial de EPM ha dejado de percibir más de 2 billones de pesos



OTRAS CIUDADES SEPTIEMBRE 12 DE 2024

Alerta por posible compra de predios para comunidades indígenas en el parque Los Nevados: esto es lo que se sabe



OTRAS CI

La grave denuncia que hacen las universidades sobre reducción de presupuesto desde el Gobierno para investigaciones



Unirme al canal de WhatsApp de noticias EL TIEMPO

([Lea esta historia en español aquí](#))

The mangroves, a system that depends on both salt water from the tides and fresh water from the mountains, are part of this world of contrasts in the Valle del Cauca, the site of **COP16** for its biodiversity.

Time passes slowly for the Afro-descendants of Punta Soldado, in front of La Bocana beach, one of the beaches that attract tourism in Buenaventura, where leaders like Gladys Romero, a pianguera at heart, love the environment.

([Follow all the news of COP16 here](#))



Mangrove in Valle del Cauca

FOTO: CVC

She is one of the women who live by digging among the roots of these mangroves, looking for piangua, but aware that the ecosystem needs a break from time to time to preserve it, like those who live near the area of the Uramba Bahía Málaga National Natural Park, another mangrove paradise bathed by the Pacific. In this 470-square-kilometer reserve, the giant humpback whales are usually sighted at this time of year and until October, when they come to the warm waters to reproduce.

COP16: number of fish species at risk of extinction may be five times higher than previous estimates, new study finds

An hour away by boat, the indigenous Wounaan Noanamá Nury Cuero and other women, dressed in paruma, a fabric with more than one fold that forms a skirt, intertwine with their hands fragments of wérregue palm, to which they have given a reddish and yellow color with the very common for them achiote, an essential natural pigment in their handicrafts. This is the community of the Chachajo Reservation, which cannot be reached by road because there is no road.

The indigenous people have taken great care to ensure that this western side of the department, where there is jungle, remains untouched as it was inhabited by their ancestors. Thus, the visitor must enter by river from Bajo Calima and then take the San Juan River, the wide stream that separates the jungle of the Reserve of the Palafitic Houses, almost in the air, from that of the neighboring Choco.

Already in the center of the Valle del Cauca, of plains and crops, mostly sugar cane, Holmes Lenis arrives at the banks of the immense Cauca River, hoping to catch fish to sell.

The dry weather of the last few weeks has motivated him to go fishing earlier, because in the afternoon the high temperatures concentrate in the water and make it difficult for the fish to reach his net, in addition to the decrease in current.

Nevertheless, the fisherman does not lose faith in this hot area. Close to where he fishes is the wetland of Videles, in the area of the Hacienda La Prensa, in the district of Guabas, in the municipality of Guacarí.

There, the CVC is building a dock and another one at the La Marina dam, in the lagoon of Sonso, in Buga, so that the Cauca River can be navigated again as it was in its best years, at the beginning of the last century. Sonso is its witness, a lagoon on the right bank of the river that crosses the entire department, but in the jurisdiction of the municipalities of Yotoco, Guacarí and Buga as part of the heart of the Valle del Cauca, tropical dry forests conducive to bird watching.

🔗 **COP16: What is at risk in Colombia and the world if the Amazon continues to lose its biodiversity and crosses the so-called 'point of no return'?**



Farallones natural reserve in Cali conserves more than 540 species of birds.

FOTO: National Natural Parks of Colombia

It is also there where a world of more contrasting flora and fauna pulsates, going from high temperatures in these plains to a moorland territory in less than two hours. The Valley has the moors of Las Hermosas, Chilí Barragán or Yerbabuena; Las Domínguez - Pan de Azúcar; Tinajas in the Central mountain range, and the Duende, which corresponds to the Western mountain range.

And the contrasts continue, because these moors include the cities of Buga, El Cerrito, Trujillo, Riofrío, Ginebra, Tuluá and Florida, two and even three hours away from Cali, the land of the cadence with the music of Grupo Niche and Guayacán, and of the 33 degrees Celsius when the sun is in all its splendor.

All these inhabitants of those tourist charms have been ratifying, among peasants, Afro-descendants, indigenous and mestizos, that the Valley is precisely the ideal venue for the Conference of the Parties in its 16th version, of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

It is a ratification that coincides with that of the General Director of the CVC, Marco Antonio Suárez. "Valle del Cauca is one of the regions richest in biodiversity, because it has the sea, the moorland, dry and very dry forests, humid and very humid forests, wetlands, hundreds of species of flora and fauna, and water, lots of water; we can go from cold to hot in a few minutes. There are eight biomes and 35 terrestrial ecosystems, in addition to marine and coastal ecosystems," he said.

🔗 **The black soldier fly, an example of how insects are key in the fight against waste**

In the case of the moorland Las Tinajas, located in the upper basin of the Fraile River, between the peaks of Florida, in the south of the valley, covers 75,703 hectares. There are frailejones, deer, bears, tapirs and dozens of migratory birds.

According to these natives, the moorland stores water in huge lagoons, like jars, that eventually drain their waters into the Santa Bárbara stream and thus into the Fraile River, which meanders through the central mountain range. This is where the Indians saw snow six years ago. It was not hail, but snow the likes of which had not been seen in 20 years. "Mother Nature is letting us know that the moorland is a very important place, not only for the Nasa people, but for the entire population," they say on the reservation.



A great variety of butterflies can be found in the different ecosystems of Valle del Cauca.

FOTO: CVC

"Our fauna and flora is represented in different species, highlighting 6,000 of flora, 260 of mammals and 997 of birds, as well as 92 species of fish for the Cauca River, of which 69 are native, 23 introduced and 23 endemic. The diversity of herpetofauna in the department corresponds to 350 species (197 amphibians and 153 reptiles). In the Cauca Valley, the entire Pacific is part of the Jaguar (*Panthera onca*) corridor. The core of the Andean Bear (*Tremarctos ornatus*) is located in Tatamá-Farallones-Munchique, in the Western Cordillera, and Hermosas-Puracé-Doña Juana, in the Central Cordillera. In addition, Bahía Malaga, in Buenaventura, is an important area for the humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), among other marine species," continues the CVC director.

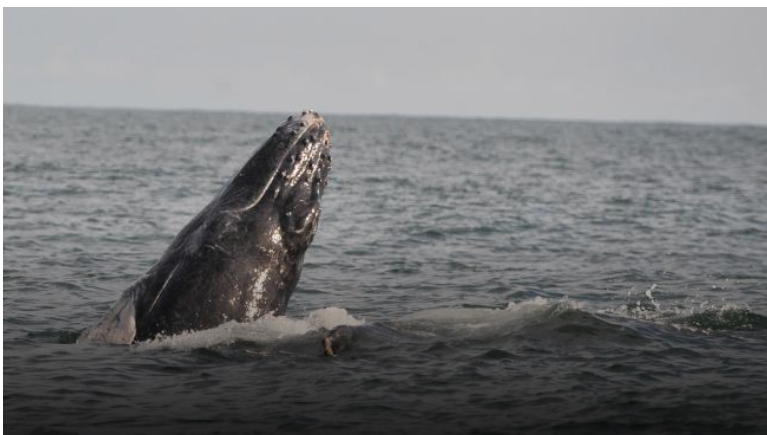
And he explains that in the coastal marine area under the jurisdiction of this corporation, there is a record of 20 species of intertidal macroalgae, 132 species of microalgae, 400 species of terrestrial shrubby flora, not counting epiphytic species, 18 species of sponges, 18 species of cnidarians, 580 species of molluscs, 6 species of sipunculids, 324 species of crustaceans, 37 species of echinoderms, 120 species of polychaetes, 390 species of marine and coastal fishes, 29 species of aquatic mammals, 331 species of birds, 156 species of terrestrial mammals, 92 species of amphibians and 130 species of reptiles, 38 of which are epiphytic. 496 hectares of mangroves.

"The valley also has more than 91 lentic wetlands, lagoons, madre viejas, marshes and lowlands. In the wetland complex of the upper Cauca River, associated with the Sonso Lagoon, declared a Ramsar site, international recognition of the convention of the same name, there are 24 wetlands," emphasizes Suarez, who also says that the main attraction of this area of the country are the birds. "In the valley there are 163 migratory species and 83 almost endemic species. Cali alone has more than 560 species, making it the capital of bird life.", he says.

More than 2,000 water sources, 283 streams, seven rivers, 350,000 trees in urban areas, 113 parks and 560 species of birds are part of the natural wealth of Cali, host of the COP16 Biodiversity Summit, according to Governor Dilian Francisca Toro and the Secretaries of Tourism of Cali, Mábel Lara, and of the Valley, Julián Franco.

To see these winged creatures, according to the Secretary of Tourism of Cali, there is also El Topacio, cataloged as the great gateway to the Farallones de Cali Park and located just half an hour from the capital of the Valley.

"They are our crown jewel of biodiversity," says Cali's Secretary of Tourism.



Whale in the Pacific Ocean, near Juanchaco, Valle del Cauca, Colombia.

"We have protected areas such as the Farallones, Tatamá and Uramba Bahía Málaga National Parks, as well as the Yotoco and San Cipriano forests, which are crucial for the conservation of endemic and endangered species. We must take care of the forests, we must conserve them, we must work with intensive silvopastoral systems to improve biodiversity and carbon sequestration," says the Governor of Valle del Cauca.

The governor reiterates: "We will benefit the community with green businesses, agroecology, sustainable agriculture and livestock, and ecotourism projects such as bird watching.

Valle del Cauca, a region of more than 22,000 square kilometers, is that paradise where there are plains, mountains and the sea. All together. In other words, it is the place where different landscapes, climates, tastes, races, dances, cultures and a whole economic drive are gathered in the same region of the Pacific Ocean. This was emphasized by the Governor and the Secretary of Tourism of the region.

Nor can we forget the rivers, waterfalls and beaches that connect nature to the Pacific Ocean. Franco mentions the San Cipriano River for bird watching, as well as the Sabaletas and Anchicayá Rivers, and waterfalls such as La Sierpe, with a drop of more than 60 meters, in addition to the beaches of Juanchaco, Ladrilleros, La Bocana, Juan de Dios, among others.

In the capital of the valley, the zootechnician Carlos Mario Wagner and other birdwatchers like him spend hours in the cloud forest of San Antonio, 40 minutes from Cali, just to stop without worrying and discover such beautiful birds as the multicolored tanager or the cock-of-the-rock.



In Valle del Cauca, from the beaches or the plains to the moors, in minutes.

FOTO: CVC

Another of Cali's forests is the area between the Farallones Reserve and the protective basin of the Meléndez River, where mammals and reptiles are the guardians of two water sources that feed the same riverbed.

It is the Colibrí Forest, a business run by Andrés Ossa, one of the 68 business initiatives in the 15 districts of Cali that have joined together to form the Rural and Nature Tourism Network, under the slogan "Cali is also a hill", with the support of the Cali Tourism Secretariat.

The forest is located between 1,450 and 1,620 meters above sea level, and more than 100 species of birds arrive there each year, including migratory birds such as the Orange Warbler (*Setophaga fusca*) and the Canada Warbler (*Cardellina canadensis*). It is also visited by endemic birds such as the Caucasian Guan (*Penelope perspicax*) and the Tufted Tit (*Habia cristata*).

These activities promote proper waste management and measures to prevent, mitigate or compensate for adverse impacts on flora and fauna. Ossa explains.



Species of all types, in Valle del Cauca.

FOTO: CVC

This proposal goes hand in hand to show that Cali is full of natural wealth with a great variety of wildlife, taking into account that the city will be the epicenter of the most important conference on biodiversity on the planet.

"This arises as an initiative articulated by the need of Cali to publicize the beauty we have, our Farallones. Cali is mostly a rural area (80 percent) and there are some guardians there", says the entrepreneur Ossa.

He adds that some Cali residents are unaware of the value of the 15 townships. "We should be proud and aware of our great wealth. Six of the seven rivers that cross the city originate here," he says.

He adds that his company focuses on connecting people with nature through bird watching, waterfalls and a coffee grown here. The Pi3nsa Corporation is also part of this initiative, "to bring knowledge of biodiversity to the city," says John López, project director for the same company.

The 22 thousand square kilometers that extend in this region are full of biodiversity, immersed in impressive ecosystems. A sample of the magical realism described by Gabriel García Márquez, with a variety of plants, animals and local communities. A millenary valley that holds stories and is home to hundreds of species. It is a true natural jewel of the planet.

CAROLINA BOHÓRQUEZ

Journalist of EL TIEMPO in Cali

Editor's note: This text is an artificially intelligent English translation of the original Spanish version, which can be found [here](#). Any comment, please write to berdav@eltiempo.com

More articles

[COP16: These are the 4 ways companies can become more connected to biodiversity](#)

[COP16: What is it, why is it important, and what will the Biodiversity Conference leave behind for Colombia?](#)

RELACIONADOS | [COP16 ENGLISH CONTENT](#) | [COP16](#)

Reciba noticias de EL TIEMPO desde Google News



CAROLINA BOHÓRQUEZ RAMÍREZ

Periodista

12 de septiembre 2024, 09:43 P.M.

Actualizado: 12.09.2024 21:53



Comentar



Guardar



Reportar



Portada