Project Update: November 2019

The Bodoquena plateau is a remnant of Atlantic Forest inside the Brazilian savanna with unique characteristics. The waters running there have karstic characteristics because the soil is rich in calcium carbonate, making the waters some of the clearest in the world. The aquatic fauna is rich; for fish alone there have been over 60 native species catalogued there. Because of the characteristics of the water, studying these species and their interactions, both with each other and their environment, can provide important data to preserve aquatic environments that could not be acquired elsewhere as easily. Therefore, the main goal of this project is to acquire data to be used in policy making for aquatic preservation while promoting conservation consciousness of aquatic environment with the local community, through lectures, workshops, and field visits.

Implemented activities:

We have:

- Conducted the experiment of fruit consumption rate.
- Conducted the experiment of fish assemblage during masting events.
- Conducted the experiment of effects of fish exclusion during masting periods.
- Started lectures, workshops, and field visits.
- Met with local owners (farmers and touristic attractions) to form collaboration to the work.

We have also started divulgation of the project on social media (instagram.com/ffi.interactions/). We have presented partial results of the project at RSG Conference in Uruguay, and in a limnology congress, XVII Congresso Brasileiro de Limnologia e do II Congresso Ibero-Americano de Limnologia, last August in Florianópolis – SC, Brazil (https://limnos2019.websiteseguro.com/index.php).

According to our schedule, the next step to be done this year is offering local teachers and tour guides mini courses on the role of fish and invertebrates in ecological networks; however, these activities are being organised.

The activity we are proud to report as success is the workshop and field visit with students, where we showed how rivers of lowland "behave" through time and how they are affected when riparian forest is lost and they could see how preservation and profit from sustainable exploration can go together. The students were impressed with how rivers work along time and how little they actually knew about their own region. They had the chance of seeing a preserved area and understand on the field how to preserve aquatic environment.

Fish exclusion experiment. Fishes were excluded from patches of fruit by using garden shade mash 30%, allowing invertebrates to access the fruits.

Experiment of fish assemblage. We determined transects along the river where fruits would be thrown and assess whether fish would assemble around these areas.

Working web interactions with students. Each student would be an organism, and the strings the connection between two organisms.


Field visit. The students went to visit a farm that conducts ecotourism. They were able to see projects of stream conservation on the field and understand the characteristics of karst streams.