

### **Project Update: October 2009**

During this period we carried out three field trips to the protected area Majayara - Yara. Without obstacles we executed different objectives of the project proposed for this stage. We had meetings with the professors, children, guides of the area and local residents to explain the objectives and stages of the project. We could complete the data like number of schools, students and professors as well as number of local people which is necessary to define the total number of persons that will be benefit from the project. Also the initial poll for the children and the community were conducted; this served to identify the main problems that should be worked in the environmental education.

Meantime during the fieldwork we took pictures for the caves fauna guide and the informative pamphlets; this activity will be continued in the next trips. The geographic coordinates were collected for the cave fauna database. Through the direct collection from the field and the interview with residents, technicians and specialists of the area, we identified the main conservation threats of the caves as well the small conflicts in the communities that block the conservation of the biodiversity of the area. We identified as the principal problems of the caves the pollution caused mainly by garbage and by the use of torches, the extraction of guano and vandalism. The faunistic inventories in the caves began and will be continued in the next stages. Up to now, two field trips in the rainy season were completed to carry out this important objective. In addition we explored some other caves, as Cueva del Agua cave, that could be included in the project.

