

Report Card of the Meta River Basin, Colombia

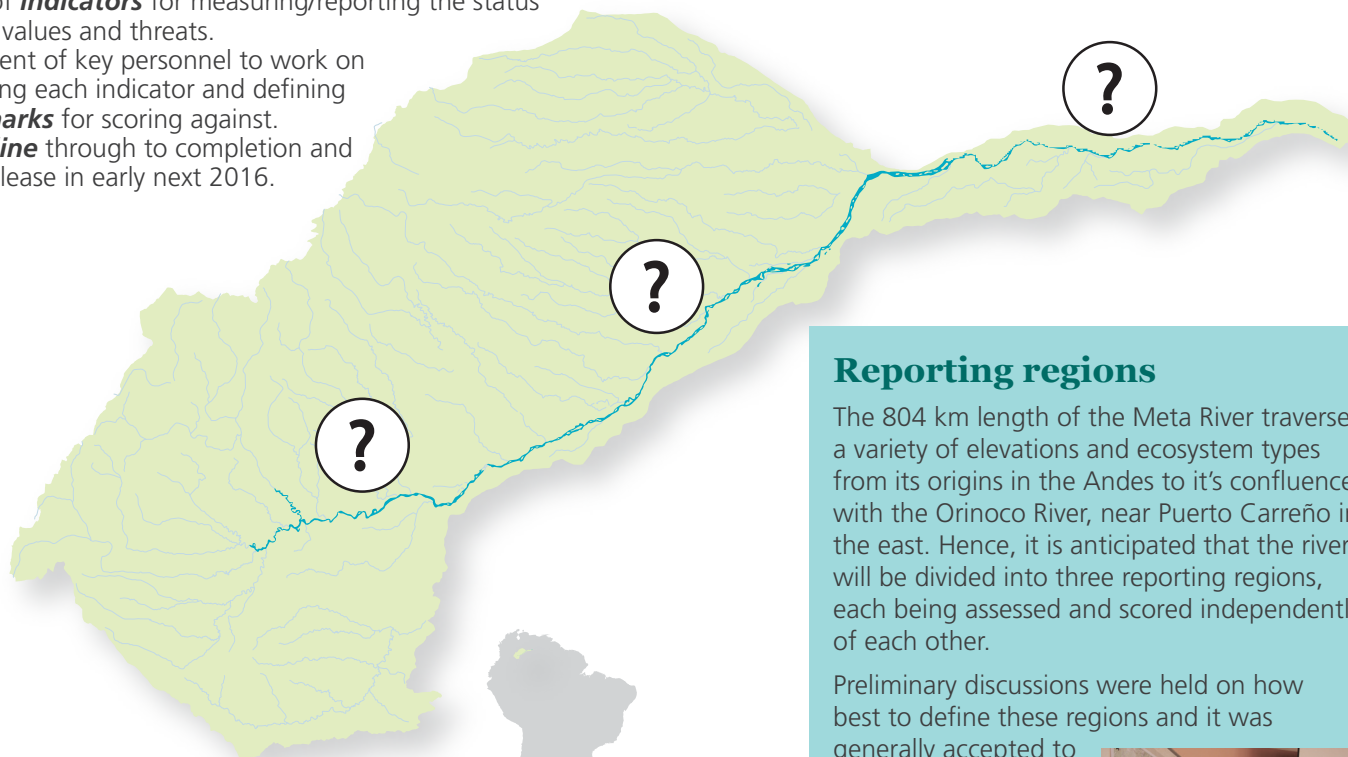
Evaluation of Colombian tributaries of the Orinoco

The Orinoco Basin Health Report Card was officially kicked-off in June 2015 with the first stakeholder engagement meeting in Puerto López, in the Orinoquía Region of Meta Department, Colombia.

More than 40 representatives from 19 organizations attended the workshop aimed at identifying the environmental, social and economic indicators that will form the basis of the Meta River Report Card. Indicators were chosen based on the top values identified as key to the future sustainability of the Meta River basin. Participating institutions included the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, the Humboldt Institute, Corporinoquia, Omacha Foundation, Fundación Orinoco, WWF, among others. The three-day interactive workshop also attracted positive media attention.

Outcomes from the meeting included:

1. Identification, and ranking by importance, of environmental, social and economic **values** within the Meta River basin.
2. Identification, and ranking by importance, of **threats** to identified values within the Meta River basin.
3. Choice of **indicators** for measuring/reporting the status of these values and threats.
4. Assignment of key personnel to work on developing each indicator and defining **benchmarks** for scoring against.
5. A **time line** through to completion and public release in early next 2016.



Map depicting the Meta River basin and example reporting regions.

Reporting regions

The 804 km length of the Meta River traverses a variety of elevations and ecosystem types from its origins in the Andes to its confluence with the Orinoco River, near Puerto Carreño in the east. Hence, it is anticipated that the river will be divided into three reporting regions, each being assessed and scored independently of each other.

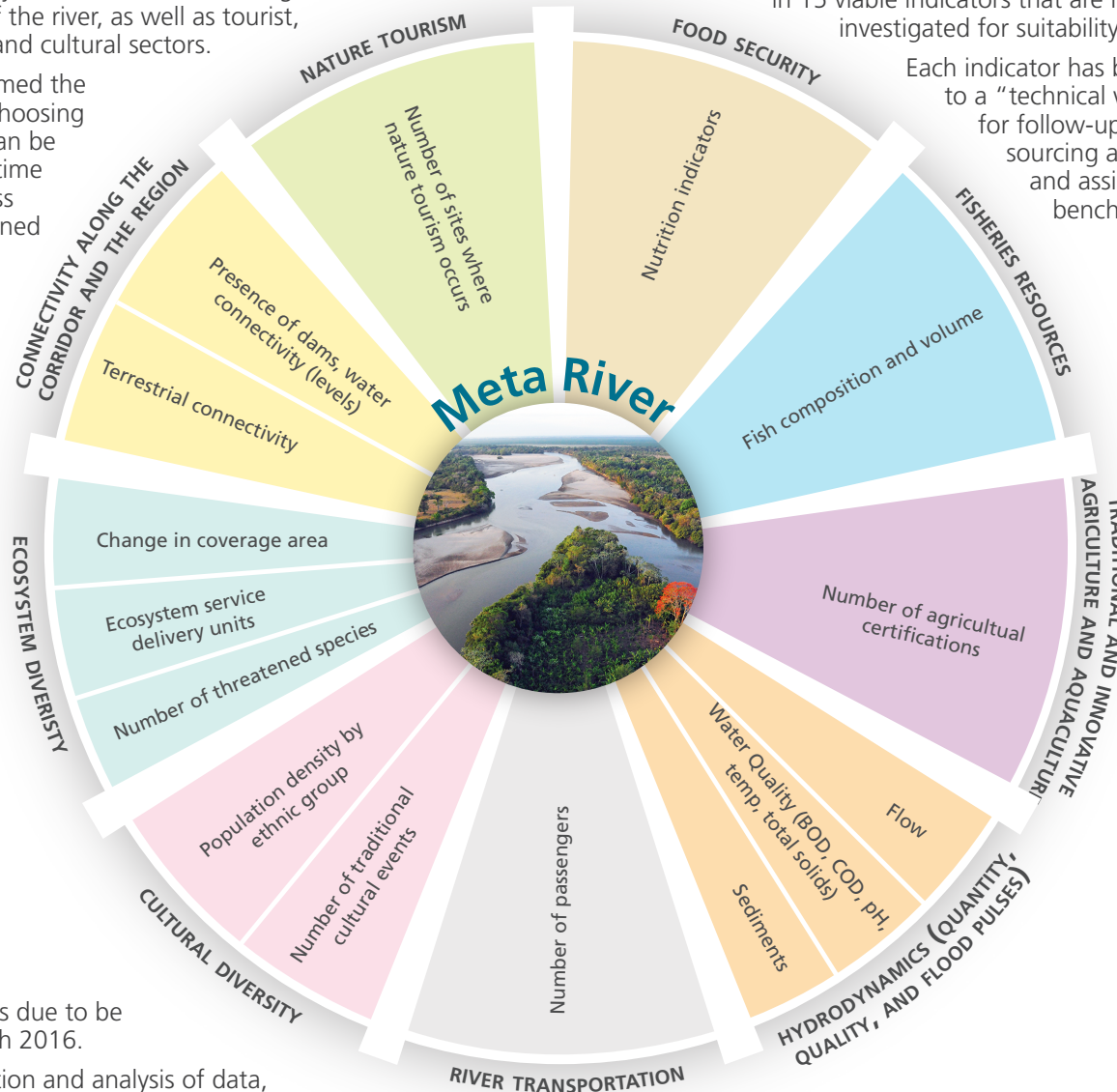
Preliminary discussions were held on how best to define these regions and it was generally accepted to achieve this based on elevation changes. A technical group has been established to define and document these regions.



Values

Workshop participants were tasked with identifying important environmental, social and economic values that the Meta River and basin provides. An extensive list of values (> 15) was collated highlighting the importance of this river basin to the region. The list was narrowed down to nine key values to be represented in the report card. These values are outlined in the figure below and comprise physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the river, as well as tourist, transport, food and cultural sectors.

These values formed the foundation for choosing indicators that can be monitored over time to assess progress towards pre-defined benchmarks.



Indicators

Following the selection of key values to be protected in the Meta River basin, workshop participants identified over 60 potential indicators that could be used to assess the status of these values.

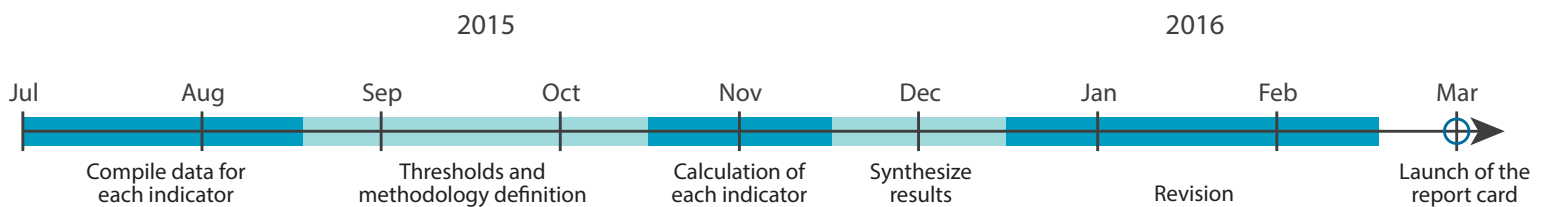
These indicators were refined by assessing their cost effectiveness for collection, future viability, sensitivity to change, relevance to management actions and data availability, resulting in 15 viable indicators that are now being investigated for suitability.

Each indicator has been assigned to a "technical working group" for follow-up review, data sourcing and collation, and assignment of benchmarks.

Timeline

The report card is due to be released in March 2016.

Following collection and analysis of data, workshop participants will be invited to review, comment, and sign-off the report card prior to public release.



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For more information about this project, contact:
Cesar Freddy Suárez, Coordinador de Análisis Geográficos
cfsuarez@wwf.org.co

José Saulo Usma, Especialista de Agua Dulce
jsusma@wwf.org.co