

The University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies & Tropical Conservation and Development Program proudly present:

The Bacardi Lecture Series
Envisioning a Sustainable Tropics

**Unraveling the complexity of
landscape management in a water-
subsidized watershed in NW Costa
Rica**

Carolina Murcia, Organization for Tropical Studies

Abstract: The Tempisque basin (NW Costa Rica) was converted from dry forest and natural savannas to cattle ranching, and then to intensive agriculture and fish farming, facilitated by a large irrigation project subsidized by water transferred from the Atlantic versant. In spite of the water subsidy, water demanded by these productive activities is not enough and the natural ecosystems are at the losing end of this conflict. The most significant environmental impact is the virtual disappearance of the Ramsar recognized Palo Verde wetland, former habitat to 20,000 aquatic birds and the largest breeding population of wood storks in Central America. An OTS-UF interdisciplinary team is leading the development of new models of environmental management and policy to understand the causes and consequences of current water availability and use; forecast how water allocations will change as temperature rises, rainfall diminishes and land use changes; and propose adaptive governance measures. In this talk, I will present this ambitious interdisciplinary project, its conceptual models and first results.

Bio: Dr. Murcia (Ph.D. UF) is a Colombian tropical conservation ecologist. She generates and coordinates interdisciplinary and inter-institutional projects in science-based conservation and restoration, focusing mostly in northern South America and Costa Rica. She is currently the Science Director of the Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS) and adjunct Assistant Professor in UF's Department of Biology. She also does consulting work in Colombia in conservation and restoration, particularly related to policy and assessments, and is the South American Regional Editor of Conservation Biology. Her publications span the continuum between science, science transfer and policy. Previously she was a member of the Board of Directors of the Society for Ecological Restoration (11 years) and Northern Andes Regional Director at Wildlife Conservation Society.



February 12 @ 10:40 am in Grinter Hall, 376

Light refreshments to follow the lecture