Join us for Tropilunch!!

**Behind a cup of coffee: culture and trees in two indigenous regions in Mexico**

Talk by Carolina Elizondo & Bia’ni Madsa’ Juárez López

UF Visiting Scholars

**March 17**

**12:45-1:45pm**

Grinter 376

**Biographies:**

Carolina and Madsa’ are both master’s students of Tropical Ecology in the Center for Tropical Research of Universidad Veracruzana in Veracruz, Mexico.

Bia’ni Madsa’ Juárez López is native of Oaxaca, Mexico. She received her B.S. in Biology at the UAM-Xochimilco in Mexico City with the thesis “Community Territorial Arrangement Proposal for San Jose El Paraíso, Oaxaca”, her family’s hometown. Her master’s thesis focuses on the linkages between social organization and tree diversity in coffee plantations of the same community. She hopes to conduct interdisciplinary work to support lifestyles of indigenous communities in Mexico and their agency over natural resources.

Carolina Elizondo Salas is a biologist at the Universidad Veracruzana in Xalapa city. Her master’s research is focused on local knowledge about strategies of diversification with timber trees in shade coffee plantations in the Sierra de Zongolica, Veracruz. This research is a component of the larger project “Community forest management in Central Mexico” with Dr. Citlalli López. The results of this interdisciplinary work will be used to inform collaboration among the research team and communities of Sierra de Zongolica to improve local natural resource management initiatives by peasants.

**Content:**

Madsa’ and Carolina will present two case studies in different indigenous regions of coffee production in Mexico as part of their master’s thesis research. Their theses are independent, but they have similarities, which together communicate a broader picture of indigenous coffee producers in Mexico, the challenges they confront, and the different strategies that allow them to continue production, including shade tree diversity.

Madsa’ and Carolina decided to research coffee plantations because those systems are socially, culturally and economically important in Mexico. Mexico is the 2nd largest producer of organic coffee and the 6th largest in total production, which is shouldered mostly by indigenous families who have had their lives affected by neoliberal policies and a global market. Their research uses an interdisciplinary approach to see what is behind a cup of coffee.

*Tropilunch is a weekly seminar run by graduate students from the Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) Program. It provides a forum for a range of discussions and presentations related to TCD work and research. Students are provided with an opportunity to present and discuss their research projects with peers and faculty. In addition, discussion sessions on issues of current interest are also held. Visiting scholars and conservation practitioners also participate when available. It is held every Tuesday at 12:45 p.m. in Grinter 376.*