

First Jaguar Photo-trapped at the Caatinga of Bahia State, Brazil

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Jaguar *Panthera onca* status in the Caatinga biome is unknown for 75% of the total area (Sanderson et al. 2001).

Lack of knowledge on jaguar populations has hampered conservation strategies in this biome. Information on distribution, density, ecology, and population dynamics for the species need to be generated to better design an action plan in this region. To raise these information, we have started a project in a Caatinga area of Northeast of Brazil (at first to identify potential areas for a long term study).

Two expeditions in 2006 (March, November-December) were conducted; at first performing interviews (with local people, hunters, farmers, and ranchers) and searching for direct or indirect signals. Furthermore, with selected areas, based in the records achieved previously, we set up camera-trap transects along the area of approximately 4,000 km². At this time, the first photo-trap of a jaguar in the Caatinga, to the east of São Francisco River was taken (Fig. 1, 2).

For 2007 CENAP plans to work on the following issues:

- determine jaguar density in the study area;
- characterize habitat use and factors influencing home range and movement pattern;
- identify main threats for jaguar conservation;
- analyze the economic impact of livestock depredation by jaguars;
- characterize reproductive and sanitary peril of jaguars and
- estimate minimum area necessary for conservation of jaguars on the Caatinga biome.

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Fig. 1. First jaguar photographed at the Caatinga of Bahia State, Brazil (Photo: CENAP, IBAMA).

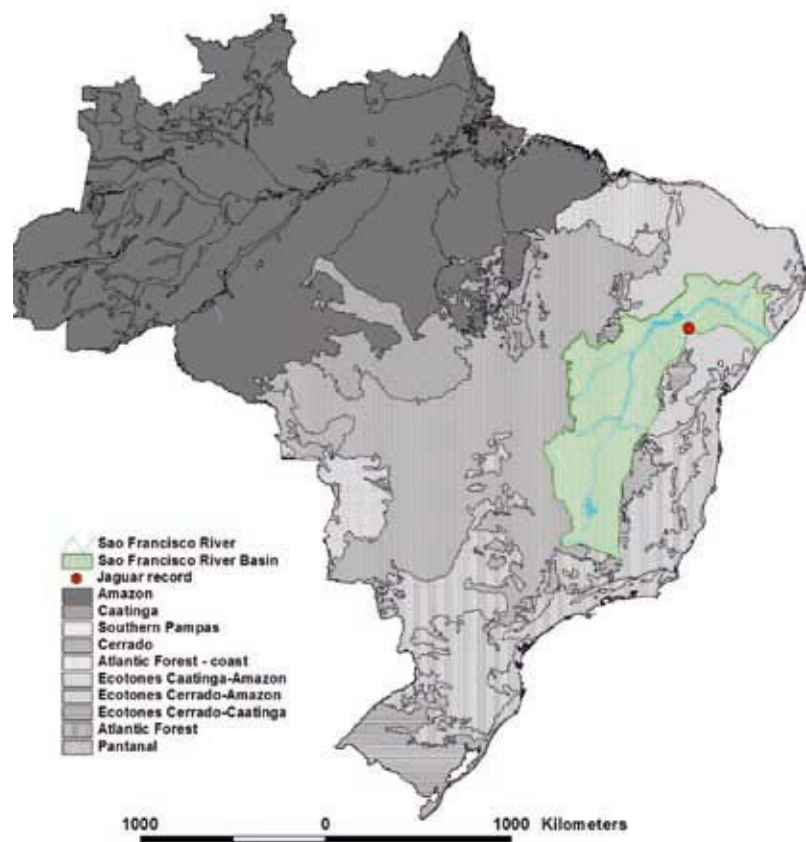


Fig. 2. Major biomes of Brazil with location of the study area (red dot).