



# FSD Bolivia – Gaia Pacha

Cochabamba, Bolivia

## **Research Intern: Biological Monitoring and Evaluation of Rocha River**

### Organization Overview

Foundation for Sustainable Development is an international development organization that seeks to support communities in achieving their goals through asset-based development and international exchange in Bolivia ( Cochabamba) and Argentina ( Salta) . FSD provides opportunities for students and professionals to engage in real community development work instead of a typical study abroad or drop-in service project program. The internships are thoughtfully designed to help you build your career while having a lasting impact on the people in the community in which you serve. Our internships have a strong emphasis on community ownership and follow the principles of Asset-Based Community Development. Interns receive extensive training in sustainable development principles and gain professional skills in project planning and budgeting, program evaluation, community assessment, and proposal writing. Interns apply their new and existing skill sets as they collaborate with their local colleagues on identifying, designing, and implementing a project to benefit the community.

### Areas of work

### Social Issue Focus & Impact

In 2006, a group of young Bolivian environmental professionals decided to create an institution that would respond to the big environmental challenges in the country. This institution would allow the members to unleash all their passions, imagination, and technical skills in order to improve Bolivia's environment and help its people. Thus, on Earth Day, 2006, the environmental non-profit foundation Gaia Pacha was born.

Currently, the foundation is functioning with more than 11 active members and training 4 part time members studying abroad pursuing their master degrees. Gaia Pacha's main office is located in the city of Cochabamba; and since 2012, the foundation expanded its activities into the lowlands of the Santa Cruz Bolivia department.

The Gaia Pacha Foundation seeks to create and implement scientific proposals to increase environmental awareness and change people's attitudes and behavior towards the environment. The Foundation's overall goal is to tackle problems where human actions alter ecosystem balances by developing real alternatives using local and scientific knowledge, thus satisfying the needs of both humans and their environment while taking into consideration the social and political realities of Bolivia. Gaia Pacha's environmental programs are based on principles of ethics, transparency, justice, and solidarity.

The general objective of the Gaia Pacha Foundation is to create, propose and implement real alternatives and efficient solutions, based on local and scientific knowledge, to problems where human actions alter the harmonic dynamics of the environment, to meet human needs and to make them compatible with the environment.

Gaia Pacha's activities are organized around the following three program areas: research and technology; education; and environmental politics, protection and conservation. Their work involves intensive research on environmental issues in the Cochabamba region in order to promote technical and scientific strategies that respond to the needs of the local community and value traditional knowledge and socio-cultural concerns. The Foundation's educational model is dynamic and participatory, seeking to engage citizens, and specifically children and youth. In addition to research and education



### Position Description

The objective of this project is to evaluate the water quality of the Rocha River in the municipalities of Sacaba, Cercado and Colcapirhua, applying a methodology of biological indicators, based on the analysis of the alteration of the community of organisms that inhabit river ecosystems

Population development and growth is closely related to water. As the human being became sedentary, he sought to establish himself near bodies of water to satisfy the need for this element for his consumption, that of his cattle and irrigation of his crops. Regardless of these uses, these courses were also used as recipients of the waste produced by these populations, and as they developed economically, demographically and industrially, the amount of waste discharged multiplied, bringing with it increasing pollution.

The Rocha River Basin is one of the most important basins of the Department of Cochabamba, since it contains approximately 76% of the population of the department. The integrating axis within the basin is the Rocha River, whose main channel has an extension of approximately 81 km.

### Student Profile

- Intermediate Spanish
- Basic knowledge of environmental issues desirable
- Willingness to work in the field and travel throughout various provinces

### Time Frame

The program is flexible for the start between May 17 and June 14 2021