



Support for the monitoring of biodiversity and climate change in the Selva Maya

Challenges

The Selva Maya, shared by Belize, Guatemala and Mexico, is the largest tropical forest area in Mesoamerica and shows a very high biodiversity across around 20 different ecosystems. The Selva Maya is under heavy pressure from immigration, agriculture & livestock raising, illegal logging of forest, and traffic of flora and fauna. The reduction of the forest area of the Selva Maya, its fragmentation and the overexploitation of its resources endanger both its biodiversity and its environmental services such as carbon storage, regional climate regulation, or water availability. Global climate change exacerbates the situation, especially because of the increased incidence of forest fires.

The environmental governance of the Selva Maya region is weak, which is closely related to its transboundary situation. To develop efficient mechanisms for conservation and climate change adaptation in the region, and to foster support at the political level, reliable monitoring data is required on a regular basis and in comparable fashion at regional scale.

There is already a wealth of monitoring data collected by a variety of organizations, yet these tend to have a limited geographic focus, lack continuity and leave many gaps. In addition, few results are freely available and widely communicated to decision-makers and the public. Exchange, coordination and collaboration at the regional level are scarce.

Project Name	Support for the monitoring of biodiversity and climate change in the Selva Maya
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), with funds of the International Climate Protection Initiative (IKI)
Project region	Belize Petén, Guatemala Campeche, Quintana Roo & Yucatán, Mexico
Lead executing agency	Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD)
Duration	08.2016 – 07.2020

The project

Since August 2016 the project *Support for monitoring of biodiversity and climate change in the Selva Maya* is implemented. The regional lead executing agency is the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD). National counterparts are the Forest Department (FD) in Belize, the Guatemalan National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP) and the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO) in Mexico. In addition, the Mexican National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) is a strategic ally.



Collared aracaris (*Pteroglossus torquatus*; left) & Geoffroy's spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*; right)

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The project is also supported by the NGO *Wildlife Conservation Society* (WCS), which has been spearheading the monitoring of biodiversity in Guatemala since 1992.

This project is being carried out in close coordination with the project *Protection and Sustainable Use of the Selva Maya*, which, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ), GIZ has been executing since 2011.

Goal

The overarching goal of the project is that results of regionally coordinated biodiversity and climate change monitoring in the Selva Maya region are channelled into policy-making to a greater extent.

Approach

To reach its objective, the project focuses on four axes:

1. **Improve the political and institutional framework** for regional cooperation on biodiversity and climate change monitoring.
2. **Strengthen the capacities** of the relevant stakeholders and the **regional exchange** of experience of biodiversity and climate change monitoring.
3. **Implement regionally oriented pilot monitoring** and **contribute to improved cooperation** between local key stakeholders.
4. **Foster the making use of relevant monitoring information** in the Selva Maya region.

Traditional biodiversity monitoring (e.g. frequency of species, extension of habitat types) is limited where monitoring is to provide critical data on biodiversity and climate change in an effective and timely manner to decision makers. Therefore the 'Pressure-State-Benefit-Response' (PSBR) framework is applied in the project. This framework includes a broader range of indicators such as threats, management and governance measures towards ensuring sustainable use and conservation of natural resources and environmental services.

A key point for the project is to increase the accessibility of existing data, as well as the communication of monitoring results to different audiences.

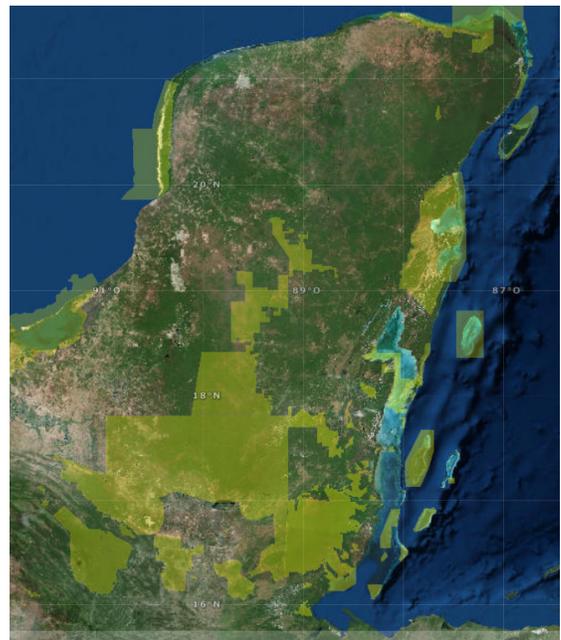


Fig. 1. The Selva Maya with its protected areas.

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