



IUCN 2023

INTERNATIONAL UNION
FOR CONSERVATION OF
NATURE

**MEXICO, CENTRAL
AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN
REGIONAL OFFICE
ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

The designation of geographical entities in this publication and the presentation of the material, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IUCN concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of IUCN.

IUCN is pleased to acknowledge the support of its Framework Partners who provide core funding: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland; Government of France and the French Development Agency (AFD), the Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea; the Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg; the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD); the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA); the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the United States Department of State.

IUCN claims no responsibility for errors or omissions that may occur in this translation. In the case of discrepancies, please refer to the original edition. Title of the original edition: *IUCN ORMACC Informe anual 2023 (2024)*. Published by: IUCN. <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/51449>

Published: IUCN, Gland, Switzerland

Produced by: IUCN, Regional Office for Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean

Copyright: © 2024 IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

© 2024 IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, for the English translation.

Reproduction of this publication for educational and other non-commercial purposes is authorized without the prior written permission of the copyright holder, provided the source is acknowledged.

Reproduction of this publication for sale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without the prior written permission of the copyright holder.

Recommended citation: IUCN (2024). *IUCN ORMACC Annual Report 2023*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN

Cover photography: Pexels Jolo Diaz

Editing: Ahmid Daccarett, Regional Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Coordinator
Giulia Clerici, Strategic Communications Coordinator

Translation: Leslie Simmons

Layout by: Tatiana Castro Caamaño

Printed by: Big Print Mx

Paper: Printed on 350g/150g matte couché paper.

**INTERNATIONAL UNION
FOR CONSERVATION OF
NATURE**

**MEXICO, CENTRAL
AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN
REGIONAL OFFICE
ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

Contents

MESSAGE FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR	6
UNITED FOR NATURE	8
A Unique and Powerful Union.....	8
Nature 2030: The Union in Action.....	10
INFORM, INFLUENCE and IMPLEMENT.....	11
IUCN IN MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	12
A Melting Pot of Biodiversity and Cultures.....	12
IUCN: 75 Years of Vision and Impact	14
Members.....	18
Commissions	21
Secretariat.....	22
Implementing One Programme in the Region.....	24
IMPLEMENT	28
A Portfolio for One Programme	29
People.....	35
Land	44
Water.....	48
Climate.....	52
Oceans.....	56



INFLUENCE..... 60

Policy Contributions61

Event Participation and Networking64

New Alliances65

INFORM..... 66

Resources67

IUCN Knowledge Products and Standards68

Message from the Regional Director

The year 2023 was marked by two major milestones: the 75th anniversary of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the 35th anniversary of the Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (IUCN ORMACC). The celebrations of this double anniversary served as a reminder of the indispensable role IUCN plays in driving global conservation efforts and fostering collaboration towards a more sustainable and resilient future for all people.

During this commemorative year, we have particularly reaffirmed the importance of the Union's three pillars: the Members, the Commissions and the Secretariat, working together under the "One Programme"

approach to identify and implement solutions for the greatest environmental challenges to the planet and our region. Throughout our history, joint work and active collaboration among these pillars have allowed us to advance towards effective biodiversity conservation and protection and restoration of the ecosystems that sustain life in our communities.

In 2024, we will witness another key milestone in Union governance: the Regional Conservation Forum, a crucial space for sharing knowledge and formulating the IUCN Work Programme. Representatives of States, government agencies, subnational governments, civil society organisations, Indigenous Peoples' Organisations, academia and the private sector will

meet 16-19 April in Chapultepec Park, Mexico City, to share experiences and jointly analyse solutions to the environmental and sustainable development challenges confronting our region. This meeting will represent an opportunity to not only continue reflecting on the legacy and impact of our actions, but also look to the future with renewed commitment and determination.

Recognising that fully understanding the challenges and opportunities we face requires both meaningful numbers and narratives, in this report we have taken an integrative approach that combines aggregated quantitative data with detailed qualitative information, reflecting our desire to provide a holistic and balanced view of our work and its impacts in the region.

This report is not only a record of our actions and achievements in 2023, but also an invitation to continue collaborating and working together toward a more prosperous and sustainable future for our region. As we grapple with global and local challenges, we reaffirm our commitment to the Union's vision: a just world that values and conserves nature.



Úrsula Parrilla

Regional Director
IUCN Mexico, Central America and
the Caribbean
HUB ORMACC-SUR

© Priscilla Mora / IUCN

United for Nature

A UNIQUE AND **POWERFUL UNION**

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is a union of Members composed of sovereign states, government agencies, and civil society organisations.

The experience, resources and reach of its more than 1,400 Member organisations and the contributions of more than 15,000 experts make IUCN the global authority on the state of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.

In 2023, the Union celebrated 75 years working for a sustainable future for people and nature.



VISION:

A just world that values and conserves nature.



MISSION:

Influence, encourage and assist societies to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically.

1,400+
Members
in **160+** countries



7 Commissions
bringing together **15,000+**
volunteer experts

1,000+
people working in
the Secretariat

75 years
of experience,
vision and impact

“*IUCN is a global union of an incredibly diverse worldwide membership including 1,400 entities from governments, subnational governments, Indigenous peoples’ groups, and civil society, and 15,000 experts from diverse disciplines. All united to defend a conviction that the world is better, more liveable, more wondrous, healthier, and more resilient when nature and humankind thrive together.*”

Mrs. Razan Al Mubarak,
IUCN President

NATURE 2030: THE UNION IN ACTION

Adopted during the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille (2021), the Nature 2030 Programme is IUCN's plan for work towards our vision of a just world that values and conserves nature.

The Programme identifies five priority areas in which IUCN works to achieve tangible, positive impacts:

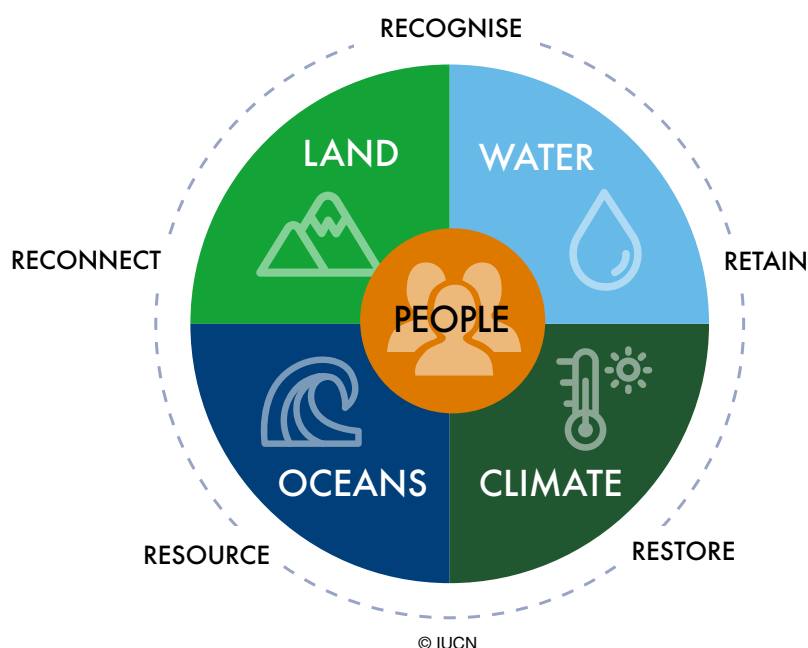
PEOPLE: Healthy biodiversity is sustained in harmony with human well-being, based on principles of equity, equality and justice.

LAND: Intact landscapes are protected, while sustainable use balances the needs of people and nature on productive and urban lands.

WATER: Freshwater systems support and sustain biodiversity and human needs.

OCEANS: A healthy ocean supports nature and people, governed by strengthened national and international legal frameworks and sustainable investments that retain and restore ocean and coastal biodiversity and associated services for future generations.

CLIMATE: Global temperature rise is limited to 1.5°C through ambitious measures to mitigate climate change and enable effective adaptation.



INFORM, INFLUENCE and IMPLEMENT

IUCN applies its experience and knowledge in three spheres of action:



IMPLEMENT:

IUCN applies knowledge, networks and influence worldwide to take concrete action on the ground.



INFORM:

IUCN generates scientific data and information to guide conservation action and policies.



INFLUENCE:

IUCN provides a neutral forum for developing policy recommendations and multi-stakeholder agreements.

IUCN In Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean

A MELTING POT OF BIODIVERSITY AND CULTURES



© Pexels

Mesoamerica and the Caribbean are two of the world's biodiversity hotspots. With less than 2% of the planet's land surface, **the region as a whole is home to between 7% and 12% of the world's biological wealth.**

The Mesoamerican and Caribbean region stands out for its extraordinary richness and diversity, both biological and cultural.

The Mesoamerican Reef System, which extends from southern Mexico to the northern coast of Honduras, is the second largest reef in the world. Due to their geography and climate, the Caribbean islands are one of the areas with greatest endemic biodiversity on the planet.



© Dave Elliot / IUCN

“We find ourselves in an uncertain world facing, among other great challenges, the triple environmental crisis: the Sixth Extinction, global climate change and pollution, mainly from solid waste/plastics. Addressing this situation seeking viable, sustainable, nature-based solutions can only be achieved by joining the efforts of each individual, each organization, region and eventually the entire world. In this respect, the Union’s presence plays a very important role.

The Union serves as the unifying body that is fed from and feeds back to its Member organisations. This is of particular relevance in the Insular Caribbean, a geographical space that shares much of its natural wealth and faces similar, but geopolitically and culturally complex environmental challenges. To a great extent, the Union helps strengthen bridges across these differences to bring us together in defence of our common cause.”



Sixto J. Incháustegui
IUCN Regional Councillor



35%

of Mesoamerica is covered by forest, including dry, subtropical, tropical and cloud forests. **The region contributes 9% of the world's forest cover.**

© Eric Ecker / IUCN

In this highly biodiverse territory, Indigenous populations, Afro-descendant communities and mestizo populations coexist. This blend of cultures, languages, and traditions creates a vibrant social fabric that reflects the history and biodiversity of the region.



© Pexels Jean Paul Montanaro

Emblematic species living in the forests and oceans of this region include the jaguar (*Panthera onca*), quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno*), hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), and West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), among others.



© Patricia Ugaldede / IUCN

IUCN: 75 YEARS OF VISION AND IMPACT

In October 2023, IUCN Members, Commissions and Secretariat celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Union and the 35th anniversary of the Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean.

“Since its creation in 1988, the IUCN Office for Mesoamerica (and later the Caribbean) has played a vital role in providing strategic inspiration, scientific orientation and technical guidance for the development of the conservation movement in the region. The publication of the *Caring for the Earth* strategy in 1991 was a key moment in academic and citizen mobilisation for nature, and inspired laws, initiatives and new protected areas. Some years later, IUCN's leadership and inspiration accelerated adoption and ratification of the *Convention on Biological Diversity* in all countries of the region. Later, IUCN ORMACC drove a more comprehensive vision of conservation and sustainable community development and integrated the dimensions of gender and indigenous peoples in biodiversity conservation efforts.

Across the region, the IUCN Red List enabled the development of national lists of threatened and vulnerable species. IUCN also supported and guided the development of national protected area systems and measurement of the effectiveness of protected area management at the national level. [...]

Going forward, IUCN will continue providing vital support to the region through the promotion of Nature-based Solutions and Ecosystem-based Adaptation. IUCN is playing a crucial role in putting nature and biodiversity at the centre of the fight against planetary climate change.”



Marco Vinicio Cerezo Blandón,
IUCN Regional Councillor



© Evelyn Vargas / IUCN



© Miguel Tábora / IUCN



© Evelyn Vargas / IUCN



© Pablo Anuro López Guíjosa / IUCN



Regional Office - ORMACC

© Pablo Arturo López Guijosa / IUCN



Honduras Office

© Miguel Tábora / IUCN



Guatemala Office

© Evelyn Vargas / IUCN

MEMBERS

In this region,
IUCN has

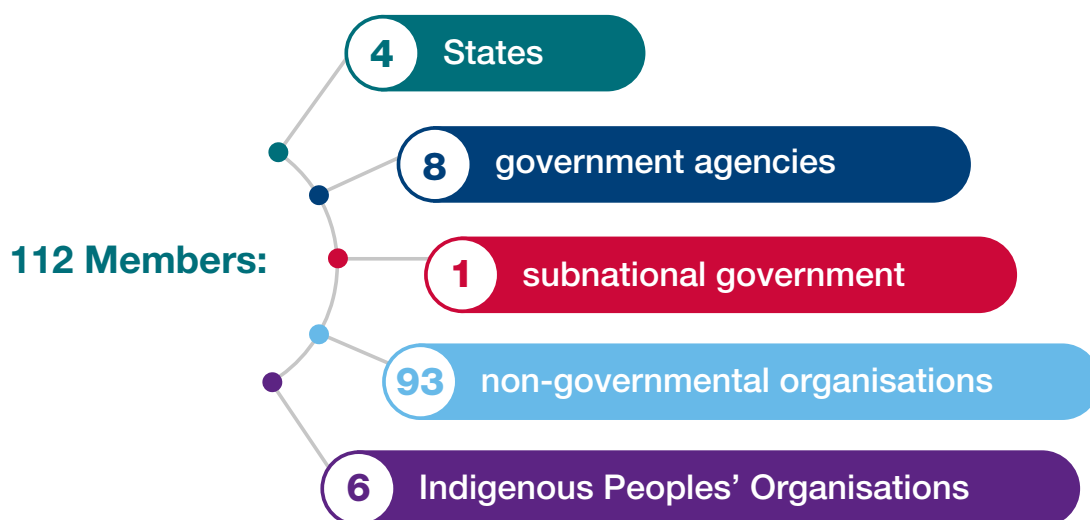
112 Members
distributed over **18** countries

2 Regional Committees

Mesoamerican Regional Committee and
the Caribbean Regional Committee

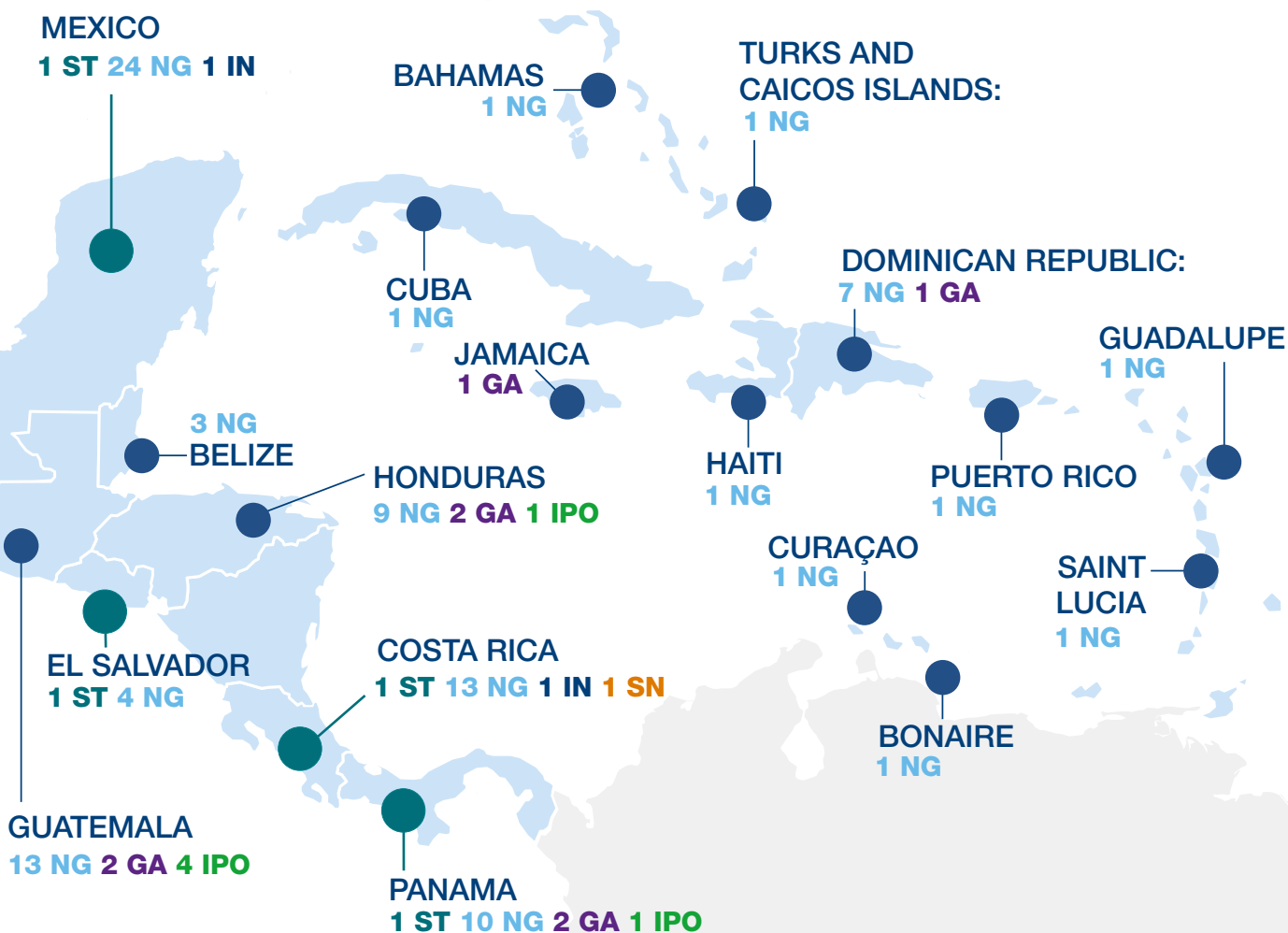
8 National Committees

Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Dominican Republic,
Honduras, Mexico and Panama



Five new Members joined the Union in 2023:

Costa Rica	• ACICAFOC
Guatemala	• Asociación BALAM • Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Hombre y su Entorno, CALMECAC
Mexico	• EARTHGONOMIC MEXICO A.C.
Panama	• Asociación Adopta el Bosque



- ST:** State Member
- NG:** National Non-Governmental Organisation
- IN:** International Non-Governmental Organisation
- GA:** Government Agency
- SN:** Subnational Government
- IPO:** Indigenous Peoples' Organisation

IUCN Members in Mesoamerica and the Caribbean

COUNTRY	INSTITUTION
Bahamas:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bahamas National Trust
Belize:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Protected Areas Management Organizations • Belize Audubon Society • Protected Areas Conservation Trust
Bonaire:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
Costa Rica:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACICAFOC • Asociación Centro Científico Tropical • Asociación Conservacionista de Monteverde • Asociación Conservacionista Misión Tiburón • Asociación Costa Rica por Siempre • Asociación de Organizaciones del Corredor Biológico Talamanca Caribe • Asociación Mesoamericana para la Biología y la Conservación • Asociación Terra Nostra • Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE) • Centro de Rescate de Especies Marinas Amenazadas (CREMA) • Corporación Educativa para el Desarrollo Costarricense (CEDECO) • Fundación MarViva • MIGRAMAR • Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía de Costa Rica • Oficina de Protección del Ambiente de la Municipalidad de Curridabat • Preserve Planet
Cuba:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundación Antonio Núñez Jiménez de la Naturaleza y el Hombre
Curaçao:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARMABI
Dominican Republic:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centro para la Conservación y Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno • Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano • Fundación para el Mejoramiento humano – PROGRESSIO • Fundación Plenitud • Fundación Sur Futuro, Inc. • Grupo Jaragua • Instituto de Derecho Ambiental de la República Dominicana (IDARD) • Ministerio del Ambiente y Recursos Naturales de República Dominicana

COUNTRY	INSTITUTION
El Salvador:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asociación salvadoreña Pro-salud Rural • Fondo de la Iniciativa para las Américas- FIAES • FUNSALPRODESE • Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales de El Salvador • Unidad Ecológica Salvadoreña
Guadalupe:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOS Faune Sauvage
Guatemala:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alianza de Derecho Ambiental y Agua • Asociación Amigos del Bosque • Asociación Balam ONG • Asociación de Desarrollo Productivo y de Servicios Tikonel, TIKONEL • Asociación de Reservas Naturales Privadas de Guatemala • Asociación para la Protección de los Recursos Naturales Renovables • Asociación Rescate y Conservación de Vida Silvestre • Asociación Sotz'il • Fondo para el Sistema Arrecifal Mesoamericano-MARFUND • Fundación Defensores de la Naturaleza • Fundación Laguna Lachuá • FUNDAECO-Fundación para el Ecodesarrollo y la Conservación • Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Hombre y su Entorno, CALMECAC • Fundación para los Recursos Naturales y Ambiente en Guatemala • Fundación Patrimonio Cultural y Natural Maya-PACUNAM • Fundación Solar • Instituto Nacional de Bosques (INAB) • Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales de Guatemala
Haiti:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine
Honduras:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencia para el Desarrollo de la Mosquitia • Asociación Ecológica de San Marcos de Ocotepeque • Asociación para el Manejo Integrado de Cuencas de La Paz y Comayagua (ASOMAINCUPACO) • Colegio de Profesionales Forestales de Honduras • Comité para la Defensa y Desarrollo de la Flora y Fauna del Golfo de Fonseca • Fundación Hondureña de Ambiente y Desarrollo VIDA • Fundación para el Desarrollo Empresarial Rural (FUNDER) • Mancomunidad de Municipios del Parque Nacional Montaña de Celaque-MAPANCE • Proyecto Aldea Global • Red de Manejo del Bosque Latifoliado de Honduras (REMBLAH) • Secretaría de Energía, Recursos Naturales, Ambiente y Minas de Honduras • Universidad de Ciencias Forestales
Jamaica:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Environment & Planning Agency
Mexico:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALTERNARE A.C. • Biofutura A.C.

COUNTRY	INSTITUTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centro Intercultural de Estudios de Desiertos y Océanos A.C. (CEDO) • Centro Mexicano de Derecho Ambiental • Cooperativa AMBIO SC de RL • EARTHGONOMIC MÉXICO A.C. • Ecopil Arte Crea Conciencia A.C. • Faunam A.C. • Fondo de Conservación el Triunfo A.C. • Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, A.C. • Fondo para la Biodiversidad CONABIO • Fondo para la Comunicación y la Educación Ambiental A.C. • Fondo Pro-Cuenca Valle de Bravo A.C. • Forest Stewardship Council A.C. • Grupo Autónomo para la Investigación Ambiental (GAIA) • Herpetario de la Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México • Hombre Naturaleza, A.C. • Instituto de Derecho Ambiental, A.C. • Instituto de Medio Ambiente y Comunidades Humanas de la Universidad de Guadalajara • Instituto para el Desarrollo Sustentable en Mesoamérica, A.C. • Pronatura A.C. • Pronatura Noreste A.C. • Pronatura Península de Yucatán A.C. • Pronatura Sur A.C. • Reforestamos México A.C. • Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales de México
Panama:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asociación Adopta el Bosque Panamá • Asociación Centro de Estudios y Acción Social Panameño • Asociación Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza • Centro de Incidencia Ambiental • Dirección de Gestión Ambiental de la Alcaldía de Panamá • Fundación Amador –BIOMUSEO • Fundación para la Conservación de los Recursos Naturales • Fundación para la Promoción del Conocimiento Indígena • Fundación para la Protección del Mar • Fundación Parque Nacional Chagres • Ministerio de Ambiente de Panamá • Parque Natural Metropolitano • Sociedad Audubon de Panamá
Puerto Rico:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para la Naturaleza
Saint Lucia:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saint Lucia National Trust
Turks and Caicos Islands:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turks and Caicos Reef Fund

COMMISSIONS

The seven IUCN Commissions in the region are comprised of **648 experts** in all, providing knowledge and guidance for the Programme's implementation.

The IUCN Commissions and their objectives



World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA):

Develop policy, advising and guidelines based on knowledge about the full range of issues concerning protected areas.

Number of experts: 143



Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM):

Promote ecosystem-based approaches to the management of landscapes and seascapes.

Number of experts: 84



Commission on Education and Communication (CEC):

Drive change through communication, learning and knowledge.

Number of experts: 80



World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL):

Promote environmental law to strengthen the legal foundations of nature conservation and sustainable development.

Number of experts: 33



Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEEPS):

Harmonize nature conservation and the critical social, cultural, environmental, and economic justice concerns of human societies.

Number of experts: 55



Species Survival Commission (SSC):

Influence, encourage, and help societies conserve biodiversity by creating knowledge about the status and threats to species.

Number of experts: 330



IUCN Climate Crisis Commission: (CCC):

Promote appropriate, effective, just and nature-positive solutions to the climate crisis based on the best available scientific evidence from all reputable international bodies and from indigenous knowledge systems.

SECRETARIAT



In this region, IUCN has a Regional Office, located in San José, Costa Rica, and three country offices in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. The last of these was formalized in 2023, strengthening the Union's presence in the country and region.



The Regional Office for Mexico,
Central America and the Caribbean is
staffed by **135 personas**
in total,

 **73 women**  **62 men**

representing growth of
↑ 17%
since 2022.

© Pablo Arturo López Guijosa / IUCN

“Wildlife and biodiversity are extremely important to this ministry, which is why we are very pleased to have IUCN here. We will continue to work with IUCN on projects already underway, through various implementers, to ensure we take care of wildlife.”

Mr. Fernando Andrés López, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador

IMPLEMENTING ONE PROGRAMME IN THE REGION



© Pablo Arturo López Guijosa / IUCN

IUCN offices have been instrumental in strengthening and empowering a growing number of Member Organisations through training, accompaniment, joint project development, the provision of tools, one-off technical assistance, information systems, data and publications. Today more than ever, thanks to being part of the great IUCN family, Member countries and organisations can take up global issues and priorities drawing them to their territory, but can also have a decisive impact on global issues using the forum the Union provides us. Thanks to this two-way, global-regional-local relationship enabled by IUCN, gender equity, respect for human rights, inclusive environmental governance, participation of young people, Indigenous Peoples, intergenerational learning and exchange, and in general an innovative valuation and conservation of nature and society have become widespread in the region.

[...]

In this convulsive world so prone to polarization, IUCN is a haven of collaboration where the premise that "strength in unity is greater than the strength of its parts" is real. Together, the members of the Commissions, the staff of the Secretariat and all IUCN Member countries and organisations can magnify our impact and continue fighting to be more effective in safeguarding functional ecosystems, providers of multiple environmental services that will permit the survival of our species and those with whom we share the planet, and the planet itself.



Ramón Pérez Gil Salcido,
IUCN Regional Councillor

Under the “One Programme” approach, the three pillars of the Union (Members, Commissions and Secretariat) work together to identify and implement solutions to the region's greatest environmental challenges.

The combined experience and expertise of its constituents make IUCN a trusted incubator and repository of best conservation practices and tools in the region.

In 2023, 28 Members participated in the design and/or implementation of the 24 projects in the IUCN Regional Office's portfolio for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, representing 60% of all implementing partners in project execution in the region.

In addition, IUCN ORMACC and regional IUCN Commissions established partnerships in the frame of 24 initiatives.

Leaders, experts and professionals define innovative strategies and solutions for the main challenges facing our society

Over the course of four days, the IUCN Mexican Forum "Roots of Territorial Sustainability of the Peoples of Mexico," held in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico, brought together leaders, experts, professionals and individuals committed to the advancement of sustainable practices in Mexican territory. The leaders were immersed in deep discussions and collective reflections, outlining innovative strategies and solutions to the main challenges facing our society in cultural, social, political, economic and environmental issues. Forum activities included workshops, two discussions about communication as a tool for connecting with nature and territorial conservation, and a nature walk to encourage reflection and share knowledge. The event also provided a space for four IUCN Commissions to meet and discuss lessons learnt. The Commissions participating included the Commission on Education and Communication; the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy; the World Commission on Protected Areas; and the Species Survival Commission.



© CEDO

IUCN Members in the region contribute to formulating the regional action plan on environmental human rights defenders in Latin America and the Caribbean

Responding to the call of the Secretariat of the Escazú Agreement and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters, the Regional Members Committees of Mesoamerica, the Caribbean and South America and the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) with the support of the ORMACC Regional Office carried out a consultation process to incorporate membership input in the design of the "Regional Plan of Action on Human Rights Defenders in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean," an instrument that will

be submitted for approval at the third Conference of the Parties to the Escazú Agreement in April 2024.

Members participating in the consultation process stressed the need to make gender and intergenerational perspective more explicit in the plan and to incorporate intercultural perspective in its strategic lines, with concrete actions addressing the specific conditions of Indigenous Peoples, who contribute strongly and actively to the defence of nature.



© Melinka Najera / IUCN

“From the perspective of IUCN Member organisations in the region, we see implementation of the Escazú Agreement and formulation of this action plan as vital tools to address the regrettable situations faced by people who defend their territories and nature from different arenas. As IUCN community, we commit to making proposals and contributing to the environmental civic space.”

Ernesto Herrera, Chair of the Mesoamerican Members Committee

IUCN commissions provide knowledge and strategic advising to drive conservation and sustainable development in the region.

The Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), and the Regional Offices for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean (ORMACC) and Sur, socialised the IUCN Global Ecosystem Typology in a [webinar aimed at Member organisations](#). The typology, published by IUCN and the journal Nature, constitutes the first comprehensive frame of reference for classification and mapping of the Earth's ecosystems integrating their functional and compositional characteristics. It is therefore a vitally important tool to achieve and monitor targets defined in the Global Biodiversity Framework and support national, regional and global efforts to assess and manage risks to ecosystems.

“The typology is one of those products demonstrating how different professionals and researchers in the regions have a space, a platform, like this Commission is, to have an impact at global level. This is one of the great value adds of the Commissions.”

Dr. Bernal Herrera, Vice-Chair for Latin America and the Caribbean, CEM

IUCN ORMACC and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) developed the [Guide for the Identification and Evaluation of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures \(OECMs\)](#) in Central America. This document provides government and civil society actors involved in biodiversity conservation, management, and restoration actions in Central America with a tool to identify, evaluate and monitor areas that, while not protected areas, enable effective biodiversity conservation in situ.

“Given the need to move forward aggressively on implementing the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, particularly Target 3, the World Commission on Protected Areas in partnership with the Secretariat has developed different global processes for accompaniment and capacity-building in this area. There are many guides and guidelines, and we need to find a common ground of understanding and concepts to collectively advance toward this world-wide goal, recognising local, regional and global differences and contexts.

Learning is continuous, there are many things to understand, and it is through mutual learning that we can decisively reach Target 3 of the new Global Biodiversity Framework.”

Andrew Rhodes, Deputy Chair WCPA



IMPLEMENT

A PORTFOLIO FOR ONE PROGRAMME

At year-end 2023, the Regional Office for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean executes a portfolio of:

24 | 11 regional
projects | 13 national

Total portfolio budget
US\$ 138 million

IUCN ORMACC Portfolio in 2023:

Regional Projects



- Biodiversity and Protected Area Management II - BIOPAMA II (Bahamas, Saint Lucia, Jamaica, Barbados, Belize and the Dominican Republic)
- Closing the Caribbean Plastic Tap (Eastern Caribbean)
- GBMF-IUCN Association for the Green List
- Linking the Central American Landscape (Central America and the Dominican Republic)
- Plastic Waste Free Islands – PWFI (Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and Saint Lucia)
- Protection of Selva Maya natural and cultural resources II (Belize, Guatemala and Mexico)
- Regional Coastal Biodiversity Programme (Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras)
- Regional Coordination, Knowledge Sharing and Support Project for the Critical Forest Biome of Mesoamerica (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama)
- Realising the Urban Opportunity
- Scaling Up Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Measures in Rural Latin America – EbA LAC (Guatemala, Costa Rica and Ecuador)
- VOICES: Advancing towards effective conservation and territorial management with a rights-based approach: strengthening regional Indigenous cooperation in Latin America (Honduras, Ecuador and Peru)



© Ahmid Daccarett / IUCN

National Projects



Costa Rica

- Integrating biodiversity in the Nespresso Strategy

Guatemala

- Advancing Gender in the Environment (AGENT)
- Building livelihood resilience to climate change in the upper basins of Guatemala's highlands
- Water Security Programme for the Guatemala City Metropolitan Region (PROSEHIGUA)
- Transition to sustainable agriculture

Honduras

- Conserving Coastal Ecosystems (CEC)
- CONECTA+
- Promoting rights and reducing disaster risks in indigenous territories
- Promoting respect for and exercise of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendants in the face of extractive industries and other initiatives in Central America

Mexico

- Sustainable Financing for New Natural Protected Areas (FINANP)
- Territorial Planning and Financial Innovation to build Mexico's resilience to climate change (SAbERES)

Saint Kitts and Nevis

- Improving Environmental Management through Sustainable Land Management in Saint Kitts and Nevis

Santa Lucía

- Strengthening Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) policies and institutional frameworks through Demonstrable Models in Saint Lucía.



© Martín Calix / IUCN

With the support of:



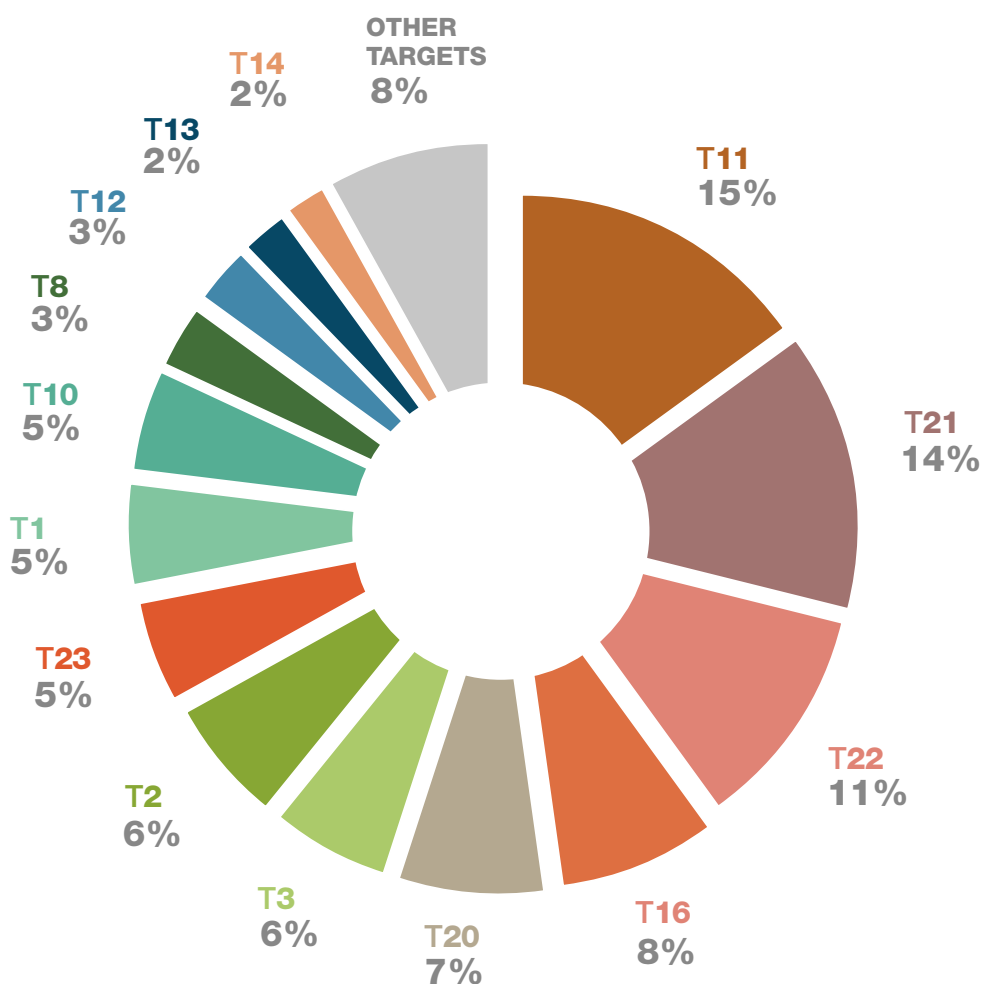
IKEA Foundation



Contributing to the new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

The strategic interventions of the IUCN ORMACC project portfolio in 2023 directly contributed to the targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, mainly Target 11 (Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions, including ecosystem functions and services, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches); Target 21 (Ensure that decision-makers, practitioners and the

public have access to the best data, information and knowledge available to guide effective and equitable governance and integrated and participatory management of biodiversity); and Target 22 (Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities).



The [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) sets out an ambitious agenda towards a world that lives in harmony with nature. It was adopted at the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on 19 December 2022. It contains four global goals for 2050 and 23 targets for 2030..



© Eric Ecker / IUCN



NATURE 2030 PROGRAMME IN ACTION





PEOPLE

During 2023, the actions and results of this programme area can be grouped around four key areas: (i) strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises to promote sustainable productive practices; (ii) strengthening governance structures of indigenous peoples, women, Afro-descendants and local communities; (iii) capacity-building at the individual level in different areas related to the Nature 2030 Programme; and (iv) channelling grants to small and medium-sized organisations for the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NBS).

102 enterprises, 56 small and medium-sized organisations, and 62 governance structures of indigenous peoples, women, Afro-descendants and local communities strengthened.

+ US\$ 10,000,000
channelled directly

+ 25,000
people benefited



45%



55%



More sustainable production practices for small and medium-sized enterprises

Over the course of 2023, IUCN ORMACC contributed to the strengthening of 92 enterprises and the creation of 10 new enterprises to carry out sustainable productive practices in the region, particularly in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. Some of the key vehicles were technical training in agroforestry and agricultural practices, financial management tools, disseminating innovative environmental approaches, and prioritizing restoration areas using ROAM methodology, among others.

In total, more than US\$ 5 million in seed capital was provided for 47 small and medium-sized enterprises, benefiting more than 13,000 people and maintaining significant gender equality (48% women and 52% men).

Solid governance structures to advance the rights of indigenous peoples, women, the Afro-descendent population, and local communities in conservation

During 2023, IUCN ORMACC contributed to the creation and strengthening of 62 spaces for citizen participation and advocacy in all of the Central American countries and Mexico to improve the governance structures of indigenous peoples, women, Afro-descendants and local communities.

These spaces included steering committees, micro basin committees, co-management committees for protected areas, inter-institutional technical groups at local level, women's networks, youth alliances, producer associations and indigenous federations, among others. These spaces led to the increased participation of young people, indigenous peoples and women in decision-making bodies at the local and national level; more effective territorial governance; formalization and registration of local water resource management groups and protected area co-management committees; and the implementation of regulatory mechanisms for access to and use of natural resources by indigenous peoples.





© Derek Galon / IUCN

Installed capacities in different areas of the Nature 2030 Programme

The acquisition of new knowledge and skills, along with their practical application, is a key element in IUCN ORMACC's work approach to promote tangible changes in people's capacities to address environmental challenges and actively contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

During 2023, the training actions of the IUCN project portfolio in the region benefited three thousand people, 48% women. Under the modalities of workshops, training, and academic coursework, capacities were boosted in conservation and protected area management, monitoring of urban biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, sustainable tourism, micro basin management, project management, leadership, financial sustainability, gender and diversity, and other areas relevant to the agendas of local actors and project partners.

Nature-based Solutions to address the water shortage in Guatemala's metropolitan region

In the frame of the Water Security Programme (PROSEHIGUA, for its name in Spanish), technical staff from 12 municipalities in the Guatemala City metropolitan area and its areas of influence and representatives of national institutions involved in decision-making about water supply received certification in integrated water resource management with an emphasis on groundwater management.

The design of the academic programme, implemented by Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, was based on the IUCN Water and Nature Initiative (IUCN WANI) and the IUCN guide, "Managing Water Sustainably."

To address the Guatemala metropolitan region's water deficit, the capacity-building process focused on water governance and conflict resolution, the hydrological cycle, aquifer systems, catchment, groundwater movement, and the water balance of aquifer systems in the country. Additional topics related to solving water and sanitation crises, geographic information systems, surface water and artificial recharge.

"This course puts us, as professionals, on the alert about the importance of groundwater resources and wells and their management, while facilitating tools to alert people in communities about management of the water table, which is being depleted."

Carol García, laboratory technician, Autoridad para el Manejo Sustentable de la Cuenca y del Lago Amatitlán (AMSA)



Catalysing the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) through grant mechanisms

IUCN promotes climate action, landscape restoration, conservation of marine coastal areas and community economic strengthening through grant mechanisms that operate with different specific objectives, such as boosting community participation in ecosystem-based adaptation; improving coastal ecosystem management to protect biodiversity and build the resilience of indigenous and local communities; promoting bio trade and conservation in marine coastal communities; and building the capacities of indigenous and social organisations in biodiversity conservation and territorial governance, among other areas.

In 2023, IUCN contributed to NbS implementation by channelling grants to 56 organisations (44 small and

12 medium-sized). A total of US\$ 5,685,657.31 was placed through these mechanisms, directly benefiting more than 9,000 people, of which 40% are women.

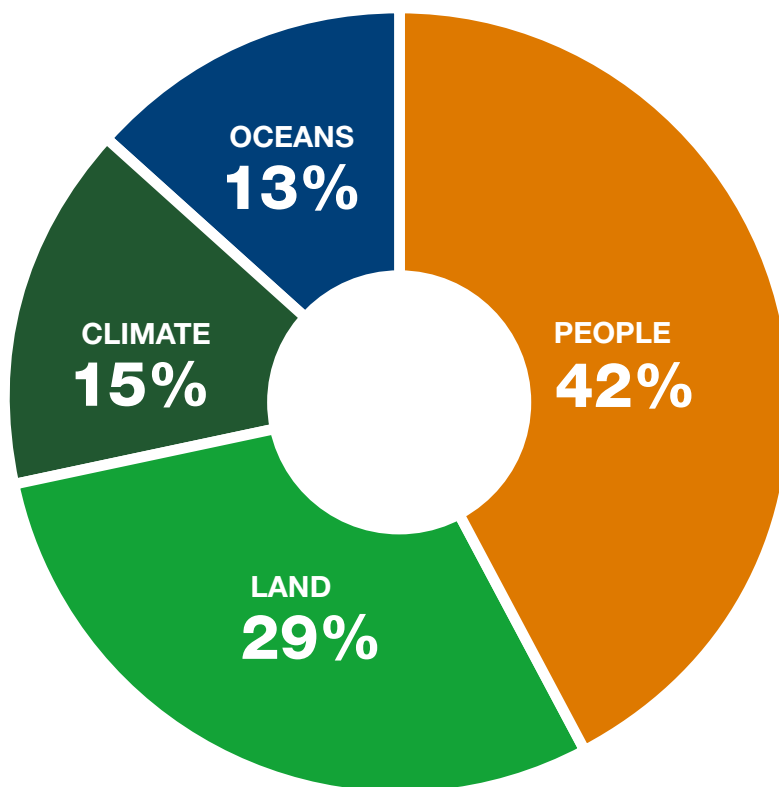
The organisations selected exemplify the rich social and organizational fabric of our region. Local projects in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, the Bahamas, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic promote best practices in land use, improving water recharge and production, sustainably managing marine coastal resources, and increasing the resilience of communities and their livelihoods to climate change.



© ASPROC



Contribution of grants to the Nature 2030 Programme



► **BIOPAMA:**

US\$ 2,887,455.22



Bahamas, Saint Lucia, Jamaica, Barbados, Belize and the Dominican Republic

► **CONSERVING COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS:**

US\$ 761,185.52



Honduras

► **RESILIENT HIGHLANDS:**

US\$ 4,796,766.38



Guatemala

► **REGIONAL COASTAL BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMME:**

US\$ 1,831,498.33



El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras



Resilience and adaptation with community participation in the Guatemalan highlands

Through the Resilient Highlands project, IUCN has given 27 grants to local first- and second-tier organisations to implement landscape restoration practices, ecosystem-based adaptation strategies and nature-based solutions, for a total amount of more than US\$ 4.8 million to date.

The project's grant mechanism focuses mainly on climate actions implemented by communities in priority areas of Guatemala's western highlands, to strengthen and increase community participation in ecosystem-based adaptation with a focus on the effective participation of women, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable sectors.

SUCCESS STORY

Mayan young people promote Nature-based Solutions for sustainable agriculture in the Guatemalan Highlands

The lack of employment and effects on agriculture from changes in climate conditions are factors causing young people to migrate away from San Juan Comalapa, a municipality populated by Mayans in the Chimaltenango department. Asociación de Productores Comalapenses (ASPROC) works to find income-generating opportunities for youth to help avoid migration.

ASPROC was one of the community-based organisations the Resilient Highlands project selected to implement a small grant focused on education and training activities for Indigenous youth, as well as agricultural activities to generate income.

In November 2021, activities began for agricultural production and use of organic fertilizers based on ancestral knowledge. These included collecting

microorganisms and native plants in local forests, such as *quequestle*, *campanilla*, *higuerillo*, *quilete*, horsetail, nopal, rue, corn, *chichicaste* and *flor de muerto*. A local training programme was also created, guided by expert adult farmers in the community, in the application of bio inputs to control fungi, bacteria, insects and nematodes. By the second year of operation, the group of trainees had completely mastered agronomic crop management and the use of bio inputs, and began marketing their products.

As a result, these young people were able to recover ancestral practices, and combined with technological knowledge such as the use of greenhouses, this led to improved crop production during both rainy and dry seasons. They could better adapt to climate change, since production conditions (temperature, humidity, pests) are better managed in greenhouses.



© ASPROC



© ASPROC

So far, 2,222 square meters of greenhouse have been set up for agricultural production, along with a forest nursery and a plot with native plants. By providing a source of employment and income, the project has also kept young people from migrating away from their community.

“With the economic resources obtained, young people cover their own schooling costs. Two were able to continue their primary education, six are in high school, fifteen are at upper secondary school levels and seven are now doing university studies. They also provide daily food for their family and generate work to avoid migration and family disintegration.”

Cristian Giovany Caná Simón, field technician and youth member of ASPROC



Improving protected area management and governance in the Caribbean

In the Bahamas, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, the Biodiversity and Protected Area Management Programme (BIOPAMA) has supported local community initiatives to improve the livelihoods of local people and contribute effectively to protected area management in the Caribbean. To date, BIOPAMA has awarded 27 grants to grassroots

and second-tier organisations for more than US\$2.7 million in total.

The objective of the BIOPAMA grant facility is to improve management and governance of priority areas by addressing constraints related to infrastructure, equipment, staff capacities, legal framework and other factors.

“BIOPAMA grants have been crucial for the Haiti Ocean Project (HOP), fostering collaboration and strengthening relationships with local partners and communities. Despite significant external challenges (a major earthquake, COVID-19, and political unrest), the grant mechanism was flexible and adaptable, demonstrating an understanding of the local context and providing extensions when necessary. The BIOPAMA regional team’s strong support and constant communication played a critical role in adaptation to these unexpected circumstances.

The grants facilitated broader access to the community and allowed work to continue through different projects, including an initiative for comprehensive coral restoration that arose from a holistic assessment using the Management Effectiveness Monitoring Tool (METT). In addition, the grants allowed HOP to reach all coastal communities in the marine protected area, forging new partnerships with donors for ongoing conservation efforts. Despite the challenges, HOP remained committed to community resilience and recovery, fostering greater awareness and active participation among local community members. HOP is favourably positioned for future funding opportunities thanks to the credibility gained through BIOPAMA.”

Jamie Aquino, President/Founder of the Haiti Ocean Project



© Dave Elliot / IUCN



Improving the livelihoods of coastal communities in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras

In marine coastal communities of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, through the Regional Coastal Biodiversity Project, IUCN has provided small grants for 25 community

groups to implement activities promoting bio trade and landscape restoration as a sustainable conservation and income-generating tool to boost livelihoods.

SUCCESS STORY

Miskitu women venture into the fishing sector to bring prosperity to remote communities in the Honduran Moskitia

Asociación de Pescadores de Medusa y Escama de Caratasca (APMEC), a group 49% comprised of indigenous women, stands out for its commitment to good fishing practices, the transparency of its management and its positive impact on local communities. This bio trade enterprise is supported by the Coastal Biodiversity Programme led by IUCN and funded by USAID.

Currently, APMEC buys local product and markets fresh and dried and salted fish, ice and "charamuscas" (a type of ice cream or sorbet), generating eight jobs and monthly income of nearly \$1,000 in gross sales of fresh fish and other products.

APMEC has been able to leverage support from the Small Grants Programme of USAID's Regional Coastal Biodiversity Project and the MiPesca project of Goal, using the US\$ 93,872.66 of seed capital it received as a revolving fund.

Strengthening Honduran coastal ecosystems and communities

To improve coastal ecosystems management to protect biodiversity, promote climate change adaptation and mitigation, generate economic opportunities and boost the resilience of indigenous peoples (Garifuna and Pech) and local communities in Honduras, through the Conserving Coastal Ecosystems (CCE) project IUCN provided 13 grants to four grassroots organisations and nine second-tier organisations, for a total amount of US\$ 626,185.52, directly benefiting more than two thousand people.



© IUCN



LAND

The actions and results of the Land Programme Area in 2023 can be grouped in four key areas: (i) development or updating of tools for the management, planning and evaluation of protected areas and OECMs; (ii) strengthening of technical and financial capacities in terrestrial protected areas and OECMs; (iii) boosting capacity in processes to restore or rehabilitate terrestrial ecosystems; and (iv) restoration actions in prioritized terrestrial ecosystems and landscapes.

27 updated or new tools
for the management, planning or evaluation of
protected areas or OECMs.

+ 7,000 hectares
in the process of restoration or included
in forest incentive programmes

+ US\$ 2 million
channelled to boost capacities in the
management of 32 protected areas
in the region

+ 9,000 people benefited
through capacity-building in processes
to rehabilitate and restore terrestrial
ecosystems



Strengthening management of protected areas and OECMs in the region

In 2023, IUCN contributed to the development or updating of 27 tools for the management, planning and/or evaluation of protected area or OECM management effectiveness, such as METT assessments (Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool), with community participation in Antigua and Barbuda and Trinidad and Tobago; the inclusion of climate change adaptation measures in national park management plans in El Salvador; and the recognition of territorial OECMs in Honduras and El Salvador, among others. Use of these tools will benefit an estimated 1,587,432 hectares, 78% pertaining to protected areas and 12% to OECMs.

Implementing actions for the protection, conservation and governance of protected areas

IUCN strengthened the management capacities of 30 protected areas and two OECMs, mainly through the development of management effectiveness assessments, the application of compensation mechanisms for ecosystem services, the implementation of strategies for financial sustainability, the provision of technological equipment; and the promotion of participatory biodiversity monitoring activities, mobilising more than US\$ 2 million for this purpose.

Applying the Restoration Barometer in the region

With the implementation of the Restoration Barometer, IUCN and its local partners have identified more than six million hectares restored in El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Mexico. These results were presented at a high-level panel in the frame of the Joint Annual Meeting of the 20x20 Initiative, the Bonn Challenge and AFOLU2040 on Restoring Degraded Lands in Latin America.



© Pablo Arturo López Guijosa / IUCN



Technology and innovation at the service of protected and conserved areas: improving biological monitoring capacities in Central America and the Dominican Republic

Monitoring biological and ecological aspects in protected areas is essential to assess both the state of ecosystems and their biodiversity and the effectiveness of protected area management. Biological monitoring makes it possible to establish whether the conservation of an area's natural assets is successful and supports timely management and conservation decision-making, implementing actions for adaptive management of protected areas.

Through the Biodiversity Programme "Linking the Central American Landscape," IUCN has promoted

the adoption of technological tools for biological monitoring, such as camera traps, drones and SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) in protected areas of Central America and the Dominican Republic.

The use of these tools will allow park rangers to organize, systematize and analyse information collected in the field, as well as establish indices on population, distribution and wildlife richness in protected areas and surrounding areas.

Knowing SMART is essential, as it makes for more efficient collection, analysis and reporting of data that informs understanding of how management effectiveness in a protected area has a positive impact on biodiversity.

Cecilia Guerrero, Project Coordinator, TIDE Belize



© Pablo Arturo López Guijosa / IUCN



© Pablo Arturo Lopez Guijosa / IUCN

Reduction of soil erosion and recovery of forest cover through landscape restoration actions in Central America and the Caribbean

In Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and the Caribbean, IUCN and its strategic partners contributed to the restoration and rehabilitation of 7,900 hectares. Direct restoration actions were applied to 35% of this area, while the remaining 65% was incorporated in forestry incentive programmes for an annual amount of US\$ 338,561.

These results represent substantial improvements in the recovery of forest cover and diversity, boosting forest integrity and expanding the provision of ecosystem goods and services by reducing soil erosion and enhancing infiltration. Actions also contributed to the conservation of critical recharge areas for water for human consumption, as well as improving the food security of local communities, among other positive impacts.

Training and equitable participation in terrestrial ecosystem restoration processes

During 2023, IUCN ORMACC promoted capacity-building to rehabilitate and restore terrestrial ecosystems, benefiting more than nine thousand people, with equal participation between genders (51% men, 49% women).

A total of 9,330 people participated in training or awareness-raising processes and 535 people received technical inputs, such as trees to implement agroforestry systems with native and fruit species, inputs for agroforestry nurseries and work tools and laboratory tests, among others. One of the most significant achievements was improved food and nutritional security for 174 families in the western highlands of Guatemala through agroforestry arrangements and intersectoral dialogue to achieve restoration objectives at the landscape scale.



WATER

The actions and results of the Water programme area during 2023 fall in four key areas: (i) investments in landscape and watershed restoration to promote water security; (ii) the creation and promotion of water governance mechanisms; (iii) restoration of prioritized landscapes for water capture and groundwater protection; and (iv) the development of science-based tools for watershed restoration and groundwater protection.

+ 900 hectares
undergoing
restoration

for water capture
and groundwater
protection

4 scientific tools
developed for watershed
restoration



Boosting municipal water security and access to drinking water for vulnerable populations in Guatemala

In Guatemala, IUCN accompanied the formulation of a strategy for water security in municipalities of the Mancomunidad Gran Ciudad del Sur (MGCS) and Chimaltenango, for sustainable use of the Guatemala City Valley aquifer.

This included institutional capacity-building in water resource management; updating the legal, regulatory and tariff framework for water resources; generating tools for municipal and aquifer management and clean-up of the MCGS; and a detailed study of the water resources available to supply the population with drinking water.

“Guatemala’s metropolitan area now has a strategy for water security, to be addressed and discussed, technically and politically. For this, local governments must ensure that the issue is addressed at both the level of the Congress of the Republic, and the level of the central government and industrial sector.”

Julio Marroquín, Mayor of Villacanales and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Mancomunidad Gran Ciudad del Sur.



© IUCN



Tools for watershed restoration created and implemented in urban and rural areas of Guatemala

In 2023, IUCN contributed to the development of four science-based tools for watershed restoration and groundwater protection: 1) Qualitative and quantitative analysis of groundwater in the Guatemala City Metropolitan Region; 2) Georeferencing of wells and coverage areas, analysis of water supply and financial sustainability in the municipality of Villa Canales, Guatemala; 3) Analysis of the sustainability of water resources and guide for collecting information on municipal wells and properties in the municipality of San Miguel Petapa, Guatemala; and 4) Application of InVEST for the valuation of ecosystem services (water infiltration and erosion reduction) in the Guatemalan highlands.

The use and application of these tools by government institutions, municipalities, and communities has aided in prioritizing geographic areas to promote the implementation of agroforestry systems, identification of agroforestry arrangements, the creation of georeferenced databases on mechanical wells, and hydrogeologic mapping of aquifers, among other results.





Strengthening community water governance mechanisms from a perspective of gender and indigenous peoples

Capacity-building was promoted for micro basin entities and water administration boards operating at the community level, the implementation of conflict mediation and prevention strategies, and development of a water management model focusing on the role of women in indigenous and local communities in Guatemala and Honduras.

© Martin Calix / IUCN



CLIMATE

Actions and results of the Climate programme area in 2023 can be grouped in two key areas: (i) development and updating of tools for adaptation to climate change, and (ii) dissemination of climate information for climate adaptation and resilience.

+ 8,000 people
have access to information
and tools for adaptation to
climate change

+ US\$ 700,000
of investments for early
warning system in
Guatemala



Communities reducing and mitigating risks associated with climate events

In the frame of the project, "Promotion of Rights and Disaster Risk Reduction in Indigenous Territories," two indigenous emergency committees were organized in participatory form in Barauda and Rayaka, Honduras, as territorial emergency prevention and response structures, for the participatory formulation of two territorial emergency plans. These plans aim to prevent and deal with emergencies involving collective risk at the local level, employing an ancestral approach and indigenous worldview. With the plans, local capacities to reduce and mitigate risks of adverse climate events and protect people's lives and livelihoods will be strengthened.



Strengthening information mechanisms and tools for climate adaptation and resilience

In 2023, IUCN contributed to generating, strengthening and disseminating tools for adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change, including the Early Warning System (EWS) and the Territory and Climate Observatory in the western highlands of Guatemala, benefiting more than 8,000 people.

The EWS has generated 22 agrometeorological bulletins, translated into the Mam, Kaqchikel and Kiche' languages, focussing on the main crops grown in the Guatemalan highlands for decision-making in community plots. As part of the EWS, 20 meteorological stations were also delivered to Instituto Nacional de Sismología, Vulcanología, Meteorología e Hidrología (INSIVUMEH), with an investment of about US\$ 700,000.

The weather stations, distributed in seven of Guatemala's 22 departments, will enable the automated generation and transmission of accurate and timely data for weather forecasting. In turn, populations in the western highlands will be able to receive accurate, timely and reliable information about any change in atmospheric conditions and make decisions to mitigate negative effects, such as the loss or decreased yield of agricultural production in this area of the country.



“For INSIVUMEH, strengthening the network of weather stations is vital, since these are tools that generate valuable information for different sectors of the country. Also, proper use of information generated by the weather stations can potentially create capacities for resilience to climate change effects in highland communities, not just in the project’s area of influence but at national, regional and global level.”

Edwin Aroldo Rojas, Director General of INSIVUMEH



OCEANS

The actions and results of the Oceans programme area during 2023 can be classified in three key categories: (i) strengthening of technical and financial capacities in marine coastal areas; (ii) development and updating of management, planning and/or evaluation tools for marine coastal areas; and (iii) rehabilitation of marine coastal ecosystems.

+ 110,000 hectares
included in fishing ban programmes

+ 2,000 hectares
of mangrove ecosystems in the process of restoration

6 marine coastal protected areas
strengthened with management, monitoring and evaluation tools



Restoring mangrove ecosystems through training and technical inputs

Capacity-building efforts for the rehabilitation and restoration of marine coastal ecosystems benefited 504 people, the majority of participants being women (57%). IUCN contributed directly to the restoration of more than 2,000 hectares of mangrove ecosystems, along with the inclusion of 111,283 hectares in fishery ban programmes in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. One notable impact is an increase in species diversity as reflected in landing catch data for the Guatemalan Caribbean, which rose from 40 species in 2019 to 73 species in 2023.

© Pablo Arturo López Gujosa IUCN



More than a million hectares of marine coastal zones will benefit from the updating and approval of management tools for marine areas

In 2023, management, planning and/or evaluation tools for the management of marine coastal areas were developed and updated. Through the use and application of these tools, evaluations of marine coastal management effectiveness were made in Saint Lucia, Haiti, Jamaica, Belize and Nicaragua. These analyses resulted in the updating of management plans and the development of new plans for areas without them. Legal approval of the management plan for the Barra de Santiago Wetland Complex in El Salvador was also a significant achievement.



© Dale Benskin / IUCN



Second phase of the Plastic Waste Free Islands Project will tackle plastic waste leakage in the Caribbean

Following the successful completion of the Plastic Waste Free Islands (PWFI) project, the Italian Government will continue to support the initiative in a second phase with a contribution of €2 million. This phase, called "Closing the Caribbean Plastic Tap", will continue to promote island circular economy and demonstrate effective and measurable solutions to address plastic waste leakage in Small Island Developing States (SIDS).



© Pablo Arturo López Guijosa / IUCN



INFLUENCE

“*In these 35 years of IUCN, our region has experienced an evolution in conservation efforts. IUCN has contributed by integrating a rights-based, equitable, and gender-sensitive approach, thereby creating comprehensive systems for the sustainable use, management, and conservation of our natural and cultural resources, as well as promoting well-being: people’s 'Útz k'aslemal'.*

IUCN has played a key role in shaping public policies, programs, plans, diagnostics, and studies that have become institutionalized in the region and now contribute to reducing the impacts of climate change, conserving forests and water, and implementing the goals of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Paris Agreement, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”



Ramiro Batzin,
Councillor and Vice
President of IUCN

POLICY CONTRIBUTIONS

During 2023, IUCN promoted and drove agreements, policies and standards on a wide range of issues, such as: substantive and customary rights of indigenous peoples in natural resource management, forest carbon transactions, incentives to promote sustainable production practices, tariff frameworks for water resources, climate change, the establishment of fishery reclamation zones, and others.

Influencing and driving this array of policies, rules and agreements has contributed to significant outcomes, such as new potable water tariffs to finance the conservation of recharge areas; a ban on fishing in 302 hectares of marine coastal areas; approval of an action plan related to gender in climate change at the ministerial level; agreements on a critical path toward developing a legal framework for forest carbon transactions; and the presentation of a policy proposal for the participation of indigenous peoples in protected areas, among other notable achievements.

Delivery of a proposal on a tariff framework in Guatemala for water resource conservation

In Guatemala, IUCN supported the design of a strategy for water security in the Guatemala City metropolitan area and municipalities making up the Mancomunidad Gran Ciudad del Sur (MGCS).

To achieve the strategy's sustainability, tariffs were assessed in MGCS municipalities. An assessment was made of capacity and regulations in four municipalities, along with a financial analysis of current fees for potable water service and a proposal for an environmental tariff to support restoration actions.

In addition, a new tariff was proposed to ensure the use of Nature-based Solutions as the approach to natural resource conservation, mainly in the recharge areas of each municipality. As outcome, IUCN delivered the tariff analyses to each municipality for decision-making around their tariff frameworks.



© Fexels Samad Deldar

The results of the analyses were presented and delivered to municipalities in the frame of the second National Congress on Water Resources in 2023 to support decision-making about updating the tariff framework for drinking water.

Concrete actions to ensure women's full participation in climate action

In the frame of the guiding principle (preamble paragraph 11) of the Paris Agreement adopted at COP 21 in 2015, the Gender and Climate Change Action Plan (PAGcc for its name in Spanish) was developed by the Guatemalan Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources as the governing body on climate change, and the Presidential Secretariat for Women, as an advisory entity and coordinator of public policies to promote women's comprehensive development in Guatemala. This was accomplished through support from IUCN and the USAID programme Advancing Gender in the Environment (AGENT).

The plan will provide support for the Guatemalan government to achieve national climate change commitments, ensuring they are implemented in a gender-sensitive, intersectional, and socially inclusive manner, and guarantee that diverse women and men, including indigenous communities and youth, can access, shape, and benefit from interventions for climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience.

To achieve the implementation and sustainability of the PAGcc, IUCN advocated for its approval through Ministerial Agreement No. 202-2023, in which the environmental ministry commits to coordinate, follow-up, monitor and evaluate compliance with the action plan.

“[...] Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity.” (UNFCCC, 2015)

Guiding principle of the Paris Agreement (preamble paragraph 11).

“The main objective of the PAGcc is to make it understood that the impacts of climate change are different for women and men. In terms of resilience, women have demonstrated that they have a great deal of knowledge and can be key agents of change in the adaptation process.

In this sense, for me one of the most important things in this process is that proposals have come from the grassroots. Women have said what they do, what they wanted to do, what they wanted to achieve, and this has been key to making a truly participatory plan.

Another of the great riches of this plan is that it is built on Guatemala's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Because of its links with country commitments, we'll be able to ensure the actions are carried out. Having this instrument gives us something concrete to bolster actions by the different institutions and organisations working on gender issues.

Our short-term objective is for the Gender and Climate Change Action Plan to be incorporated in the National Climate Change Plan, and in the medium term there won't be a separate gender plan; instead, gender will be mainstreamed in the National Climate Change Plan.”

Marleny Oliva, Coordinator of the Gender, Multiculturalism and Persons with Disabilities Unit
Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala



© Miguel Tábora / IUCN

Driving regulatory frameworks for the adoption of indigenous rights in natural resource governance in Honduras

In Honduras, IUCN drove the approval of two proposals to review and reform the institutional regulatory framework of the Forest Conservation Institute (ICF for its name in Spanish), mainly the Forestry, Protected Areas and Wildlife Act (98-2007); and the Secretariat of Natural Resources and Environment (SERNA), focussing on the General Environment Act.

The proposals arose from a review and analysis of legislation on the adoption of Indigenous rights in policies on governance of natural resources

and biodiversity. These proposals were prepared by an Indigenous entity, Plataforma Nacional de Coordinación Indígena Lenca y Maya Ch'orti', with the support of the CONECTA+ project.

These initiatives will lay the foundations for crafting a public policy proposal to guarantee the participation of indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants in governance of natural resource conservation and sustainable management, and advocate for its adoption by institutions.

Limit on fishing effort and new ban areas approved to protect endangered marine species

Ministerial Agreements N° 251 and 252 were adopted to implement management measures for Guatemala's Caribbean and Pacific shrimp fleets, marking a milestone in national fisheries administration and management. The shrimping fleet was set at 25 vessels for the Pacific and 87 for the Caribbean, with biological monitoring at landings.

Additionally, Agreement N° 213-2023 was approved, mandating a temporary five-year ban of three 302-ha polygons of the Santa Isabel and La Graciosa Lagoons within the proposed Cuyamel Omoa-Punta Manabique Sustainable Biological Corridor. Both processes were accompanied by the Regional Coastal Biodiversity Project.

EVENT PARTICIPATION AND NETWORKING

► **Perspectives**

In the frame of the event hosted by the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas of Mexico (CONANP for its name in Spanish), representatives of CCAD, German Cooperation, the Government of Mexico and IUCN renewed their commitment to protecting Selva Maya through the project, "Protection of Selva Maya Natural and Cultural Resources II". Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ, for its name in German) through KfW German Development Bank, the project will invest 20 million euros in 33 protected areas to "strengthen integrated, coordinated and participatory management of natural and cultural heritage in priority areas for the conservation and restoration of Selva Maya."

► **Seventh Assembly of the Global Environment Facility**

In the frame of the 7th Assembly of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), IUCN ORMACC organized a side event in which government actors, representatives of indigenous peoples, multilateral finance institutions and civil society organisations reaffirmed their joint commitment to protect and restore primary forests in Mesoamerica as part of the Critical Forest Biome Integrated Programme. This programme will be implemented in the frame of the eighth replenishment of GEF in Selva Maya, Mexico and Guatemala; Trifinio, in El Salvador and Guatemala; La Mosquitia, Honduras; Indio Maíz, in Nicaragua; and Darién, in Panama, with an investment of around US\$ 60 millions at regional and national level.

► **Latin America and the Caribbean Climate Week 2023**

IUCN, together with the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD for its name in Spanish), Central American Agricultural Council (CAC for its name in Spanish), and the 20x20 initiative, participated in Latin America and the Caribbean Climate Week, held to build momentum for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) and contribute to the first global stocktaking on key goals of the Paris Agreement. As part of this activity, IUCN ORMACC facilitated an event on ecosystem restoration to present restoration advances in the region. According to data from the IUCN Restoration Barometer, since 2011, 486,000 ha have been restored in Costa Rica, 278,908 ha in El Salvador, 379,192 ha in Guatemala and 5,218,986 ha in Mexico.

► **2nd Regional Environmental Congress**

IUCN ORMACC gathered with government authorities, technicians, and representatives of indigenous and local communities in the seven countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic at the 2nd Regional Environmental Congress. The event's objective was to present and discuss various initiatives as part of the Regional Environmental Framework Strategy 2021-2025 being carried out in the region. During the Congress, IUCN ORMACC provided technical coordination for the block of talks titled "Great Forests, Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Landscapes," offering a window into several initiatives already underway and others being designed to contribute to the aims of the Strategy, as well as initiatives of the Great Forests of Central America and the Dominican Republic and AFOLU 2040 initiatives.

NEW ALLIANCES

The Mexico City Secretariat of Environment (SEDEMA for its name in Spanish) and IUCN sign agreement to hold the Regional Conservation Forum 2024

The IUCN Regional Conservation Forum for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean will be held at Chapultepec Park from 16 to 19 April 2024, emphasizing the role that urban areas and cities, as engines of innovation, economic generation, employment, and education opportunities, can and should play in conservation efforts and improving human well-being.

OECS and IUCN reaffirm their common commitment to environmental sustainability

The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the IUCN reaffirmed their shared commitment by signing a new Memorandum of Understanding for the period 2023-2028. This agreement will expand collaboration and guide cooperation between both parties in various areas related to environmental sustainability. These areas include regional environmental information systems, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, plastic waste management and reduction, promotion of green, blue, and circular economy approaches, and management of protected areas, among others.

ECLAC and IUCN sign cooperation agreement for conservation and sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, with an emphasis on the Escazu Agreement

In the framework of COP28, IUCN and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a general framework of cooperation centred on sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, climate change, and the protection of environmental defenders. The agreement places special emphasis on collaboration for the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America, known as the Escazú Agreement.

“The conclusion of this cooperation framework will allow both institutions to strengthen ties in Latin America and the Caribbean to advance the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda and regional commitments such as the Escazú Agreement, for the benefit of countries in the region. It will allow us to establish a strategic alliance with a key partner in the region to protect our natural heritage and build the foundations for a more productive, inclusive and sustainable future.”

José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, ECLAC Executive Secretary



INFORM

RESOURCES



- ▶ [Guide for the identification and evaluation of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures \(OECMs\) in Central America](#)



- ▶ [Economic Impact of Plastic Pollution in Grenada – Technical Fact Sheet](#)



- ▶ [Economic Impact of Plastic Pollution in Antigua and Barbuda – Technical Fact Sheet](#)



- ▶ [Economic Impact of Plastic Pollution in Saint Lucia – Technical Fact Sheet](#)



- ▶ [Ecosystem-Based Adaptation \(EbA\) in Financial Products and Commercial Insurance](#)



- ▶ [Business Model Analysis and Financing Mechanisms, Costa Rica](#)



- ▶ [Interactive Presentation of Results from the Metropolitan Region of Guatemala Water Security Programme](#)

IUCN KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS AND STANDARDS

The IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas adapted standard was approved in Honduras and Costa Rica

Honduras and Costa Rica became the first two Central American countries to approve the standard adapted from the IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas. In committing to this instrument, countries aim to demonstrate and maintain the highest standards of protected area management and governance and thus generate real impacts on nature conservation. With the adoption of the adapted standard, IUCN ORMACC will work closely with the Green List expert groups to initiate assessment and implementation in four proposed protected areas, one in Costa Rica and three in Honduras.



© Sean Southey / IUCN

Mexico City and Guatemala City applied the IUCN Urban Nature Indexes

IUCN's Urban Nature Indexes are a tool enabling cities to establish a baseline and monitor progress in their efforts to address the climate crisis and biodiversity loss through the deployment of Nature-based Solutions. In the framework of the Latin America and the Caribbean Climate Week, Guatemala City and Mexico City, which have pioneered application of the Indexes in the Mesoamerican region, shared their Index results and main actions implemented based on the information obtained.





“Thanks to the application of the IUCN Urban Nature Indices in Mexico City, we know more about the distribution and impact of invasive alien species, which allows the state government to establish corresponding management actions.”

María Isabel Herrera Juárez, Senior Advisor on Adaptation and NbS, Mexico City



Reach:

Followers:

99,000		+17,800
8,500		+1,800
6,800		+3,800
82,000		+2,000
196,300		+25,000



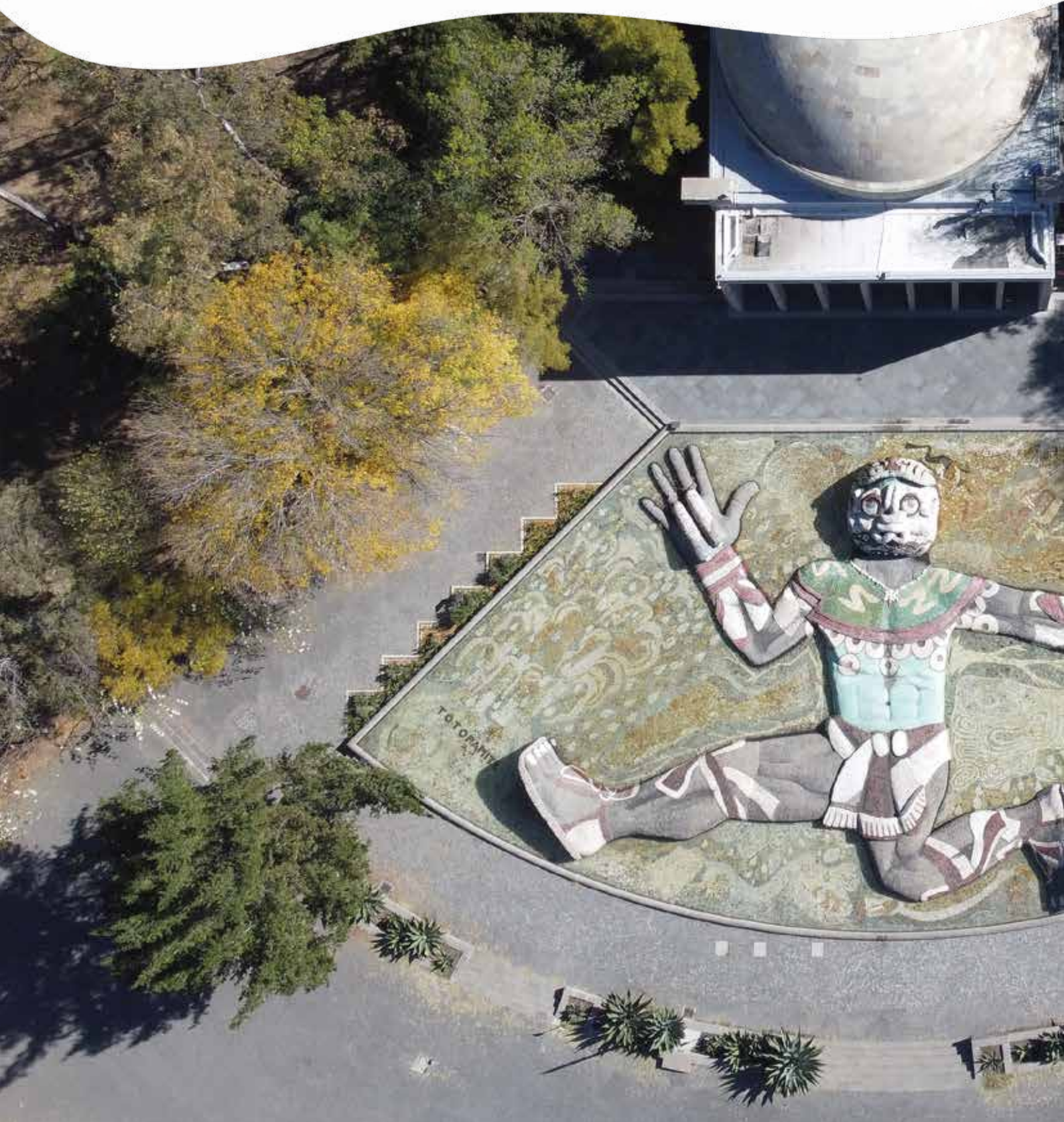
IUCN
Regional
Conservation
Forum
Mexico City
16-19 April 2024



GOBIERNO DE LA
CIUDAD DE MÉXICO

SECRETARÍA DEL
MEDIO AMBIENTE

 **BOSQUE
DE CHAPULTEPEC**





2024

En route to the Regional Conservation Forum

Chapultepec Park, Mexico City, 16-19 April

Working for a just world that values and conserves nature



**INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR
CONSERVATION OF NATURE**

Regional Office for Mexico, Central America
and the Caribbean (ORMACC)

P.O. Box: 607-2050
San Pedro de Montes de Oca
San José, Costa Rica
Phone: +506 22 83 84 49



www.iucn.org/ormacc



ormacc@iucn.org



www.iucn.org/resources/publications



[@uicnormacc](https://www.facebook.com/uicnormacc)



[@uicn_conserva](https://twitter.com/uicn_conserva)



[@uicn_ormacc](https://www.instagram.com/uicn_ormacc)



[uicnormacc](https://www.linkedin.com/company/uicnormacc)



IUCN 2023

INTERNATIONAL UNION
FOR CONSERVATION OF
NATURE

**MEXICO, CENTRAL
AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN
REGIONAL OFFICE
ANNUAL REPORT 2023**