

Protecting Ecosystems through Forest Resource Management in Protected Areas

PARTNERSHIP



Background

Guatemala has some of the richest and most diverse forests on the planet, home to three UNESCO biosphere reserves (Maya, Sierra de las Minas and Trifinio Fraternidad) and a World Heritage Site (Tikal National Park). More than half of the country's forest cover is found within the Sistema Guatemalteco de Áreas Protegidas (Guatemalan System of Protected Areas - SIGAP), which is directed and coordinated by the **Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas** (National Council of Protected Areas - CONAP), the entity responsible for supporting the conservation of protected areas and biological diversity in Guatemala through the

planning, coordination and implementation of conservation policies and models.

Many of these protected areas are located near the border with Mexico and provide a habitat for both indigenous communities and protected fauna on both sides of the border, which has led to the development of joint conservation strategies and management plans with the **Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas** (National Council of Natural Protected Areas of Mexico - CONANP). In addition, the challenges of climate change, including the increased risk of fires that can originate in one country and spread to another, have led to an increase in joint efforts and the strengthening of cooperation mechanisms for fire prevention and management.

These prevention and conservation efforts are joined by Spain's **Organismo Autónomo de Parques Nacionales** (Autonomous Organism for National Parks - OAPN), an organisation with more than 30 years of experience in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of protected area management projects, ecosystem management (including forestry), biological monitoring, prevention and management of forest fires in Spain, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Since 1997, the OAPN has served as the Secretariat of the Network of Biosphere Reserves of Ibero-America and the Caribbean, working to promote the conservation and management of protected areas together with CONAP and CONANP. Particularly noteworthy among these actions is the Triangular Cooperation project "Strengthening Conservation and Management Strategies in the Tacaná Volcano Biosphere Reserve" (2009-2012), financed by the *Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo* (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation - AECID). This Partnership has continued its collaboration through various efforts and seeks to promote capacity building among the member entities for the management of protected areas, which will now be carried out through this Triangular Cooperation Initiative.

All of the Partnership member entities have experience working with the European Union, and specifically in Triangular Cooperation. The OAPN in particular has participated in a project on sustainable development in the environment, within the framework of the ADELANTE 2 Triangular Cooperation Funds.

Entities and roles

BENEFICIARY ENTITIES



Secretaría Ejecutiva del Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas - CONAP

Guatemala

FIRST PROVIDER ENTITIES



Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas

Mexico

SECOND PROVIDER ENTITIES



Ministerio para la Transición Ecológica y el Reto Demográfico (MITECO) / Organismo Autónomo de Parques Nacionales (OAPN)

Spain

Development challenges

The development of effective strategies for the conservation and sustainable management of forest resources in protected areas is essential to ensure the livelihoods of local communities, as well as the flora and fauna that depend on these unique ecosystems.

Through this Triangular Cooperation Initiative, the knowledge and expertise of the Partnership's member entities in biological monitoring, forest management and fire management will be used to develop a model for forest resource management in protected areas, focused on protected areas in Guatemala. This model can also be used by other countries in the region, thus contributing to SDG 15 - Life on Land and SDG 13 - Climate Action.

INITIATIVE

This Triangular Cooperation Initiative aims to promote capacity building among the Partnership entities to create a model for forest resource management in protected areas, characterised by the protection of ecosystems and the active participation of local communities.

Triangular approach

Guatemala is home to a rich natural heritage, especially with its lush and diverse forests that are located in protected areas. However, this natural heritage faces an impending threat of deforestation and loss of biodiversity. Until 2020, forest cover in Guatemala comprised approximately 3,601,567 hectares, representing 33% of its territory. More than 50% of this invaluable tree coverage is protected within the Sistema Guatemalteco de Áreas Protegidas (Guatemalan Protected Areas System - SIGAP), under the management of CONAP.

The Triangular Cooperation Partnership, comprised of CONAP, CONANP and OAPN, recognises the importance of capacity building for forest management in these protected areas. There is also an urgent need to improve wildlife monitoring tools. This improvement will not only bring inventories up to date in terms of the diversity of species, but also in terms of abundance. In addition, fire management, which presents a significant challenge in the conservation of these ecosystems, will be effectively addressed.

In this context, the development of effective strategies for the conservation and sustainable management of forest resources in protected areas is a top priority, to ensure a sustainable future for both local communities and the rich flora and fauna that depend on these unique ecosystems.

This Triangular Cooperation Initiative offers a valuable opportunity to harness the knowledge and expertise of the Partnership member entities. In particular, it focuses on areas such as biological monitoring, fire management and forest management, with the aim of creating a model for forest resource management in protected areas that will contribute to strengthening the effective management of these areas. Although it will primarily benefit CONAP in Guatemala, this model will be designed to be applied in Mexico and other countries in the region, thus promoting regional collaboration and the exchange of good practices in sustainable natural resource management.

Sectoral approach - Contribution to the 2030 Agenda

PRIMARY SDG



Goal 15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development

SECONDARY SDG



Goal 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

ADELANTE SDG

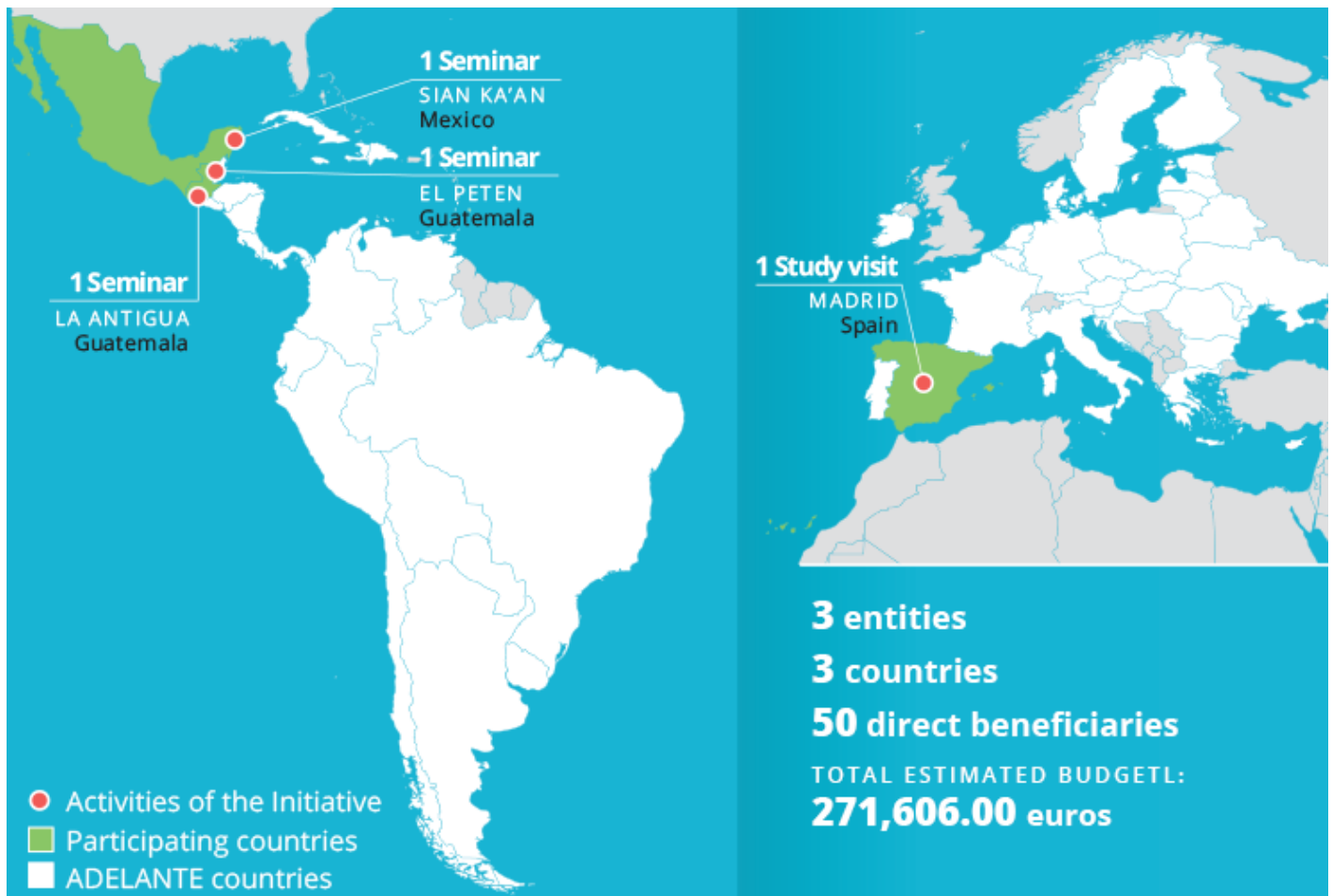


Goal 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status



Goal 17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation

Territorial approach



Intervention methodology

This Initiative is centred around **a training programme** to be carried out in Mexico, Guatemala and Spain, which seeks to harness the strengths of each Partnership member entity in the three priority areas (biological monitoring, fire management and forest management) to equip specialists and field officers with practical tools that they can apply immediately. At the same time, the model for forest resource management in protected areas will be built with the inputs and lessons learnt in each of joint actions among the Partnership entities.

The work plan includes **a specialised consultancy** that will contribute to developing an assessment of capacity building needs for CONAP staff and representatives of local communities responsible for managing protected areas. Work will also be carried out on the design and development of the training programme to be implemented throughout the Initiative.

Subsequently, **three seminars** will be held, each focusing on one of the three priority areas, which will take place in protected natural areas in Mexico, Guatemala and Spain. The first seminar will take place in the Sian Ka'an reserve in Mexico and will focus on training in biological monitoring. The second seminar will be held in the protected areas of Petén in Guatemala and will focus on fire management. The third seminar will be held in La Antigua Guatemala to address forest management training.

The core activity of the Initiative will be **a study visit to Spain**, where different protected natural areas will be observed, both from the National Parks Network and the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves. These sessions will provide an opportunity to learn about the actions and experiences in the three priority areas, helping to consolidate the lessons learnt throughout the Initiative.

The insights shared during the seminars and the study visit will be systematised and analysed to jointly create the model for forest resource management in protected areas, which will be presented to the interested parties at the end of the Initiative.

Throughout the Initiative, work will be carried out from a gender equity, environmental and climate change approach, both in terms of highlighting and sharing specific experiences and presenting and reflecting these approaches in the joint work, and especially in the management model. In addition, special attention will be given to promoting the active and inclusive participation of local communities, in line with the human rights-based approach.

Direct beneficiaries (individuals)

According to Rule 9 of the Guidelines for Applicants: all persons participating in the activities of the Initiative.

Approximately **50 direct beneficiaries** will participate in the Initiative, all of whom are authorities and technical staff of the Partnership member entities. They will receive specialised training, conduct study visits and contribute to the formulation of the Initiative's outputs.

Budget

EU contribution: 198,550.00 €

Co-financing - Triangular Cooperation Partnership: 73,056.00 €

Total budget: 271,606.00 €