

Presentation of project "Tacaná PD.668 / 12 Rev.1 (F)" at LXIII Meeting of the International Tropical Timber Council - ITTO



Within the framework of the **LXIII Meeting of the ITTO Council**, from November 26 to December 2, in the city of Lima, Peru; HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation in Guatemala presented the results of the Project "Integrated Management of Biodiversity and Natural Resources at Tacaná Volcano and its area of influence in Mexico and Guatemala", abbreviated as "Tacana". The team working in the project, was the only one that made a results presentation at the CRF Committee meeting and received congratulations from several delegates including Finland, Panama, Mexico and the delegate of the United States of America, one of the donor countries of this project, along with the government of Japan. Within the framework of the Committee meeting, a new project is being presented (Phase II) in order to continue with this dream that is beginning to become a reality, with which Helvetas Guatemala bets on the future of these binational actions and its continuity. The Tacaná PD 668 project is one of the projects framed in the memorandum of understanding between the ITTO and the Convention on Biological Diversity and is, in this sense, based in the prevailing need that conservation, sustainable use and forest production at a national and global levels, must join forces to promote the Millennium Development Goals.

Project development objective: To contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of the population of Guatemala and Mexico that inhabits the Tacaná Volcano and its area of influence, from the conservation and sustainable use of forest resources.

Main achievements:

- The conservation of biodiversity and models of local restoration are strengthened as well as the ecosystem services.
 - In Guatemala and Mexico, **155.31 Ha**, are in process of restoration, conservation and sustainable use, some under financial mechanisms to guarantee sustainability.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmUTXJxpR_M
- **7 productive initiatives were implemented.** 4 in Mexico and 3 in Guatemala. Developing pilote processes in:
 - Roses greenhouse cultivation
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQ0VAGOnfcA>
 - Reproduction of rainbow trout
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1Pdm1vO-GU&feature=youtu.be>
- **Binational trail of the Tacaná volcano**, more than 6 km of the trail are being improved, 2 registration booths and tourist services are being installed, besides 4 rest areas and sanitary services.
 - Bi-national Trail
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mmil2jixGkl&feature=youtu.be>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTWb-fWNVK4>
- **Path for birdwatching at Vega del Volcán Village (Gt) and Ejido Benito Juárez el Plan (Mx)** are being improved.
- Governance and implementation structure is improved after suspension and learned lessons are applied.
- Strategic communication is uploaded in institutional and personal social networks, including CHM in Guatemala and Mexico.
- It is possible to establish a binational coordination mechanism – Steering Committee – and their corresponding social and local government representations at “round table discussions”.

Future vision (Phase II of the project)

- Strengthen the territorial articulation from a strong and informed governance; including community leaders, indigenous peoples and local governments.
- Strengthen community restoration models by articulating traditional and scientific knowledge.
- Multiply productive initiatives from the analysis of value chains, to maximize income for rural producers.
- Begin the process of declaring the Biosphere Reserve on the Guatemalan side, and to rise this issue at a chancellery level for declaring a “Transboundary Biosphere Reserve”.

And ultimately, our thanks to donor countries of this project: United States and the Government of Japan. To the co-financing and co-executors institutions of this project: For Guatemala: INAB and CONAP and for Mexico: CONANP and CONAFOR. To the local governments of: Sibinal in Guatemala and Cahaoatán and Union Juárez in Mexico. Also, our thanks to two co-implementing organizations of this project at a local level, in its closing phase: ADAFIS under the direction of Vinicio Bravo and MAPS under the leadership of José Pascacio.