



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety



We Are Selva Maya

Editorial

After more than 7 years of hard work and commitment we say goodbye to Jaap School, who for reasons of retirement, rather than lack of energy and motivation, leaves the direction of the Selva Maya Programme in my hands. I take on

this new challenge with great enthusiasm, ready to promote current projects, assess the potential we have and take advantage of the experience of the entire team, our counterparts and partners, to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of the Selva Maya.

Thank you Jaap and all the best for the future!

Maybe without noticing, the first half of the year has passed and it is the moment to share with great pleasure the third edition of the newsletter **We Are Selva Maya**. On this occasion we put at your disposal the news from January to July 2018 as well as some topics of interest, including the *Monitoring of water holes and associated fauna* and *Field Schools in agroforestry and silvopastoral systems*.

We hope you will enjoy the shared topics without forgetting that this is an open space for you to send us your proposals about aspects that you consider relevant for the prevalence and conservation of the Selva Maya.

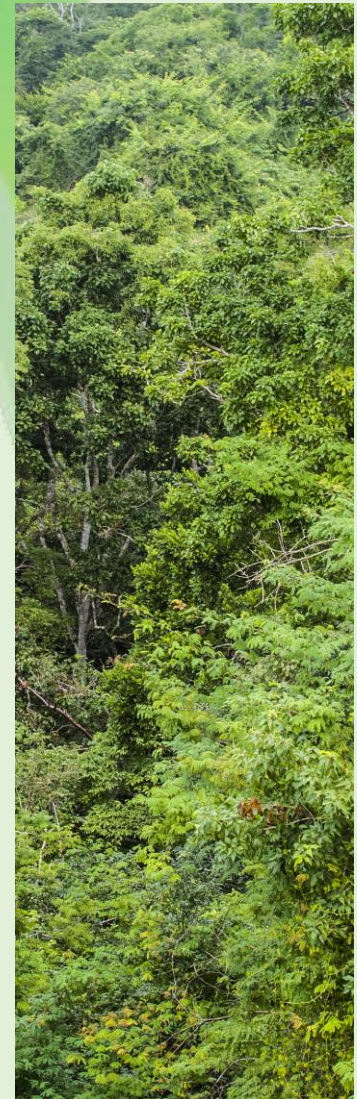


Lisa Steurer
Directora Programa
Selva Maya / GIZ



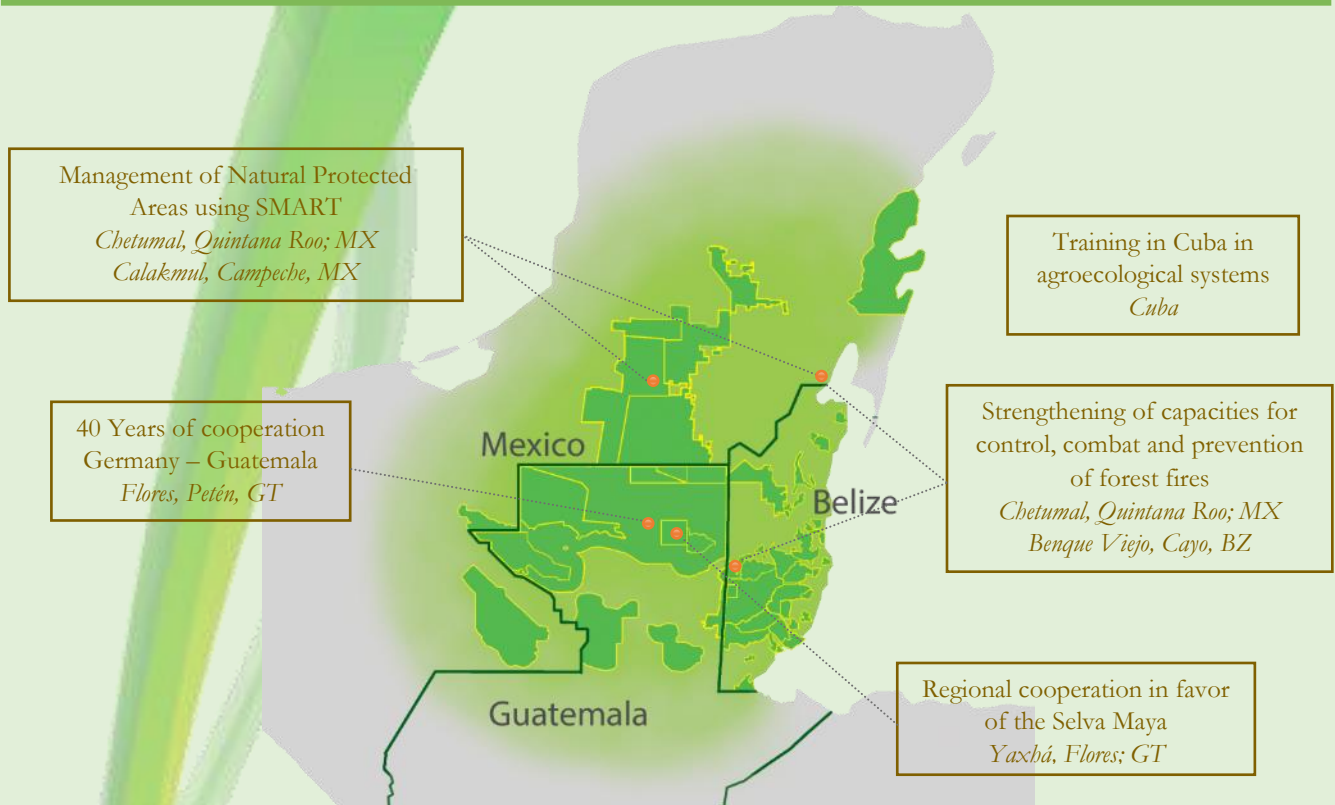
Jaap School
Director saliente

On my side, I want to thank everyone for the cooperation in the conservation of the Selva Maya. My best wishes to Lisa and the Selva Maya team to continue working together with our counterparts and partners. Please count with my disposition to support the efforts in favor of the conservation of this wonderful region, either far from the Netherlands or closer somewhere in the Selva Maya. Thank you very much and see you soon!



Left, Sunrising at Vaca Forest Reserve, Belize
Right, El Remate, Petén – Itzá, Lagoon, Guatemala
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News



Management of Protected Areas using SMART

Monitoring, control and surveillance activities are fundamental for the management of Protected Areas (PAs). The Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool – SMART (smartconservationtools.org) is a free software composed of a database, a geographic information system (GIS) and an analysis and reporting module. It allows the systematic entry of observations in digital and georeferenced form, directly in the field, through mobile phones; as well as automated analysis and reporting of patrols, at the office. Thus, an adaptive and efficient management of the PAs is facilitated.

With the aim of implementing SMART in the Selva Maya, in the Yucatan Peninsula, workshops have been carried out. The first one to plan and define the database structure (Chetumal, 4-5 December 2017), the second to train the personnel of the PAs in the use of the tool (Calakmul, March 20-23, 2018) and the last one to feedback on the first experiences in the field (Chetumal, June 26-27, 2018).

The workshops have been taught by experts from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Monitoring and Evaluation Center of the National Council of Protected Areas of Guatemala, with active participation of staff of central and regional offices of the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas of Mexico.



Activities during the workshop held in Calakmul, Mexico

Regional cooperation in favor of the Selva Maya



5th GOC Meeting at Yaxha, Guatemala

To strengthen the technical actions of coordination and regional cooperation, for the conservation of the Selva Maya; on February 8 & 9, 2018, the 5th Meeting of the Operative Coordination Group (GOC) of the Selva Maya took place in Santa Elena de la Cruz and the Yaxha archaeological site in Guatemala. The 6th Meeting of the Strategic Coordination Group (GEC) was held simultaneously.

In a joint session of the GEC and GOC, the main results of the TRIFINIO Plan were shared. It is a regional integration initiative that seeks to strengthen environmental and territorial management processes and therefore the living conditions of the border communities between Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. This allowed reflection on the strengthening of the coordination and regional cooperation and territorial development actions in the Selva Maya. In addition, the Annual Operating Plans of the projects of the German cooperation, implemented by GIZ and KfW / IUCN, were presented.

An important step in the process of regional cooperation has taken place at the 6th GOC Meeting, held from July 10 to 12, in San Ignacio, Belize. During the meeting the Vision and Mission of the GOC were defined, however, perhaps the most outstanding activity is that the Integral Strategic Planning for the Selva Maya 2030 began, based on the vision defined by the GEC in the *Declaración de Chicanná* in 2015.

In this 6th meeting, the intention to move towards the integration of a comprehensive regional strategy for the conservation of the Selva Maya with vision to 2030 is consolidated. The criteria for the formalization of the GOC are also established, hoping on the one hand to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the protected areas of the Selva Maya and, on the other, establish an adequate linkage and articulation with the GEC.

Based on the results of the SWOT analysis carried out, three strategic lines were defined that the GOC should carry out in order to fulfill its vision towards 2030:

1. GOC formalization strategy (guidelines and operation structure).
2. Sustainability strategy (financing mechanisms at the national level and international cooperation).
3. Advocacy strategy aimed at strengthening local and international recognition of the GOC (mechanisms to raise advocacy capacity through a Technical Action Plan, taking into account existing legal instruments).

Finally, the construction of GOC's strategic objective for 2030 was defined: *Consolidate the GOC as an institutionalized technical tool that supports the GEC in decision-making, ensuring effective management and handling of the ecosystem and historical values for the Selva Maya.*



6th GOC Meeting at Belmopán, Belize

Strengthening of capacities for control, combat and prevention of forest fires



Course' Attendants at CONAFOR, Quintana Roo, Mexico

Forest fires are one of the main threats that the Selva Maya faces. All efforts to strengthen the resources and capacities to prevent and combat them are needed.

For this reason, from April 9 to 13, the courses **S130 Forest Fighter** and **S190 Introduction to Fire Behavior** were given to 30 rangers from Belize, Guatemala and Mexico (10 per country). The courses

were hosted at the facilities of the National Forest Commission in Quintana Roo, Mexico and taught by staff of the Regional Fire Management Center – Campeche.

Additionally, at a bilateral level, on May 3, a meeting was held at the Organization of American States (OAS), in order to coordinate joint actions for the prevention and control of forest fires in the adjacency zone between Guatemala and Belize. Government representatives, NGOs and civil society were present. During the meeting the risk represented by the use of fire in agricultural activities was identified, which may culminate in the occurrence of forest fires in adjacency zones.

Considering that the Selva Maya exceeds international borders, it was recognized it is vital that the three countries participate together in the tasks of prevention and control of forest fires, as well as in the exchange of information and experiences.

40 Years of Cooperation Germany – Guatemala

Development cooperation between Germany and Guatemala began in 1978.

To commemorate the 40 years of this cooperation, the Department of Peten received the visit of some personalities: In February 2018 Thomas Cieslik, Head of Cooperation at the German Embassy in Guatemala; visited together with Anja Dahl, Director of GIZ in Guatemala; Lydia Andler, Regional Director of the German Development Bank (KfW); Manuel Lorenzana, KfW Representative in Guatemala and Ursula Parrilla, Coordinator of IUCN - Guatemala. Subsequently, on April 20, 2018, the Ambassador of Germany in Guatemala, Mr. Harald Klein, was welcomed.

During the visits, presentations and field activities were carried out to show the state of conservation of the Mayan Biosphere Reserve, its challenges, threats and best practices. Also, areas and approaches of the

German technical and financial cooperation, which promote sustainable regional development and the protection of natural and cultural resources were visited and discussed.



Visit of Mr. Thomas Cieslik, Head of Cooperation at the Embassy of Germany in Guatemala

Training in agroecological systems



Humus production at Vivero Organopónico Alamar

The German Cooperation / GIZ collaborates with partner institutions in various agricultural alternatives in the Buffer Zone of the Mayan Biosphere Reserve in Guatemala and around protected areas of Belize. Therefore, in order to enrich the experience and knowledge of the technicians involved, from April 29 to May 10, a training in silvo-pastoral systems and visits to different agroecological experiences was carried out

in Cuba. The delegation of participating technicians was integrated by representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food of Guatemala, Pastoral Social of the Apostolic Vicariate of Peten and the Municipality of Flores.

During the field trip, the development of the agro-ecological model in different productive and social spheres was learned about. In the first week the participants took part in a training in silvo-pastoral systems at the Experimental Station of Pastures and Forages Indio Hatuey. The second week was spent visiting agro-ecological model farms related to agroforestry systems, biointensive production of vegetables, sustainable livestock, production of fertilizers and bio-supplies; all of which are characterized by the high level of integration, self-sustainability and use appropriate technologies for the development of small and medium-sized agriculture.

Participants felt that the objective of visualizing concrete, easy and simple proposals to be adopted by the groups and families of the program was achieved.



Top left, *Leucaena* Silvopastoral System with pasture, Indio Hatuey Pastures and Forage Experimental Station

Top right, Explanation about the operation of a biodigester, Casimiro's Family Farm, Sancti Spiritus

Bottom left, Participants in the course of silvopastoral systems, Cuba

Bottom right, Biointensive system of vegetable production, Vivero Organopónico Alamar

Subject of Interest

Field Schools in agroforestry and silvo-pastoral systems

Identifying alternatives that promote the conservation of protected areas and biological diversity does not seem an easy task when it implies generating a change in the way of thinking of the people who live in these areas. The truth is that in the process, one will follow another, and another until a collective or community change takes place. A good example is the *Field Schools in agroforestry and silvo-pastoral systems*, an initiative developed through support from the Protection and Sustainable Use of the Selva Maya Project, in coordination with the Pastoral Social of the Apostolic Vicariate of Peten, Guatemala.

To better understand this initiative, it should be noted that an *agroforestry system* refers to a set of annual, biannual and perennial crops (fruit and forest), which complement each other in terms of fertility, humidity and shade, and are distributed efficiently. The agroforestry system can be established in a deforested area or in a pre-existing forest area. A variant of the agroforestry systems, adapted to livestock production, are the *silvo-pastoral systems*, which are distinguished by the integration of pastures, tree species (forage, timber, fruit) and livestock (cattle, goats, sheep), with the intention to increase forest cover in smaller areas and associated with livestock systems. In the Selva Maya, *agroforestry systems* are an alternative to reduce the agricultural frontier and deforestation, intensify production and improve families' incomes.

Thus, in April 2018, the first Field School has been initiated in which 16 Promoters in Integral Rural

Development from different communities throughout the Buffer Zone of the Mayan Biosphere Reserve participate. The objective of the Field Schools is to strengthen the productive systems and capacities of the promoters based on the same knowledge and experiences acquired through their productive activities. The learning methodology is very practical, that is, during visits / field trips to the promoters' plots, a facilitator addresses a particular topic and the producers themselves reflect and recommend to the host promoter what could be done to improve his / her plot, while at the same time they develop actions that could be implemented on their farms.

The Field Schools are developed in modules of two days. The first day farmers work on topics related to livestock intensification and silvo-pastoral systems; on the second day, they do a field trip and the agroforestry systems are analyzed, based on fruit species or other crop species that can be cultivated in harmony with the forest (v. g. vanilla, cocoa or pacaya (*Chamaedorea costaricana*) – a palm tree from which edible inflorescence is obtained). After each day the space for reflection, recommendations, opens up.

It is expected that with the support of local institutions and the conviction of the farmers involved in the different agroforestry systems, these experiences will serve as inspiration and example for other agricultural and livestock producers to adopt a sustainable production scheme with and within the Selva Maya.



Left, promoter explaining his silvo-pastoral system and how to make organic fertilizer.

Right, promoter explaining how he manages his pacaya culture under the forest canopy

Subject of Interest

Monitoring of water holes and associated fauna in the Selva Maya

The Selva Maya is one of the largest tropical forests in Mesoamerica, very important for wildlife species that need large areas of habitat such as the jaguar and tapir.

However, the Selva Maya faces threats such as deforestation and habitat fragmentation, hence the relevance of knowing and monitoring the impact of such threats on the species. Studies have determined that one of the most effective strategies is the monitoring of bodies of water where several species are concentrated during the dry season.

The collaboration between the *Reserva de la Biosfera Calakmul* and the *Reserva de la Biosfera Maya*, with the support of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), the *Colegio de la Frontera Sur* and Wildlife Conservation Society, gave rise the opportunity to unite efforts for the monitoring of vertebrates in bodies of water in Mexico and Guatemala, to have a better picture of the situation.

In 2017, in the frame of the Project “Support for the Monitoring of Biodiversity and Climate Change in the Selva Maya”, of GIZ, a regional workshop was held with scientists, representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations, directors of protected

areas of Mexico, Belize and Guatemala. As a result, the *Regional group for monitoring of water bodies and associated fauna in the Selva Maya* was formed.

The objective is to have a standardized system for the monitoring of water bodies and associated fauna, using it as an indicator of the state of conservation of biodiversity and climate change in this region. Then, being able to generate management and conservation recommendations, with emphasis on decision makers and to establish a baseline of scientific information on these ecosystems and associated fauna for future comparisons.

There is a regional protocol to be implemented by all the members of the group and annual meetings are considered in order to do a regional report on the situation of the water holes and associated fauna in the Selva Maya. It is expected to generate recommendations for the management and conservation of bodies of water and associated fauna in the Selva Maya.

Further information can be found on the group’s website:

<https://aguadaselvamaya.wixsite.com/aguadaselvamaya>



Left, tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*) pictured at Reserva de la Biosfera Calakmul.
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Right, Collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*)
© Parque Nacional Tikal

Publications

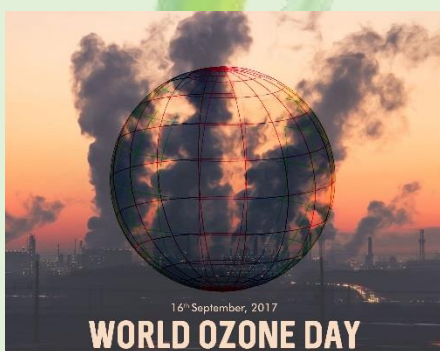


Monitoreo de la biodiversidad para la gestión de recursos naturales

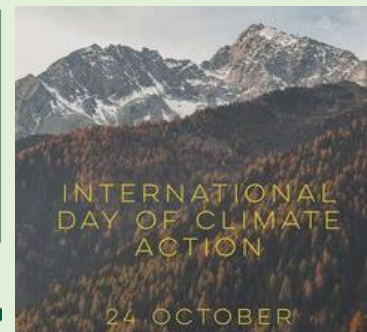
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Important dates and commemorations



**SEPTEMBER 22
WORLD CAR
FREE DAY!**



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