



# LACANDÓN - FORESTS FOR LIFE GUATEMALA

**Protecting endangered ecosystems and strengthening biodiversity with the involvement of local communities.**



*Lacandón – Forests for Life is situated in the Sierra de Lacandón National Park in the north of Guatemala and aims at conserving the tropical rain forest and its biodiverse ecosystems in cooperation with local communities. Endangered species listed in the IUCN, such as the jaguar (*Panthera onca*), the tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*), and the forest species mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) and cedar (*Cedrella odorata*) are protected, and sustainable forest management activities support the livelihoods of local communities.*



*The project area includes 29 archaeological sites from the Mayan Civilization, including the monumental city of Piedras Negras.*

The tropical rain forest in northern Guatemala is considered a “biodiversity hotspot”. Located within the Mayan Biosphere Reserve, it is one of the most endangered ecosystems in the world. The Sierra del Lacandón National Park provides refuge to endangered species, such as the scarlet macaw, white-lipped peccary, and the jaguar in this area. However, due to encroaching settlements, forest fires, illegal logging, and agricultural activities, the rate of deforestation in this precious region is high.

Lacandón – Forests for Life is a pilot project that aims to reduce deforestation in the National Park, while conserving biodiversity and developing economic livelihood alternatives. The NGO Defensores de la Naturaleza and three local communities, Unión Maya Itzá, La Lucha and La Técnica Agropecuaria developed the initiative and integrated a governance committee to manage the project and strengthen local capacities. Sustainable forestry activities (timber and non-timber products) provide a source of income for local communities while improving water management and agriculture techniques, as well as conserving natural resources. The project strengthens local governance, encourages the participation of women, and develops sustainable economic activities.



**2,121**

people benefiting from capacity building



**54**

women directly benefiting from project activity



**238,876**

tCO<sub>2</sub>e mitigated per year on average



**45,288**

hectares of forest protected

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

For more information on the UN Sustainable Development Goals please visit: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

