

Central America

Five great forests of Mesoamerica

#GLOBALGATEWAY

#TEAMEUROPE

TEAM EUROPE PROPOSAL



Geographical coverage:

the Five Great Forests of Mesoamerica (covering south-east of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama) and other relevant forest areas such as Trifinio.

Synergy with "green" TEIs at country level and continental TEIs on green transition and security and justice (environmental crimes component).

Data for transparency and decision-making:

- build multi-actor multi-country partnerships to provide periodic, standardised, and strategic sectoral data on the state of the large forests.
- capitalise on the regional Copernicus data centre in Panama, and the EU Space Programme (Copernicus, Galileo and EGNOS services), academia and investigation networks.

Forest governance and biodiversity:

- favour transboundary governance processes.
- promote exchange of experiences and cross-learning among local, national, and regional stakeholders.

Deforestation-free and low carbon production and sustainable trade, support to:

- traceability systems for cattle-ranching.
- deforestation-free value chains and territories.
- bi-regional dialogue around sustainable production and development of new market opportunities.

Environmental rights and defenders:

- support the implementation of the Escazú Agreement pillars related to Access to Environmental Information and Environmental Defenders, to ensure a safe and supportive environment.

MODALITIES/TOOLS

Peer-to peer mechanisms, capacity-building, and exchanges of best practices through webinars and workshops.

Investment tools

Technical assistance

Grants

KEY DELIVERABLES

Biodiversity

Protection of 10 million hectares of forest by 2030 in the 5 Great Forests of Mesoamerica, through

- at least 2 multi-country forest monitoring initiatives using satellite data to detect deforestation, forest fires, value chains;
- at least 5 regional networks on critical endangered species and at least 5 forest friendly value chains;
- as well as the establishment of a regional mechanism to support environmental defenders.

*This Team Europe Initiative is work in progress

TRANSFORMATIONAL POTENTIAL

To foster coordination and visibility to provide a coherent framework that highlights EU and its Member States' global contribution to the protection of the region's last remaining large forests.

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NATIONAL CONTEXT

The five great forests:

- 50% of region's forest carbon stocks,
- Provide vital natural resources to 5 mil people.
- 3 of them were reduced by more than 23% since 2000, due to agricultural activities and illegal cattle ranching for export

Mesoamerican biodiversity hotspots:

- cover less than 0.5% of the land on the planet.
- ranks 8th among global biodiversity hotspots in terms of the area covered.
- contain 7-10% of all life forms, including 17% of all terrestrial species (CEPF 2000, 2001).
- ranks 4th for the diversity and endemism of species.

Mesoamerica is strongly impacted by:

- climate,
- poverty and population growth,
- land use change (deforestation and forest degradation),
- soil degradation,
- migration crisis,
- organised crime and violence against human rights.

High dependence of national and local economies on natural resources for production of commodities (IPCC, 2022).

Highest per capita rate of violence against environmental defenders in the world (Global Witness, 2021).

Advanced use of forest monitoring technologies and methodologies:

- Earth Observation
- other satellite-enabled technologies

Regional policies:

- Study on Initial assessment of Latin American countries and value chains potentially affected by the future Deforestation-Free Products regulation, TPSDE Facility (2022)

Escazú Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters.

GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT AND RELEVANT SDGs



Agenda 2030

AAP 2022: "Blue Economy"

EU-Central America and EU-Mexico Association Agreements (AA)

EU directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence

EU report "Larger than Jaguars" (2021)

Proposal for a regulation on deforestation-free products



**SDGs included based on a new JRC electronic text mining tool, which identifies SDGs (targets)