

EU-Central America Cooperation Facility (EUreCA)

Location	Countries of the Central American Regional Integration System (Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Belize, Guatemala)
Starting date	November 22, 2022
Execution period	60 months
Executor	AESA (leading company) - GIZ
Budget	8.357.000 €
Reference	INTPA/SJO/2022/EA-RP/0018

Overall Objective (Impact)

Support the bi-regional partnership between the EU and Central America in line with the principles and objectives of the EU-CA Association Agreement, focusing on common political priorities, including green and blue recovery, digitalization, gender equality and the fight against inequalities.

Specific Objectives (effects)

- To support the effective and efficient implementation of EU priorities and programmes in the sub-region, ensuring alignment with broader regional strategies.
- To support the Central American regional integration process as a driver of stability, peace, sustainable and inclusive development, including through public diplomacy activities designed to build, strengthen and connect regional networks.
- To raise public awareness, understanding and support for the EU's values, priorities and partnership with the region, through strategic communication activities targeting specified audiences.
- To implement the Mesoamerica Five Great Forests Program Secretariat to ensure coherence and adequate coordination among components and with other interventions (financed by the EU and other donors).

Outputs

- Output 1 on effect 1: Strengthened capacities of regional and national institutions and organisations to build on the EU-CA Association Agreement, bi-regional partnership, political dialogue and other initiatives on the EU's global agenda.
- Output 1 regarding effect 2: Increased knowledge, skills and technical capacities of regional integration institutions, national entities and CSOs to formulate, implement, coordinate and monitor regional policies and initiatives, particularly in the focal sectors of the Regional IMP/CA Window, with special emphasis on digitalization, green and blue recovery and inclusive development.
- Output 1 regarding effect 3: Strategic communication plan designed and implemented, contributing to measurably increasing public awareness, understanding and perception of the EU-Central America partnership.
- Outputs regarding effect 4 "Implementing the EU-Panama Cooperation Facility":
 - 4.1: New EU cooperation actions/projects with Panama financed by "non-bilateral funds", have been identified, formulated and accompanied by the Facility, with special emphasis on the priority themes of digital transformation and green transition of the country; EU cooperation actions/projects related to the aforementioned priority themes that benefit Panama and are financed by "non-bilateral funds", have been strengthened and complemented through the Facility.
 - 4.2: Preparation, implementation and follow-up to EU-Panama Political Dialogues and Dialogues/Consultations on public policies related to priority sectors of EU cooperation and bilateral

agenda (digital transformation, green transition, defence and promotion of human rights and the rule of law, gender equality, good governance and transparency, inclusion and social justice, security, migration management etc.) have been supported by the Facility, together with the definition of national strategies/public policies in these sectors.

- 4.3: EU strategic communication and public diplomacy in Panama have been strengthened by the Facility, in accordance with the KPIs identified by the Delegation of the European Union to Panama in its annual/multiannual strategic plan, as appropriate.
- Output 1 regarding to effect 5: A secretariat for the Great Forests of Mesoamerica Program that ensures coherence and adequate coordination among components and with other interventions (financed by the EU and other donors).

Geographical area covered

Countries of the Central American Regional Integration System (Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Belize, Guatemala)

Target groups

The main target group is the countries belonging to the Central American Integration System (SICA). Likewise, the different regional integration institutions of strategic relevance for the focal areas of the Central American sub-window will be addressed, for example the General Secretariat of SICA, the Secretariat for Economic Integration in Central America (SIECA), the Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD), the Secretariat for Central American Social Integration (SISCA), Organization of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA), Ad-hoc Group of the Regional Digital Strategy (ERDI), the Council of Ministers of Women of Central America and the Dominican Republic (COMMCA).

Target groups will also include national entities, civil society organizations (CSOs), academia, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Central American countries. Other beneficiaries will be the private sector, academic organisations and regional institutions involved in EU cooperation.

The EU-Panama Cooperation Facility will support EU actions specifically targeting the country's different actors and partners, including national authorities, EU and international entities, civil society, academia, the private sector, and the general population.

The secretariat of the Great Forests of Mesoamerica program will have as a main objective to ensure the coordination and harmonization of an action that will focus on four components: 1) Data for Transparency and Decision Making, 2) Forest Governance and Biodiversity, 3) Sustainable Production and Trade, and 4) Environmental Rights and Defenders, implemented by four EU Member State agencies such as AECID, GIZ, EF and SIDA; as well as an international organization that will manage a mechanism for the protection of environmental defenders.

Responsible body

The Delegation of the European Union to Costa Rica will be the body responsible for managing the project.

Offices

The operational base for this contract will be in San Salvador, El Salvador, from where the coordination of activities will be managed; Additionally, there will be project personnel located in Panama City, Panama, to assist in the activities to be carried out within the framework of the EU-Panama Cooperation Facility in that country, as well as in San José (Costa Rica) to attend to the functions of the Secretariat of the Five Great Forests of Mesoamerica program.