Guatemala

Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology

Forest landscape restoration (FLR) supports sustainable rural development, providing opportunities for income generation, poverty alleviation, climate mitigation and biodiversity conservation.

Why FLR

Between 2008 and 2015, Guatemala experienced an increase in population density of 18% (from 126 to 149 inhabitants per km²), with a current population of 16 million people. This growth places greater demand on ecosystem services, such as water for human consumption and irrigation, food production, provision of housing and energy. The poverty rate in Guatemala reached 60% in 2015, meaning that about 9.5 million Guatemalans live in precarious conditions. Subsistence agriculture is the main source of food for the most vulnerable populations. Unsustainable land management is causing erosion and reducing productivity. About half of Guatemala's forest cover has been converted to other land uses since the 1950s. Since then, Guatemala's forested areas have been severely hit by deforestation, with 132,137 ha of forest lost every year between 2006 and 2010.

National FLR Strategy

Vision: FLR with functional provision of ecosystem goods and services that contribute to improving the quality of life of inhabitants.

Mission: to integrate key actors and instruments that enable the investment and implementation of restoration activities in Guatemala's forests and forest landscapes, thus maintaining ecosystem goods and services over time.

Goal: to sustainably restore 1.2 million ha of degraded areas by 2045, coordinating actors and instruments through capacity building.

National FLR Strategy

Guatemala's National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy is based on the recognition that FLR contributes to the achievement of national environmental goals, including: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Aichi Biodiversity Targets; and the UNFCCC Paris Agreement. The goals of the National FLR Strategy are aligned with international commitments and the 1.2 million ha restoration pledge to the Bonn Challenge and Initiative 20x20.

The direct beneficiaries of the national FLR strategy are the forest communities, indigenous peoples, the private forest sector, local governments, academia, forestry and agroforestry producers,

as well as small and medium forest companies, including stakeholders across productive landscapes.

To support the National FLR Strategy, a Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) was applied to formulate recommendations which take into consideration social, economic and financial factors, as well as institutional measures, to advance the implementation of FLR. ROAM and FLR efforts have been receiving technical and financial support from IUCN through the KNOWFOR programme, funded by UK aid from the UK Government, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, and the US Agency for International Development under its Regional Climate Change Program.

Governance

The institutional coordination team is composed of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN), the National Forestry Institute (INAB), the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP), and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA). The team is supported by the National FLR Roundtable, an inter-sectoral entity made up of more than 30 Guatemalan organisations and government institutions, and led by INAB.

Finacial mechanism

The Probosque Law (Decree 2-2015) includes a forestry incentive program to promote the establishment, recovery, restoration, management, production and protection of forests. Probosque will be in place for 30 years and will be the main public financing instrument for the implementation of the National FLR Strategy, together with the incentive program for small holders of forest or agroforestry land (Pinpep).

Priority Interventions

A financial analysis for the implementation of restoration actions selected the following land use transitions:
- Agroforestry systems from natural pasture, guamiles (shrub vegetation), and staple grains with a potential to restore 228,573 ha;
- cocoa-banana-mahogany agroforestry systems from natural pasture (44,653 ha) or guamiles (88,868 ha);
- forest plantations in areas currently with natural pasture and low shrub vegetation (scrub and guamiles); and
- silvopastoral systems from natural pasture (79,565 ha).

For riparian and protected forests with restoration potential and low shrub vegetation (shrubs and guamiles), transitions are recommended to protect waterways and promote sediment retention. Additionally, the production of pine (*Pinus sp.*) and mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) is proposed.

Next steps

The national strategy is being implemented in phases, promoting the incorporation of good practices and access to markets in sectoral development plans that contribute simultaneously to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

For further information, please see:
Forest landscape restoration opportunities in Guatemala

Value for Money: Guatemala's Forest Landscape Restoration

Resources:
InfoFLR.org
iucn.org/forests

IUCN

INFO**FLR**
by IUCN