

GUATEMALA

BASIC FACTS ABOUT PEI GUATEMALA

Timescale: Preliminary Phase (2010-2011); Phase I (2013-2017).

Partners: National Development Planning Agency of the Office of the President (SEGEPLAN), the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN), Municipal authorities in the eastern 'Dry Corridor', and UNDP Guatemala.

Focus: Improve national development planning capacity to include ecosystem services and pro-poor equitable development into sub-national and national policies and development planning processes.

MAINSTREAMING CONTEXT

Despite progress on democratic governance, poverty and inequality remain high in rural areas (70% poverty rate) and among indigenous groups (56% poverty rate). Guatemala faces considerable environmental challenges, including severe droughts, deforestation soil and land degradation, vulnerability to natural disasters and vulnerability to climate change. Guatemala is among the five countries in the world that is most affected by floods, hurricanes and earthquakes. Among Guatemala's main products and sources of economic growth are sugar, bananas, coffee, tourism, and aquaculture. All these products and activities depend heavily on natural resources and place additional pressures on the environment.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Through capacity building initiatives such as seminars, workshops, design of a communication strategy, PEI hopes to: identify and characterize the uses and services of ecosystems and their contribution to the reduction of poverty of the population; form and strengthen the national inter-institutional commission (SEPLAN, MARN, CONAP, INAB, MEM) for the mainstreaming of the valuation of ecosystem services and the incorporation of indicators to the framework of the national development agenda 2032.

Implement citizen participation and consultation mechanisms within the Dry Corridor regional development plan. This, through the gathering of information and creation of the territorial vision will be directed towards territorial management with emphasis in ecosystems and public/private investments for the reduction of food vulnerability.

Development of three plans of local territorial planning with an ecosystem approach for the preservation of the coastal ecosystem using pilot experience and through a commission between the different municipalities articulated around the valuation of the coastal ecosystem.

ACHIVEMENTS

The project started in the last trimester of 2013. It is in early phase of implementation. The PEI team has been established with a project coordinator, a specialist in Geographic Information Systems, a specialist in environment and rural development, a regional planning specialist and a territorial economy specialist.

A baseline for public investment expenditure in PEI-ECOPLAN related issues at national level has been created.

Environmental issues have been integrated into the National Development Plan “K’atun Nuestra Guatemala 2030”, both through a specific chapter and through the whole document with precise goals and indicators.

LESSONS LEARNED

Conceptual approaches to poverty and environment are important and when combined with on-the-ground experiences maximize impact from the project.

In a country that is suffering of high rates of rural migration to cities, there is a high need to take into consideration the different impacts of ecosystem services both at rural and urban level.

Need to articulate actions at different levels of administration in order to have impact, diminish transaction costs and ensure participation.

Communication is a key element of the project and will require investment.

WAY FORWARD

As a project under the National Implementation (NIM) modality the main objective is to consolidate national appropriation and impact in public policies to mainstream environmental issues into the planning processes all around the country. Create effective impact in the on-going decentralization process and ensure the continuity of the scheduled activities are also important project goals.