



STRENGTHENING CULTURAL AND PRODUCTIVE DIVERSITY OF THE OTOMI AND ZAPOTEC INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN MEXICO



AUTHORS

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Reforestamos Mexico promoted collaboration between 5 members of the International FSC® to strengthen the cultural and natural heritage of the Otomi ethnic group in San Geronimo Zacapexco Community, San Luis Anahuac Ejido and the Silvicultores Unidos de la Cuenca del Alto Panuco in Villa del Carbon, State of Mexico, and the Zapotec ethnic group in the community of Ixtlan de Juarez in Oaxaca, benefiting 1,895 people through the management of their natural resources for the sustainable development and responsible forest management of 26,713 hectares.



Scope and objectives

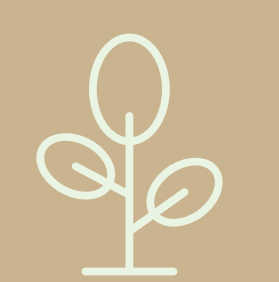
The project has strengthened community development and improved business skills, generating benefits in educational, cultural, artistic, recreational and tourism aspects to rescue the identity and productive processes of the forestry value chain, some of the results are:

- Creation of manuals for teaching Otomí and Zapotec languages.
Training of instructors and courses for 150 people.
- Creation of operating manuals for carpentry, plant production, temazcal practice, native species, and medicinal plants.
- Placement of signage for forest care in 4 languages.
- First FSC® certification of ecosystem services for watersheds and recreational services in Mexico and North America.- Analysis and monitoring of water quality.
- First FSC® FM and CoC certification of Christmas trees in Mexico.
- Installation of solar lamps in 2 ecotourism parks.
- Creation of a nursery for plant production and a botanical garden for educational purposes.
- Installation of 2 sawmills for short dimension processing.
- Development of the wood flooring industry in the community and commercial linkage with FSC® member INDUMARK.
- Establishment of a carpentry micro-industry to produce furniture and accessories.
- Promotion and linkage of door-to-door sales of Christmas trees, increasing the commercial value by 30%.
- Conditioning of a rappel, construction of 2 temazcales and a dressing room.
- Development of traditional Otomi embroidery.
- Responsible consumption marketing strategy.



Innovative approach / Results

- The initiative is based on a multi-sector strategic alliance, which has allowed rapid actions to generate trust, accelerate territorial planning, and facilitate the approach of public, private and philanthropic investments / collaborations in an aligned and articulated manner in favor of the development and consolidation of value chains.
- An alternative to reduce the loss of culture in forest-covered areas is through the strengthening of governance in ejidos and communities, with the focus on community productive activity, business strengthening, taking care of the identity of each agrarian group, and productive linkages.
- Strengthening productive alternatives and services offered by the forests of communities framed in a cooperative background favors the exchange of knowledge to achieve social balance in living conditions, skills, and work; all the above with a shared territorial vision between communities and ejidos that has a greater productive and organizational progress, promoting the self-management of their



Lessons learned

Integrated landscape management through the appropriation of productive capacities contributes to a more efficient organization and distribution of wealth, which translates into improving the quality of life of the inhabitants, generating economic development in harmony with the environment.

The transfer of a model that works can mean a greater area of influence in various agrarian nuclei that can also aspire to obtain FSC® certification of forest management. However, there is still work to be done to position the true value of forests in the marketplace and to simplify the language of forest management for society to promote responsible consumption.



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