

CAPABILITIES STATEMENT

TOWARD A RESILIENT AND PROSPEROUS SELVA MAYA



Photo: Sergio Izquierdo

One of the most ecologically important forests globally, the Selva Maya spans 5.7 M hectares across Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize and sustains more than 600,000 rural people—many of whom live in poverty. Its name reflects a vibrant socio-cultural heritage, and the forest is home to more than 7,000 species of plants and animals, including the iconic jaguar, tapir, and scarlet macaw.

Harmful agricultural and extractive practices, such as cattle ranching and logging, have caused widespread deforestation and land conversion, threatening local livelihoods, biodiversity, and essential ecosystem services.

For more than three decades, the Rainforest Alliance has worked with forest communities in Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve (MBR) and across ejidos in Mexico's Calakmul and Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserves. We have deep-rooted relationships with community forestry associations, community forest enterprises (CFEs), national and local forest authorities, and Indigenous and community leaders.

IMPACTS TO DATE

The Selva Maya is one of the world's most successful examples of community forest management, and the Rainforest Alliance has helped shape many of those achievements for 30+ years.

2.4M HA+

under sustainable management and conservation, with biodiversity and livelihoods co-benefits provided to more than **18,000 people**

25 value chains

supported, including timber and non-timber forest products such as ramón seed, honey, and natural rubber

US\$155 M in sales

generated for forest products from 2003 to 2025

19,725 jobs created, nearly 4,500 of which are held by women in male-dominated industries

7,743 young people

with improved capacities in sustainable forest management, community forestry, and conservation

INSTITUTIONAL EXPERTISE IN THE SELVA MAYA



Community-based forest governance and policy-enabling environment

- Equitable benefit-sharing and social inclusion in forest governance
- Improved forest fire monitoring, control, and prevention
- Policy, regulatory, and market instruments for sustainable forest management, landscape restoration, financial incentives, value addition, and commercialization within forest value chains
- Landscape-scale evidence and decision-support, including through LandScale, integrating socioeconomic, production, environmental, and human development indicators to inform policy, investment, and adaptive management decisions



Sustainable forest management, conservation, and restoration

- Sustainable forest management planning and implementation, including technical capacity strengthening and compliance with Forest Stewardship Council certification
- A proven, scalable forest landscape restoration methodology, with 1,000 hectares restored in the MBR's multiple-use zone over the last three years
- Technification of community- and municipal-run nurseries, with 100,000 native species under permanent production in one community



Diverse and resilient forest-based market systems

- Production and processing infrastructure, transformation of timber and non-timber forest products, and new product development
- Women and youth leadership, employment, and business development in forestry value chains
- CFE and cooperative development, including strengthened organizational, administrative, and financial skills
- Business matchmaking, negotiating power, and improved access to finance and partnerships

DEEPENING GROWTH AND IMPACT

The Rainforest Alliance has defined three priority areas, aligned with the trinational action plan for the Great Selva Maya Biocultural Corridor developed by the governments of Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize. We will engage with these governments and partners to mobilize resources through blended finance, corporate sourcing commitments, and climate, nature, and biodiversity finance. The [Selva Maya LandScale Assessment](#) provides a common landscape-level evidence base to track progress, identify priorities, and inform investment across these strategic areas.

CONSERVE

Achieve zero deforestation through institutional strengthening, enhanced territorial governance, and expansion of community-based sustainable forest management

- Strengthen and replicate successful community-based models for sustainable forest management, conservation, and business development
- Increase equitable benefit-sharing and social inclusion to solidify territorial governance, overcome barriers to youth succession in forestry, and promote fair compensation for environmental outcomes
- Strengthen community-based forest fire monitoring, control, and prevention

RESTORE

Scale productive landscape restoration to regenerate degraded forest regions and buffer zones and increase ecological connectivity across the Selva Maya

- Provide technical assistance and training using our robust farm and landscape-level planning and management tools
- Embed forest-based enterprise development principles into restoration strategies, ensuring market outlets for products derived from restoration activities
- Adapt, define, and strengthen policies and regulatory frameworks that incentivize and institutionalize forest landscape restoration

GROW

Advance a bioeconomy approach, leveraging markets, data, and innovation for economic growth while ensuring the health and integrity of the Selva Maya's biodiversity and ecosystems

- Generate a portfolio of investment- and market-ready bio-enterprises with biodiversity or nature-based product offerings
- Develop and apply technical, monitoring, and financial instruments and incentives that support communities and market actors to accurately value bioeconomy and ecosystem products and services with verified environmental and social outcomes
- Strengthen bio-enterprises' organizational, financial, and business capacities to help them meet market requirements for quality and volume
- Build market, finance, and partnership opportunities for Selva Maya bio-enterprises, including through technological innovations that improve traceability, sourcing, and impact communication

SELVA MAYA LANDSCAPE



SCALING PATHWAY

The Selva Maya Brand is a developing initiative at the trinational landscape level that aims to scale sustainable production and commercial practices, while strengthening the market recognition and value of bioeconomy products originating from the Selva Maya. The brand will celebrate the Selva Maya's rich bio-cultural heritage and connect products with community-led conservation and sustainable management of forests and biodiversity. If supported by a rigorous traceability, monitoring, and reporting system, building on the landscape-level evidence generated through the 2025 LandScale Assessment, the brand can provide greater visibility and credibility to bio-enterprises that meet defined criteria for sustainable production, transformation, commercialization, and origin.

ANTICIPATED ADDITIONAL IMPACTS OF OUR SELVA MAYA PROGRAM THROUGH 2030

1.5 M HECTARES

of biologically important regions under continued sustainable forest management and conservation

15,000 HECTARES

under forest landscape restoration, with enhanced ecological connectivity in priority degraded regions

100+ BIO-ENTERPRISES with enhanced organizational, business, and sustainable production capacities, with a subset advancing toward certification and/or verification under recognized standards

6 MARKETS established for bioeconomy products with national and international linkages

US\$15 M mobilized for conservation, restoration, and economic growth activities