

Integrated landscape management for biodiversity conservation in the Sierra Madre Oriental (ProMIP)

► **Context:** Exceptional but fragmented landscape

The mountainous Sierra Madre Oriental is one of Mexico's key natural and cultural biodiversity areas. In addition to providing habitats for important species, the area's ecosystems, including magical cloud forest, provide essential services such as food and timber production, water storage and regulation, and stunning landscapes for recreation and leisure. It is also home to six indigenous peoples groups and is therefore the cradle of ancestral cultural traditions. However, the fact that different resource management and socio-economic development models, often with conflicting or disjointed visions, exist alongside each other means that it is difficult to achieve sustainable development goals in the region.

To address this situation, the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP), in coordination with numerous actors across all levels and sectors in San Luis Potosí, Querétaro, Puebla, Hidalgo and Veracruz, promoted the creation of an ecological corridor to improve connectivity between the area's ecosystems and strengthen management both in the conservation areas themselves and in the buffer zones. In 2012 all the stakeholders agreed to establish an area of over 4 million hectares, announced a shared vision and began to implement activities aimed at sustainable regional development. The initiative is called the Sierra Madre Oriental Ecological Corridor (CESMO) and was created with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) finances the project.

► **Approach:** Integrated natural resource management to simultaneously address production needs, livelihoods and environmental protection.

The approach of the CESMO to sustainable development is based on integrated landscape management. This involves multi-stakeholder collaboration as a means of managing different land uses and resources in a joined-up way. In contrast to sectoral planning, in this approach landscapes provide a framework for balancing the different needs, taking into account both local requirements (e.g. ensuring water availability) and the long-term objectives and targets established in national policies (e.g. reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and international commitments, such as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



The objectives and expected results of the ProMIP project can be grouped into **three main components**, as described below:

1. Formal recognition of the Sierra Madre Oriental Ecological Corridor and development of a national institutional framework

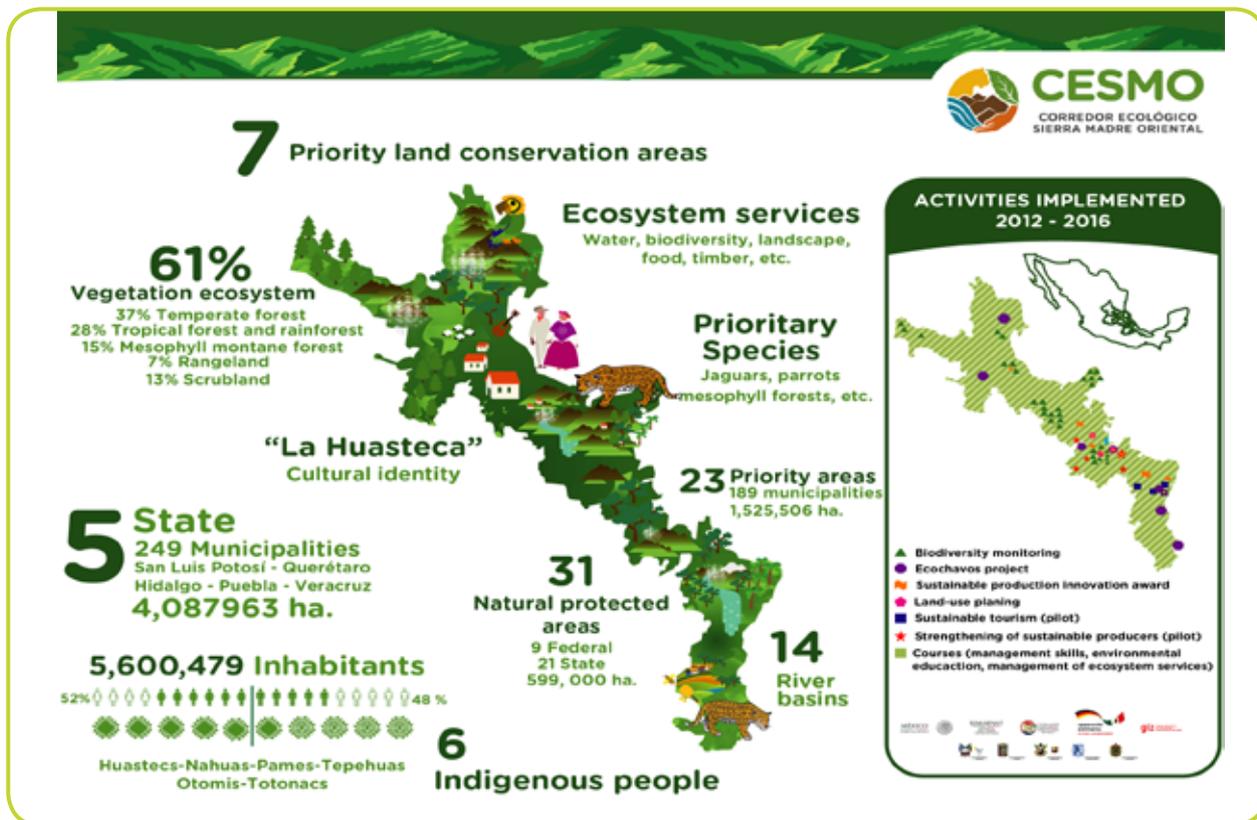
Since the CESMO was first created, various governance mechanisms have been put in place to agree on actions for effective implementation, and the strategy has been recognised in a number of local policy instruments. The ProMIP project is seeking to have the CESMO initiative formally recognised in a regional public policy instrument, which could take the form of a political arrangement, such as a coordination agreement, or something more complex, such as a Special Concurrent Programme for the region involving various government institutions.

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Mexican partner:
National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP)
www.gob.mx/conanp (in Spanish)
Other federal institutions in the agricultural, forest, environmental, tourist and indigenous sectors, state and municipal authorities in the CESMO area and local social and private actors will also be involved in implementing the project.

Committed by:
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) www.bmz.de/en

Overall term:
May 2017 to December 2020



It also aims to promote better conditions at the national level for integrated landscape management as a sustainable development approach. The CESMO experience can serve as an example of good practice at the local level and be scaled up to include other areas and levels. Expected outputs from policy dialogue and exchanges of experience include the creation of a shared understanding among stakeholders and the development of national implementation mechanisms and tools.

2. Strengthening the effectiveness of CONANP's management of protected areas

The protected area is one of the main conservation tools used around the world. With a view to enhancing the effect of protected areas and increasing their representativeness and scope, the new conservation paradigms advocate increasing their effectiveness by improving their design, management and impact and promoting connectivity and integration with buffer areas and wider landscapes and sectors. The project is expected to help strengthen knowledge and capacities, with a view to mainstreaming the integrated management approach into CONANP's processes and tools. A regional-scale pilot initiative will help to develop practical experience.

3. Driving local initiatives to improve economic, social and environmental conditions in the CESMO

The ProMIP project will support the implementation of specific activities to achieve the sustainable economic management and use of resources through various local pilot schemes involving different landscape units and scales in the Sierra Madre Oriental area. They could include initiatives to promote agroforestry and agropastoral systems, basin management measures, sustainable tourism, restoration and green business ventures. These measures

have to simultaneously address multiple environmental, social and economic objectives for a sustainable landscape, which include increasing agricultural productivity and diversification, improving food security, strengthening the resilience and livelihoods of local people, protecting biodiversity, promoting income-generating activities for local communities, enhancing climate change adaptation and mitigation, and improving water quality and availability.

Key expected results include support for actor dialogue and coordination platforms (with a special emphasis on compliance with the principle of inclusion), inclusive negotiation processes, capacity building, resource mobilisation and the implementation of information systems to monitor progress.

For further information, visit:

<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/57127.html>

GIZ Mexico's YouTube channel (in Spanish and German)

www.youtube.com/user/gizmexico

Ecological Corridor website (in Spanish)

www.cesmo.mx

Video: Sierra Madre Oriental Ecological Corridor, Mexico

(Spanish with German subtitles)

https://youtu.be/2xiAW0ZyM_w

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