

Collaboration Efforts Continue to Expand

EcoLogic Development Fund

Collaboration for Community Conservation

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

We protect and restore
threatened ecosystems
through community-
led natural resource
management.

PARTNERSHIP

We provide resources,
training, and accom-
paniment to help local
people and organizations
accomplish their goals.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

We collaborate with our
partners to develop
sustainable, culturally
appropriate livelihood
alternatives.

EcoLogic believes in expanding our partnerships strategically across Latin America, while enhancing our existing projects in the region. We're excited to join with new partners in Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras who are crafting innovative solutions to environmental problems while empowering local communities.

Mexico

Veracruz, on the southern gulf coast of Mexico, is one of the nation's poorest areas. It has two important natural resources that risk being lost to pollution and overdevelopment—the Veracruz wetlands and the Papaloapan River. EcoLogic is partnering with ProNatura Veracruz to conduct “community consultations” in these areas to help local communities build strategic plans. When community members determine their priorities—whether it's better schools, a community center, or more economic opportunity—it allows them to take ownership of solutions that can meet their needs while preserving the environment. Armed with this roadmap, local residents and ProNatura will be able to take action and effect positive change.

Guatemala

In Belize, it's called the Sarstoon River. In Guatemala, it's the Sarstun. The spelling difference is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the massive communication challenges EcoLogic faces in uniting the two countries to preserve this critical river, which flows between two wetland areas that have been formally recognized as protected areas. EcoLogic has long partnered with the Sarstoon-Temash Institute for Indigenous Management (SATIIM), an active NGO in Belize that works to protect the river, including paying to police it from overfishing. Lately, however, they have been consumed with fighting oil exploration in their national park.

Clearly, SATIIM needed a strong Guatemalan collaborator, especially since a lack of environmental regulations and deeper levels of poverty meant that many of the problems needed to be addressed on that side of the river. EcoLogic has begun working with two key groups on this issue. A group called Ak'Tenamit (New Village) focuses on development and youth issues, and runs a high school for indige-



A Maya Q'eqchi child on the the Sarstoon River, an ecologically rich area where EcoLogic is helping to build collaboration between groups in Belize and Guatemala. PHOTO BY TODD SHAPERA

EcoLogic's Growing Reach



nous youth. In the next year, 18 of the youth will do a thesis project with EcoLogic related to economic and environmental issues in the region, especially among the Mayan population. EcoLogic is also working with the local fishermen's association, with whom we are investigating ways to further reduce overfishing. This project enables us to do what we do best—bring together different parties (in this case, across national borders) to address regional environmental and economic problems.

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR


EcoLogic Grows and Deepens

Dear friends and colleagues,

I'm pleased to report that in just the past few months, EcoLogic has taken several huge steps forward. We joined with three new partners—in Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras—in strategic spots along the Meso-American Biological Corridor. Our work on innovative projects such as Pico Bonito Forests, our for-profit affiliate that sells carbon credits, is drawing attention from key players like USAID and Dole Fruit, a major employer in the area. You'll also hear from our Mexico Program Officer Ramón Herrera—who explains in real terms why our work matters—and come along for the ride as two EcoLogic supporters visit Honduras to help study and save the endangered Emerald Hummingbird. On another note, we'd also like to thank Jocelyn Gardner, our communications officer who departed this fall for a new chapter at Harvard Divinity School, and Josh Lichtenstein, our Belize program officer, who returned to the United States with his family. In turn, we're welcoming two additions to our staff: Gina Rindfleisch, our development associate/executive assistant, and Gabriela Artavia, our new communications officer.

As always, we could not do this work—helping local communities thrive in Latin America, and protecting environmental resources for them and for all of us—without your financial support. We are truly grateful for your help, and I encourage you to take a look at our “Ways to Give” box on page 3 or visit our website, www.ecologic.org. Your contribution truly makes a difference.

Yours sincerely,



Shaun Paul

Studying and Saving the Honduran Emerald Hummingbird: EcoLogic Supporters Take Action

Performing aerial reconnaissance and conducting GPS tracking might sound like an episode of *24*, but for two weeks, it was the routine for EcoLogic Development Fund supporters Deb Atwood and Robert Hyman, who were part of a team researching the critically endangered Honduran Emerald Hummingbird. The bird's unique, dry thorn-forest habitat is threatened by the expansion of agriculture and livestock grazing.

The group took GPS data from the flights, transferred it to maps, and then drove through the territory in jeeps to verify it. In fact, team members drove over 1,000 miles throughout Honduras in search of dry forest habitat. The payoff of this painstaking research? Finding the bird in an area it was not known to exist (a valley south of San Francisco de la Paz). This new data will be incorporated into an updated ecosystem map of Honduras.

While the bird's population numbers may be revised upward thanks to the new habitat discovered, the overall environmental degradation of the area threatens its future. “We hope to go back annually and spend more time in areas we identified as suitable habitat where the Honduran Emerald may still exist,” says Hyman. “I also want to thank EcoLogic and all of our team for their tireless efforts.”



The endangered Emerald Hummingbird, which EcoLogic supporters studied on a recent trip to Honduras.

PHOTO BY ROBERT HYMAN

Board's Visit to Honduras Includes Briefing to Business and Government Leaders

In June, EcoLogic's board and supporters traveled to Honduras to visit Pico Bonito Forests, the site of a world-renowned program that sells carbon offset credits in a bid to combat global warming. EcoLogic helped start the initiative, whose methodology was only the fourth approved under the Kyoto Protocol, and has spun it off into a for-profit venture.

Visitors encountered the amazing sight of 180,000 seedlings of local species such as Rosita, Redondo, and coffee trees. Some of these seedlings will be planted in local communities and others will expand the buffer zone of Pico Bonito National Park. One of our goals for Pico Bonito Forests from the outset was to encourage other ventures like it—and it's clear from our June trip that key players are paying attention. Harry Brinholz—the director for USAID in Honduras, which also contributed funds to a component of Pico Bonito Forests—spent an entire day on a field visit learning about the project and how it can be replicated. We were also accompanied by Raul Martinez, the general manager of Dole Fruit's Honduran operations. Dole, which owns many plantations close to Pico Bonito Forests, is a major employer in the area.

On their trip to Honduras, EcoLogic board members and supporters also visited other agroforestry and microwatershed projects EcoLogic undertakes with our partners. They heard from Sumilda Duarte, who did not have access to fresh, clean water. She decided to take action, and with her neighbors and the help of EcoLogic created a “water board”—a community agency that obtains legal jurisdiction over the water supply and, for a small monthly fee from users, ensures it's available and safe. Clean water would simply not be available without the water boards. EcoLogic supporters and representatives from USAID and Dole left with a clear sense of how EcoLogic's work is benefiting families and the environment in Honduras.



**USAID
Director in
Honduras
Harry Brinholz
(center) learns
about Eco-
Logic's work
at Pico Bonito
Forests.**

Ways to Give

EcoLogic relies on your support to help conserve the biological and cultural diversity of Latin America. Here's how you can help:

- Become an EcoLogic Ambassador and pledge to raise \$1,000 or more. You can fulfill your pledge by making a personal contribution and reaching out to your network.
- Have your employer match your contribution.
- Honor a birthday, wedding, or anniversary with a donation to EcoLogic.
- Make a gift of stock or other securities.
- Share your talents by donating professional services.
- Participate in workplace giving. Federal or Massachusetts state employees can give to EcoLogic through Earth Share's yearly Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) by designating our code number (11432) on the payroll pledge form.
- Donate via our website. We welcome online credit card contributions. Simply go to www.ecologic.org and click on **Donate Now** to give through our secure online donation form. You can also sign up for recurring monthly donations on this page.

To find out more about these options, please call Deborah Fraize, director of development, at (617) 441-6300 ext. 105.

Thank you!

Collaboration Efforts Continue to Expand

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Honduras

Finally, our partner in Honduras stands out because is not an NGO—rather, it *is* the government. MAMUCA (the Municipalities of the Central Atlantic Department) is made up of five cities and towns, and was established in 2001 by their mayors. Their goal, like EcoLogic's, is to reduce poverty and improve the lives of the underserved in their communities. We were drawn to this project for two key reasons. First, we already have partners both

north and south of the region in Honduras, so this project allows us to connect the “corridor” and protect the steady strides we're making regionally. Secondly, we couldn't resist the opportunity to work with local governments who are actively embracing the values we share—and are committed to establishing the legal basis for the protection of biodiversity, a step that would pay huge dividends for their region and across Honduras.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Why Our Work Matters: Mexican Program Officer Ramón Herrera

Ramón Herrera started his journey toward EcoLogic—and his “mission in life”—in 1993. He was working for the government and was sent to collect defaulted loans from five indigenous community organizations in one of Mexico’s poorest regions. “I went to visit the groups,” Ramón says, “and discovered that not only did they not know how to read or write, but the money that they supposedly had borrowed from the government had never even been delivered. They had been viciously tricked and cheated. This realization caused a radical change in my thinking.”

He was able to help get the “debts” canceled and decided to devote himself to helping similar communities. “This experience opened my eyes to the situation of extreme poverty in my country,” he says, “and opened my heart to offer what service I can to these marginalized rural communities.”

One of Ramón’s major projects is assisting the Regional Council of the Sierra de Guerrero, a local nonprofit organization focusing on supporting communal landholders, improving their



**Ramón Herrera,
EcoLogic Mexico Program Officer**

quality of life, and protecting forests. Ramón and EcoLogic helped the Regional Council develop strategic plans for both economic development and environmental conservation. Highlights of the plan include con-

“Whenever I work with a local organization, my overall goal is local self-sufficiency.”

ducting feasibility studies related to extracting resins from certain tree species, producing livestock in a sustainable fashion, and creating a network of community-managed protected areas. The plan’s initiatives also include establishing “ecosystem service payments” in which Acapulco’s tourist industry would pay for the clean water they can access thanks to the conservation efforts of poorer, upland residents. EcoLogic will continue to work with the Regional Council, providing technical assistance (on things like fundraising and project management) to help them execute these plans.

Says Ramón, “Whenever I work with a local organization, my overall goal is local self-sufficiency—for the beneficiaries to take ownership of their conservation efforts and, through their participation, to generate income and develop their own capacities.” With more than 90 communities and 1,300 local residents involved in the strategic planning process EcoLogic helped conduct, we’re already well on our way.



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