



U.S. - MEXICO - CANADA AGREEMENT SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT AND COMBATTING ILLEGAL LOGGING



GOAL 1

Strengthen Mexico's wood identification capacities, and integrate Mexico into regional and global wood identification efforts, including enhanced monitoring via Lacey Act declaration automation and analysis.

The United States, Mexico and Canada are significant timber trade partners. Mexico imports nearly 70% of its timber from the United States, and exports as much as 75% of its timber to the U.S. (1). Illegal logging and deforestation, however, can negatively impact trade as well as weaken rule of law, damage and degrade critical ecosystems, and harm local communities. In Mexico, it is estimated that between 5 and 14 million m³ of illegally harvested wood are sold each year, and that the trade in illegal wood represents a business of \$7,000 to \$20,000 million pesos or \$342 to \$978 million USD (2,3,4).

The partnership between USFS and USTR is working to address these challenges and promote sustainable timber management in Mexico. This in turn helps all three USMCA trade partners to strengthen the timber market by combating illegal logging, deforestation and forest degradation.

- **Wood assessment report:** Interviewed 114 relevant actors from the government, academia, and the private sector to report on the current resources, opportunities, and challenges related to wood identification and screening within Mexico.
- **Macro-scopic wood identification workshops:** Conducted seven webinars and four in-person trainings on wood identification tools and technologies and best practices for combating illegal timber and associated trade for over 100 inspection agents, researchers, and other government personnel from Mexico; USG agencies such as the Department of Justice, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Customs and Border Protection presented at these trainings.
- **Reference database for timber samples:** Collected 455 timber samples from 25 tropical tree species to support timber inspection efforts. USFS is collaborating with the Mexican Ministry of the Environment (SEMARNAT), local communities, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) to collect timber samples within forest-dependent communities in southern Mexico. The wood samples are part of a global wood reference database that facilitates timber species identification with the Direct Analysis in Real Time (DART) Time-of-Flight Mass Spectrometry (TOFMS) technology. Timber samples are shared with laboratories in Mexico, Canada and the United States.
- **Wood identification technology:** Launched the DART-TOFMS mass spectrometry wood identification machine through USG inter-agency collaboration. The DART-TOFMS supports rapid species identification of seized timber. The National Institute for Ecology and Climate Change (INECC) received the DART-TOFMS and is coordinating with the Attorney General office to analyze seized timber.

Timber trade routes to and from Mexico



Developed by the USFS with information from the Ports, Airports and Border Inspection Office of PROFEPA.

GOAL 2

Improve capacity of government agencies and communities to efficiently and effectively monitor their landscapes and enforce environmental regulations and policies.



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- **Diagnostic of park ranger and community groups:** Completed semi-structured interviews of 12 key partners and an assessment survey of 170 park guards, inspection agents and relevant actors in Chiapas to identify pathways to improve effective monitoring and enforcement of forests and natural protected areas that are under threat from deforestation and illegal logging, as well as other illicit activities.
- **Illegal Logging and Associated Trade training course:** USFS is collaborating with Mexico's Commission for Natural Protected Areas to launch a virtual park ranger course aimed at combatting illegal logging. The course includes 4 modules designed to train participants on the laws and regulations governing forest management, the tools for detecting land use change, specific actions to prevent deforestation and the role of human rights and ethics in illegal logging and associated trade.

MAIN OBJECTIVES



The USFS strengthens monitoring and enforcement relating to USMCA Articles 24.15 (Trade and Biodiversity), 24.22 (Conservation and Trade), and 24.23 (Sustainable Forest Management and Trade). These Articles commit the Parties to exchange information and experiences on issues related to illegal trade in wild flora and fauna; improve inspection capabilities; strengthen government capacity and institutional frameworks to promote sustainable forest management; and promote trade in legally harvested forest products. The USFS is addressing these objectives through a Three Goal Plan to Promote Sustainable Forest Management and Combat Illegal Logging.





Early warning system (EWS)

- Early warning systems (EWS) for deforestation:** USFS, in collaboration with other US government agencies and the government of Mexico, piloted deforestation early-alert systems using remote sensing technologies for the avocado-producing region in the state of Jalisco and two priority protected areas, Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve in Chiapas and the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve in Campeche, which are threatened by illegal logging and illicit land-use change.

The early alerts have already led to concrete action by the GOM to curb illegal logging and deforestation. Following a request from SEMARNAT, CONAFOR and the deforestation early-alert team successfully verified illegal land use change in municipalities around the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve. With these results, SEMARNAT and other GOM authorities have begun to take actions against those involved in this deforestation.



GOAL 3

Increase legal avenues for sustainable timber management and trade.

- Collaborating with community partners:** Collaborating with NGO and community partners to train communities in financial analysis tools, allowing small and medium enterprises to monitor and evaluate costs and income, negotiate fair prices, improve financial management and transparency, and strengthen their long-term sustainability. Two NGO partners and four partnering communities (total 25 participants) in Chiapas completed a 6-week training on the Green Value Tool in year 2. In year 3, one of the GVT developers conducted an in-person course at a rural forestry technical college in the state of Campeche. The students and teachers who participated in the course are now conducting financial analyses of local community forest enterprises in the region.
- Technical assistance along the forestry value chain:** Completed 10 workshops on timber management, training 347 individuals from forest dependent communities. USFS provides technical assistance to community forest enterprises (CFEs) in Oaxaca, Chiapas, and the Yucatán Peninsula on timber and non-timber forest management and financial analysis for CFE business plans.
- Best practices in community forestry management:** 5,000 hectares of land in Oaxaca and 15,000 in Campeche are currently being managed under a new community forestry management plan, which strengthens the technical capacity of communities and establishes best practices.

Chacá (<i>Burcera simarouba</i>)	33
Chechén (<i>Metopium brownei</i>)	30
Chicozapote (<i>Manilkara zapota</i>)	30
Machiche (<i>Lonchocarpus castilloi</i>)	30
Sac Chaccá (<i>Dendropanax arboreus</i>)	30
Tzalam (<i>Lysiloma latisiliquum</i>)	29
Katalox (<i>Swartia cubensis</i>)	24
Caoba (<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>)	21
Amapola (<i>Pseudobombax ellipticum</i>)	21
Guayacán (<i>Guaicum sanctum</i>)	19
Chacahuanté (<i>Simira sp.</i>)	18
Pukté (<i>Terminalia buceras</i>)	17
Kanisté (<i>Pouteria campechiana</i>)	16
Chacté kook (<i>Cosmocalyx spectabilis</i>)	15
Negrilo (<i>Simarouba glauca</i>)	13
Ramón (<i>Brosimum alicastrum</i>)	12
Granadillo (<i>Platymiscium yucatanum</i>)	11
Cedro rojo (<i>Cedrela odorata</i>)	5
Jabín (<i>Piscidia piscipula</i>)	4
Teca (<i>Tectona grandis</i>)	4
Bayo (<i>Aspidosperma cruentum</i>)	3
Barí (<i>Calophyllum brasiliense</i>)	2
Giricote (<i>Cordia dodonandra</i>)	2
Chakté viga (<i>Caesalpinia platyloba</i>)	1

Table 1: Number of wood samples collected from 17 commercially important tree species in Mexico



LOOKING FORWARD



The USFS and USTR continue to work together and complete the action points under the Three Goal Plan to Promote Sustainable Forest Management and Combat Illegal Logging. This includes supporting wood identification, building a training program for national park employees to enforce environmental regulations and policies, and implementing financial analysis tools in communities to support the promotion of sustainable forest management and trade.

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