



Reserva de la Biosfera Sierra Gorda, Querétaro

Third Quarter Newsletter 2007

UNESCO



As part of the Project "Jaguar Monitoring in the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve," we have continued working with camera traps in diverse ecosystems located within the municipalities of Jalpan de Serra and Landa de Matamoros. We have made significant advances with a total of 15 species of birds and mammals photographed, providing information about the diversity and abundance of the wildlife species that find refuge in this natural protected area. The species registered on camera vary from threatened birds like crested guans and wild turkeys to jaguars, pumas, ocelots, white tailed deer and agoutis, among other species of mammals. Aside from the satisfaction of having evidence of their presence in the reserve and gaining preliminary data on their distribution and abundance, we have been pleasantly surprised about the distribution of several species that have been photographed in areas where we had not expected them. We have made these photos available to the public to express our gratitude to the local landowners who have permitted us to work on their properties with willing support at all times.



Three consultants from the prestigious financial firm PricewaterhouseCoopers, an international leader in markets, consulting, investments and accounting, visited to collaborate with the management of the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve and Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda to develop an integrated strategic plan for conservation businesses and other projects. Lena Svensson of Stockholm, Sweden, Benjamin Ye of Shanghai, China, and Darren Griffiths of Brisbane, Australia, (currently in San Francisco, USA) visited from the beginning of July through mid-August and worked in the Sierra Gorda Earth Center in order to develop and integrate a business strategy to assist the Sierra Gorda Earth Center, Sierra Gorda Ecotours, and Bosque Sustentable, A.C. in reaching financial sustainability in the medium and long terms. The documents are the backbone for the self-financing strategy of the on-going civil conservation movement and presentable for potential funders and investors who are interested in supporting environmental projects.



In Turrialba City, Cartago province, Costa Rica, at the Center of Tropical Agronomy and Ecological Investigation (CATIE), the VII Forum of Mesoamerican Members of the IUCN took place from the 1st to the 3rd of August. The goals of the meeting were to exchange experiences, raise consensus among members, elect a new Directive Board for the Mesoamerican region, and prepare regional members of the IUCN for their participation in the World Congress for Nature to be held in Barcelona, Spain this coming year. A representative of the GESGIAP (the 1000th member of the IUCN), attended the forum together with the representatives of other organizations, universities and governmental agencies that form the Mexican Committee of the IUCN. Likewise, delegations attended from Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Panama, and of course the host country of Costa Rica. The conference constituted a unique experience of camaraderie and exchange of experiences among diverse organizations including those that work on issues like the protection of coastal mangroves, responsible fisheries, environmental education and environmental law, to those developing projects as part of their work in natural protected areas.



COMISION NACIONAL DE
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On June 21, the panel "Putting a Price on People and the Planet: The new voluntary market for poverty alleviation and environmental services" was organized by SVTGroup and Viva Sierra Gorda and hosted at the home offices of Salesforce Inc., a company based in San Francisco, California. Tackling cutting-edge issues such as climate change and measuring tangible and intangible impacts on environmental, economic and social levels, the Director of the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve, Martha I. "Pati" Ruiz Corzo, presented the accumulated experience on regional and multi-institutional levels. 40 attendees heard from recognized experts in their fields: Ricardo Bayón Director and Editor-in-chief of www.ecosystemmarketplace.com for the markets of payments and compensation for environmental services; Sara Olsen, founding partner of Social Venture Technology Group (SVT) for methodologies of Social return on Investment (SROI), and Michael Orr of www.salesforce.com about private enterprise drivers for investing in triple bottom line concepts. To learn more, contact us at gesgjap@prodigy.net.mx, it is important to share the experience of the Sierra Gorda. See the press release on our website: www.sierragorda.net/news/

On the 25 and 26 of June, thanks to the support of Forest Trends, the Business and Biodiversity Offset Program (BBOP) led a workshop entitled "Designing Biodiversity Offsets for Development Projects" held at Rancho el 7 in Tequisquiapan, Querétaro. The second in a series of workshops about Ecosystem Services organized by the Sierra Gorda Earth Center (Centro Tierra Sierra Gorda). Kerry ten Kate, BBOP's Director from the United Kingdom, and David Parkes, of Queensland, Australia, who with their broad experience detailed how to develop biodiversity offset projects to compensate in an efficient manner for the impacts to biodiversity resulting from infrastructure development projects. The conference was attended by personnel from a variety of institutions like Mexican Petroleum (PEMEX), the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE), the Secretary of Agriculture of San Luis Potosi State (SEDARH), the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), the National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR), Grupo Ecologico Sierra Gorda (GESG) and Bosque Sustentable A.C.

Ashoka Innovators for the Public, with their network of social entrepreneurs, experts in various critical global issues, supports the collaboration of three Latin American fellows distributed in Mexico, Chile and Peru. At the Jalpan campus of Centro Tierra Sierra Gorda in July, Rod Walker, coming from southern Chile, conducted two workshops for tour guides from the region to practice observing and experiencing nature with their clients, as well as with personnel from the Sierra Gorda project, sharing his wide breadth of experience and teaching resources for Nature Appreciation. For a second time this year, Albina Ruiz of Ciudad Saludable in Peru came to Sierra Gorda to work once again with municipal government officials to improve the management of sanitary landfills by making site visits and training workshops in the Sierra Gorda Earth Center installations. In the neighboring region of the Huasteca, San Luis Potosi State, Reserve staff accompanied Albina to worked with the personnel of the town councils of Xilitla, Aquismón, Huichihuallán and San Vicente Tancuayalab, with the goal of improving the management of the trash dump which receives the waste of various municipalities of the Huasteca. Additionally, Ashoka funded the participation of the Biosphere Reserve deputy director to visit Ciudad Saludable in action in Lima, Peru. And Sierra Gorda has formed a partnership with the Mexican Ashoka Fellow, Carolina Nieto of Todo Mujer, to raise the self-esteem and hold capacity-building workshops with the women-run microenterprises in the Reserve.

These collaborative consultations and workshops are a valuable contribution to the region, through Centro Tierra Sierra Gorda we intend to follow-up for improving livelihoods and the conservation of nature.