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Introduction

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) is recognized as a key strategy to restore ecological integrity while generating a series of benefits for the population locally, nationally, and internationally as it builds resilience to climate change.¹

Restoration implies increasing the number of trees and/or the health of forest ecosystems in a given area, thus recovering and improving the important ecological functions of the landscape such as sustainability for biological production, availability of sufficient and safe water, protection of soil and watercourses, erosion control, and fire prevention.

Forest Landscape Restoration is a necessary condition for compliance with the three international conventions: to combat climate change (UNFCCC), against desertification (UNCCD), and to protect biological diversity (CBD). At the same time, restoration contributes directly to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 13 "Urgent action to combat climate change", SDG 15 "Terrestrial ecosystems", SDG 6 "Clean Water", and SDG 2 "End hunger".

Given this context, global leaders and organizations came together in Bonn, Germany, to commit to promoting a comprehensive approach to landscape restoration rather than narrow initiatives such as direct reforestation. The Bonn meeting highlighted the importance of restoration for different sectors, including agriculture, energy, water, poverty alleviation, and climate change mitigation (GPFLR, 2017).²

The Bonn Challenge serves to channel country commitments through a platform for political dialogue that catalyzes national actions and local activities, promoting restoration goals that facilitate compliance with international conventions.

In the year 2015, the First Regional Meeting in Latin America was held as part of the global initiative. Since then, the platform has met annually in the region, most recently in June, 2017, in the city of Roatán, Bay Islands, Honduras.

The objectives for the Bonn Challenge Latin America 2017 were:

1. To promote building technical and political capacity for landscape restoration activities.
2. To share experiences in Latin America on processes for good forest governance and job creation linked to landscape restoration.
3. To build cooperation relationships between countries in the region.

This report covers and summarizes the most relevant aspects from the Bonn Challenge Latin America 2017 event, including country contributions from ministerial presentations, important points from high-level discussion panels, experiences on restoration activities undertaken around the Challenge initiative, and the event conclusions.

Background

About the Bonn Challenge

Problems of deforestation and forest degradation continue to grow worse in most tropical countries, leading to a reduction in the ecosystem goods and services that forests provide, and triggering deterioration of livelihoods and greater vulnerability for the rural communities that depend on the forests.

Seeking to counteract the negative effects of deforestation and forest degradation, the Bonn Challenge was launched in September, 2011, in a ministerial event organized by the Federal Republic of Germany and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with support from the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (GPFLR).

The Bonn Challenge is considered to be the largest global restoration initiative, and it has set a goal of restoring 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by the year 2020.

This initiative was designed as a vehicle to implement several existing international commitments, particularly REDD+ objectives under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Aichi Target 15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), along with other instruments related to soil degradation.

Additionally, the New York Declaration on Forests, signed at the 2014 Climate Summit, has pushed global restoration efforts. This declaration was signed by over 100 governments, different civil society organizations, indigenous groups, and private companies. The declaration also included the Bonn Challenge target in its goals, and recognized the urgent need to extend the target further, requesting additional restoration of at least 200 million hectares by 2030.

Thus far, the Bonn Challenge has procured 40 commitments from different countries, subnational governments, and non-governmental agencies to restore over 148 million hectares of degraded lands.

In Latin America, 18 commitments have been announced for a total of 35.64 million hectares, including commitments from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Rwanda, and others.

In March 2015, the second conference for the Bonn Challenge was held, to take stock of the progress made since the launch of the Bonn Challenge in 2011, to announce new commitments, policies, and other pertinent measures to deepen and strengthen forest landscape restoration around the world, and to explore opportunities to create and implement new and creative partnerships for restoration implementation.

Bonn Challenge Latin America

In August 2015, the First Latin America Regional Meeting was held, in El Salvador. This conference sought to promote restoration efforts in countries in the region and encourage parties to join the initiative by establishing local commitments. This would be done through an international platform for dialogue on topics such as capacity building, cooperation systems, and financing mechanisms for landscape restoration. The meeting highlighted the need to foster capacity building through South-South cooperation, including exchange of specialized knowledge and advice, building learning networks, developing technical instruments and tools, and taking advantage of experiences not only from countries in the region, but from Africa and Asia as well.
The second Bonn Challenge meeting in Latin America was held in August, 2016, in Panama City. The objective of this second event was to evaluate country progress toward meeting their restoration commitments, and to announce new concrete commitments. Participants at the meeting demonstrated progress in public policy, plans, and strategies, contributing to the creation of linkages and synergies to facilitate the execution of landscape restoration actions.

**The Bonn Challenge Latin America 2016** demonstrated the importance of developing public policies and regulations to facilitate actions in the field, the effective inclusion of the private sector into restoration financing, and harmonize inter-institutional agendas to ensure that all of the restoration actions undertaken contribute to the sustainable development of communities whose livelihoods depend on the forests.

**Concept for the Third Bonn Challenge Meeting in Latin America, 2017**

This year, the Bonn Challenge dialogue platform focused its discussion on two important topics for landscape restoration: forest governance and employment generation associated to forests.

Good governance often enables forest resources to be used efficiently, sustainably, and equitably; it is also an indication that countries are meeting their objectives in the forest sector and for land use.

The discussion on *forest governance* for landscape restoration opens the door to a broader analysis to identify weaknesses and design timely solutions. Forest governance can also offer a clear response through concrete actions to produce short, medium, and long-term results, generating a learning, adaptation, and progressive improvement process for the governing institutions on issues of forestry and territorial planning.

**Employment generation** associated to forests, on the other hand, helps to re-establish natural capital. Landscape restoration is an opportunity to create jobs, given its low demand for capital, important multiplier effect, and high flexibility and adaptability to different market situations.

This Challenge meeting contributed to political dialogue through formulating environmental conditions for investment, and promoting private sector interest, allowing employment generation and a positive investment climate on a larger scale.
Bonn Challenge Latin America, 2017

Opening ceremony

The third Bonn Challenge Latin America meeting was held in Roatán, Bay Islands, Honduras, and began with the presentation of a video on the "Master Plan on Water, Forests, and Soils", a plan that sets guidelines for holistic management of natural resources, aligned with effective inter-institutional coordination to meet the Honduras' commitments under the Bonn Challenge.

After the screening of the video, opening remarks were shared by the Secretary of State for the Office on Energy, Natural Resources, the Environment, and Mines of Honduras, MiAmbiente+, José Antonio Galdámes, who thanked the country representatives and organizations for participating in the high-level meeting and supporting the Bonn Challenge through their country commitments.

Upon the conclusion of the opening remarks for the event, the Mayor of the Municipality of Roatán, Dorn Andy Ebanks, personally welcomed the participants to the island. Next, the State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Public Works and Nuclear Security, Jochen Flasbarth, presented a summary of how El Salvador became the first host of the Bonn Challenge in Latin America in 2015, opening the doors to the region as a pioneering country in the Challenge initiative.
Additionally, Secretary Flasbarth reiterated his support for the upcoming Challenge meetings in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, demonstrating the commitments and national progress made in this global initiative.

Secretary Flasbarth expressed the satisfaction of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Public Works and Nuclear Security that, as of May of this year, the individual commitments by countries supporting the Bonn Challenge surpassed the restoration target of 150 million hectares by the year 2020, with the help of the most recent restoration commitments made under the Bonn Challenge in Asia.

In the event introductory session, the results from the Second Bonn Challenge Latin America event, 2016, were presented by the Vice-Minister of the Environment of Panama, Yamil Sánchez. These results included:

- **Restoration approach**: Participants examined the importance of using the existing restoration approaches, including a watershed-based approach, and shared their assessments of institutional, administrative, and community progress. Participants also reflected on the need to create favorable conditions for private sector investments in order to facilitate changes in production systems under an efficiency and sustainability approach.

- **Restoration**: The Challenge event emphasized the importance of landscape restoration as a practical measure for climate change adaptation and mitigation, reducing impact on local communities.

- **Country progress**: The participating countries reported progress in building policy instruments to facilitate their restoration activities, including plans, strategies, and programs with pilot actions to express their national interpretations of "restoration".
- **Financing**: The Bonn Challenge event recognized the existence of regional formats for capital investment, risk collateral, credit, and working capital for restoration.

- **Harmonization of inter-institutional agendas**: Participants agreed on the need to identify national priorities in conservation and restoration of forest assets, soils, and biodiversity, to build consensus on a regional agenda and find common sources of support.

Following the intervention by the Vice-Minister Sánchez, *the Secretary of State for the Office on Energy, Natural Resources, the Environment, and Mines of Honduras, MiAmbiente+, José Antonio Galdámes*, presented the Honduras **National Program for Economic Development 20/20**, which promotes actions for job creation and sustainable development in the country from 2016 to 2020. This program is implemented through the "Master Plan on Water, Forests, and Soils", which seeks to ensure that institutions and local organizations have the technical and financial capacity to oversee integrated water, forest, and soil management, with a holistic approach to natural resource management for the wellbeing of the Honduran population.

*The Secretary of State, José Antonio Galdámes, then made the symbolic presentation of the commemorative coins and postage stamps in honor of the Bonn Challenge Latin America 2017 event, to the Secretary, Jochen Flasbarth.*

Subsequently, *the Deputy Executive Secretary for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CDB), David Cooper*, greeted the event participants and emphasized the importance of the Strategic Plan on Biological Diversity, 2011-2020, in which the Aichi Target 15 seeks: "enhanced ecosystem resilience and contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification". The Bonn Challenge thus provides an important thrust forward toward meeting this target.
The Deputy Executive Secretary also urged the countries that still do not have a National Strategy on Biological Diversity to join into efforts to revert environmental degradation and reduce climate change vulnerability.

**Introductory presentation**

To expand upon the central themes of the event, forest governance and job creation associated to forests, the **Regional Director for Mesoamerica at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Grethel Aguilar,** made an introductory presentation entitled: "Socio-Economic Impacts of Good Governance in Landscape Restoration".

This presentation underscored the importance of restoration, not only for ecological recovery in landscapes, but also for the generation of social and economic benefits locally, nationally, and globally.
National Progress in Landscape Restoration in Latin America

The introductory presentation on the Socio-Economic Impacts of Good Governance on Landscape Restoration opened the floor for participants to share the progress made and challenges faced thus far in the implementation of national proposals for restoration. This space was moderated jointly by Secretaries of State, José Antonio Galdámes and Jochen Flasbarth.

The remarks from each of the participating countries in the Third Bonn Challenge Latin America Event, 2017, are summarized below.

- **BRAZIL** has committed to restore 12 million hectares, along with 5 million hectares on integrated agriculture systems that combine crops, livestock, and silviculture activities. These actions are incorporated into the Low-Carbon Agriculture Plan (ABC Plan), and will be implemented together with efforts to restore 5 million hectares of degraded pasture land.

In terms of legislation, Brazil has a National Agenda for Vegetation Recovery that includes three lines of work: a) eradication of illegal habitat conversion, b) sustainable forest management, and c) recovery of native vegetation. Line "c" is underpinned by a National Law for the Protection of Native Vegetation, as well as a National Policy on the Recovery of Native Vegetation (PROVEG) through Federal Decree No. 8972, in force since January 23, 2017. The PROVEG policy seeks to coordinate, integrate, and promote public policies for the recovery of native vegetation on 12 million hectares by 2030, and is implemented through the National Plan for the Recovery of Native Vegetation, PLANAVEG. The plan includes actions to recover native vegetation in permanent preservation areas, legal reserves, and low-productivity lands, using large-scale restoration principles with economic compensation and social inclusion.

Financially, different funding sources have been arranged for the recovery of native vegetation, mainly through a new administrative conversion model by the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA), providing payment for results by the Amazon Fund administrated by the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (BNDES); a German offer of a refundable credit line between the Development Bank (KfW) and the BNDES; and two grants from the Global Environment Facility (GEF).
Additionally, Brazil volunteered to host the third global meeting of the Bonn Challenge, in March 2018.

- **CHILE** has committed to restore 500,000 hectares through the “National Strategy on Climate Change and Vegetation Resources, 2017–2025” (ENCCRV). This strategy was approved in the year 2016 and seeks to contribute to fulfilling Chile’s national commitments on vegetation resources under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), among others.

  The ENCCRV is an instrument to meet emissions reduction commitments related to land use, changing land use, and silviculture. This instrument includes sustainable forest management action in 100,000 hectares of native forests, as well as afforestation, principally with native species, in an additional 100,000 hectares. Currently, the ENCCRV is in its second phase of activity execution, addressing the drivers of deforestation and the degradation of vegetation resources. A third phase of payment for results is projected for 2018, using international bilateral and multilateral financing, state incentives, and private sector financing.

  Another instrument is the Forestry Policy, 2015–2035, which has a goal of afforestation of 500,000 hectares, sustainable forest management of 1 million hectares, and restoration of another 500,000 hectares. This instrument has four defined lines of work: forestry institutions; productivity, and economic growth; social inclusion and equity; and protection and restoration of forest assets.

- **COSTA RICA** has committed to restoring 1 million hectares. The working model is based on rehabilitation of landscape ecosystem services to help populations build resilience to climate change.

  The national strategies to promote landscape rehabilitation include: the National Strategy on Climate Change, Strategy for Biodiversity and Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation in Costa Rica, National REDD+ Strategy, National Forest Development Plan (2011-2020), National Development Plan (2015-2018), and the Agro-Environmental Agenda (2016). Instruments in the agriculture sector include the Agriculture Sector and Rural Territory Development
Policy, Sustainable Development Promotion Program, and the Environmental Benefits Recognition Program.

- **Cuba** has not made any restoration commitments under the Bonn Challenge. Nonetheless, restoration of degraded lands is a country priority and 4 million hectares have been allocated for the forestry sector; changes in land use are subject to approval by the Government Council of Ministers.

For soil restoration, reforestation, forest management, and forest protection, 350 million Cuban Pesos have been allocated in 2017: 89% of this budget comes from the state treasury, and the remaining 11% comes from agricultural companies and cooperatives.

In policy, the recently approved "State Plan to Address Climate Change" incorporates reforestation and forest restoration actions for coastal zones and watersheds. Additionally, the "Social and Economic Development Plan 2030" was approved, with a strategic focus on natural resources and the environment.

For actions in the field, Cuba has demonstration plots on soil, water, and forest protection, for a total effective area of 32,000 hectares. These plots are sites to develop, extend, and consolidate the landscape restoration process. Soil restoration actions can reach 800,000 hectares by 2020, with the available financing and technology.

- **El Salvador** has committed to restoring 1 million hectares, equivalent to 50% of the national territory. To meet this commitment, the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) is implementing the Program for Ecosystem and Landscape Restoration (PREP), which includes three components: a) inclusive restoration and conservation of critical ecosystems; b) synergistic development of physical and natural infrastructure, and; c) restoration of degraded land through the adoption of climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly agriculture.

The PREP plan uses a working methodology with four defined steps: participatory analysis of vulnerability and landscape degradation, identification of sites and techniques for landscape
restoration, preparation of local restoration and monitoring plans, and establishing alliances for implementation.

The technical instruments generated for this work include restoration opportunity maps using local criteria to prioritize water, 49 technical restoration sheets, cost sheets by restoration technique, seven local sustainable development plans, and a farm-level monitoring system with restoration impact indicators.

High-level political agreements promoted in El Salvador include: the Coffee Pact (restoration of 300,000 hectares of coffee production); implementation agreements for landscape restoration with 100 out of the 262 municipalities in the country; the National Council on Environmental Sustainability and Vulnerability (CONASAV), which produced the National Reforestation Plan and the "Sustainable El Salvador" National Environmental Sustainability Plan.

• **GUATEMALA** has made a commitment to restore 1.2 million hectares. The institutional arrangements that the country has made include the establishment of dialogue roundtables with the private sector on the rational and efficient use of water resources. Additionally, 60% of the resources that the state allocates for municipal governments are oriented toward water and environmental sanitation issues.

Guatemala has a restoration opportunities map and a "National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy", coordinated by a National Restoration Roundtable that is made up of government institutions, private sector representatives, non-governmental organizations, community groups, and the academia. The Restoration Strategy uses forest incentive programs as an implementation method, funded by a 1% allocation of the National General Budget.

Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala, Sydney Samuels, presents the country's advances.
**HONDURAS** has committed to restoring **1 million hectares**. The country has developed the Forest, Soils, and Water Master Plan, which seeks to integrate restoration efforts through appropriate inter-institutional coordination, institutional strengthening, and the use of financial mechanisms and incentives to build the capacities of local organizations and knowledge management for decision making. Honduras has also formulated a National Restoration Program to fulfill its national commitment under the Bonn Challenge, and meet the targets set in the Country Vision and National Plan.

In the governmental sector, Honduras has a series of instruments for restoration, such as the National Reforestation Plan, Micro-Watershed Management Programs, and Protected Areas. In term of water infrastructure, water-harvesting projects are underway, and the National Plan on Irrigation and Drainage is in its final stage.

**NICARAGUA** has committed to restoring **2.8 million hectares**. The country is implementing a “Dialogue-Alliance-Consensus” political management model, in accordance with the 2030 sustainable development agenda.

The actions Nicaragua will implement includes the National Crusade for Reforestation, which plans to reforest 30,000 hectares each year. Through the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) at the World Bank, Nicaragua is working on a National Structure on Forests and Climate Change that has set a target of reducing 11 million tons of CO2 equivalent on the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua over a period of 5 years. Regulations on public-private partnerships recently passed to promote ecosystem-based green development schemes.
**PANAMA** has committed to restoring 1 million hectares. Landscape restoration actions in Panama are executed through the "Alliance for One Million" public-private partnership, made up of 5 leading organizations and 42 member groups. The goal of the Alliance is to generate 100,000 decent jobs per year and capture 7 million tons of carbon annually.

By the year 2017, the Alliance for One Million has reforested 13,000 hectares, and granted 12 tenders to reforest 15,000 hectares, with a total investment of 10.8 million Balboas.

As part of the **progress made in the normative framework**, there is currently a bill before the Panamanian Parliament for a Forest Incentive Laws, which would create a "Reforest Panama" rotating loan fund with an initial capital amount of 15 million Balboas. Institutionally, Panama supports the International Center for the Implementation of Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (ICIREDD).

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** will join the Bonn Challenge as a member country in the next regional meeting. With 68% of its national territory appropriate for forestry uses, and as a leader in tourism with 6 million visitors per year, the country will emphasize reforestation and restoration actions in priority watersheds, especially on cross-border watersheds with Haiti. The Dominican Republic has decreed 2017 as the "Year of Agroforestry Development".

In terms of **normative instruments**, the Dominican Parliament is currently considering a proposed Forest Resources Sector Law and Payment for Environmental Services law. The Dominican Republic is currently executing a preparedness fund for REDD, and seeking resources from the World Bank Carbon Facility to fund actions for a projected reforestation pace of 25,000 hectares per year.

Upon the conclusion of the presentations on National Advances in Landscape Restoration in Latin America, a **dialogue session began on the steps to implement landscape restoration actions**. This dialogue was divided into two discussion panels. The contents and conclusions of each discussion are described below:
Forest governance is an essential theme in landscape restoration efforts, covering participatory planning processes, decision-making structures, and formal or informal agreements for actions to be executed. In this Bonn Challenge meeting, Discussion Panel 1 explored efforts to strengthen multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms for landscape restoration and the efficient, sustainable, and equitable use of forest resources. The panel also highlighted progress in the countries that are meeting their targets within national plans in the forest sector and land use issues.

The panel recognized that governance for landscape restoration must focus its efforts on coordinating and integrating different sectors within the territory, and strengthening both "top-down" as well as "bottom-up" dialogue structures that may have decreased in effectiveness, in order to hear and satisfy local demands.

Dialogue and consensus models need to be innovative and comprehensive in order to adjust to different national circumstances and dynamics and avoid obstacles to implementation. These models also must include a multi-disciplinary and participatory approach, with the capacity to integrate regional and national discussions and produce governance systems that reach horizontally (locally) as well as vertically (nationally).

During the plenary session on this topic, participants discussed how the success of dialogue platforms and decision-making structures rests on a working agenda that addresses specific topics and harmonizes the interests of different sectors and stakeholders. This kind of working agenda can be built through a gradual process: first communicating and understanding the problems, challenges, and obstacles for other sectors; second, coordinating actions to generate rapid results and build trust among institutions, and; third, cooperating on relevant issues through win-win arrangements.

It is important for the dialogue platforms and decision-making structures to understand that the economic and financial analysis of land use is an important component for territorial governance, as it can identify perverse incentives, areas of policy incoherence, and barriers to investment. This analysis can also be a point of common ground among different stakeholders and different interests. It is essential to promote economic agendas that emphasize the protection of natural capital without punishing economic growth; this translates into sustainability for restoration actions and appropriate use of the natural resources of the country.

Public investment and public-private mechanisms must be catalysts for economic resources, knowledge, and experience, scaling up from farms to administrative units and higher levels, facilitating technical assistance, and strengthening chains of production in the territory.

Given these considerations, it is important for work to be well coordinated across the three branches of the state (Executive, Legislative, and Judicial) through the corresponding institutions, to produce policy that can be coherently implemented in the territories to facilitate landscape restoration and economic resilience.
In the case of Central America, regional integration is a relevant point to consider in terms of governance issues, as this integration can contribute to structural changes in favor of equitable development. In this sense, it is important to develop a new cooperation model among countries to facilitate the exchange of locally-generated information and experiences, ensure coordinated and integrated natural resource management, and even enable joint financing schemes for restoration on a regional level.

At the end of the discussion panel, participants concluded that to improve governance conditions on a territorial level, it is imperative to:

a. Foster inclusive spaces for dialogue to identify and present local needs and solutions;

b. Seek engagement among different sectors for effective ecosystem restoration and sustainable economic growth;

c. Increase public and public-private investment for landscape restoration;

d. Articulate sector-specific and multi-sector policies to meet the needs of farmers and the economic priorities of the country;

e. Promote regional integration among different sectors linked to landscape restoration, and generate regional agendas that can provide solutions through South-South cooperation formats.

**DISCUSSION PANEL 2: Employment Generation**

**Moderator:** Dr. Laszlo Pancel, GIZ / **Panelist:** José Román Carrera, Rainforest Alliance

Discussion Panel 2 explored the role of landscape restoration as a catalyst for employment in rural areas, and identified the production sectors that can contribute to reducing ecosystem degradation, as well as the value chains that should be promoted through public and/or private investment for these ends.

The discussion panel addressed how employment generation associated with forest landscape restoration can help re-establish natural capital. Landscape restoration is an opportunity to create jobs, given its low demand for capital, important multiplier effect, and high flexibility and adaptability to different market situations.

To address the topic of how to catalyze private sector investments and generate employment, it is important to clarify our understanding of the private sector: local banking interests, impact investors, and different economic stakeholders throughout the value chains may all have different motivations, with the only common ground of seeing economic returns on their investments. Given this variety, it is essential for the countries to define what type of private sector they wish to invite to make investments in their countries, and for this decision to be clearly reflected in their landscape restoration strategies.

The panel identified that the value chains with the greatest potential for landscape restoration and employment generation in Latin America are coffee, cacao, forest management, tourism, and livestock production. In the case of coffee and cacao, these commodities are integrated into global markets and thus data on their profitability and markets are widely known. Secondary forest management was also identified as a sector with great potential for landscape restoration.
The main barriers slowing landscape restoration and rural job creation are low productivity, low competitiveness in international markets, limited financing, little diversification of production, and weak business and administrative capacities.

Impact investors have provided only limited financing due to the high levels of risk in production activity, lack of guarantees, little clarity on land rights and ownership, high political variability, long terms for recovery of the investment, and the limited experience of the organizations in handling credit.

Some alternatives to improve investment and financing for restoration actions are: developing strategic alliances to build the business and administrative capacities of small and medium-size companies; promoting certification for products that contribute to landscape restoration; working to open new markets; and establishing loan guarantee funds to encourage investors to work in this region.

The panel concluded that the (agro)forestry sector can contribute to generating rural employment, but that to ensure quality jobs, a value chain approach to landscape restoration is needed. Incentives and seed funds are also necessary; to reduce the risks associated with investment in production activities, countries should endeavor to develop and/or update labor legislation to generate decent work and a favorable investment climate to generate fair business.

**Closing Ceremony**

Upon the conclusion of the discussion panels, the State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Jochen Flasbarth, made closing remarks for the event.

To continue the efforts and commitments that the countries have made, the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala, Sydney Samuels, invited the participants to the Fourth Bonn Challenge Latin America meeting, to be held on May 8 and 9, 2018, in Antigua, Guatemala.

To bring the session to a close, the Secretary of State for the Office on Energy, Natural Resources, the Environment, and Mines of Honduras, MiAmbiente+, Mr. José Antonio Galdámes, offered conclusions and final remarks.
Conclusions

On the Bonn Challenge

- Bonn Challenge Latin America is an extremely useful platform to catalyze actions for forest landscape restoration. This is a space that combines interest in reforestation, with the tools to make this reforestation meaningful by incorporating a political and conceptual approach to address important challenges such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, and others.
- The continuity of this dialogue platform enables linkages and interaction between different sectors, and promotes public-private alliances to meet the restoration targets of this global initiative on a national scale.
- The Bonn Challenge Latin America is a space for political dialogue that has allowed each country in the region to share their learned lessons.

Country commitments

- It is crucial to recognize that this initiative is an opportunity to align global goals based on the commitments that countries have made under international agreements, and guide the objectives of national planning processes.
- It is important to align the commitments undertaken, particularly the Bonn Challenge targets, with a state policy that can ensure continuity of these efforts under subsequent administrations.
- It is essential to have a monitoring system to report progress toward the political, technical, and financial commitments in each country and the region.

Sustainability

- It is key to engage with the Bonn Challenge partner organizations to facilitate technical cooperation and formulate a regional project to implement restoration actions that can be submitted to the appropriate financing mechanisms such as GEF, GCF, etc.

Benefit distribution

- We are all part of a global restoration effort, and thus must build strategic alliances oriented toward certification processes and fair marketing. These efforts should be linked to value chains, not only within the forestry sector, but also seeking to benefit other sectors such as cacao, coffee, tourism, and livestock.

Experience exchange

- South-South cooperation in Central America must be strengthened, with an eye toward the experiences in Brazil, especially successful cases in knowledge management, capacity-building, and best practices that may be replicated in other countries.
- Considering local experiences, it is necessary to generate specific initiatives to promote restoration in islands and marine-coastal zones.
Participants at the dialogue roundtable

GERMANY

Jochen Flasbarth

In December, 2013, Jochen Flasbarth was named State Secretary for the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. Previously, he was the chair of the Federal Environmental Agency in 2009. Flasbarth studied economics, political science, and philosophy in Münster and Bonn, where he received a degree in economics. He has participated, ad honorem, at the German Society for Protection of Birds, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and the German League for Nature and the Environment.

Horst Freiberg

Dr. Horst Freiberg has served as the Head of the Division for Conservation and Sustainable Management of Forests, Biological Diversity, and Climate Change, at the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety in Bonn, Germany, since 2009. Previously, Dr. Freiberg worked at the Bavarian Forest Service on development cooperation projects in Latin America for forest regeneration and restoration, as well as forest education and capacity-building. Freiberg has worked extensively under the Convention on Biological Diversity at the Federal Agency for the Conservation of Nature in Bonn. Dr. Horst Freiberg is the main promoter of the Bonn Challenge globally.

BRAZIL

José Pedro de Oliveira Costa

With a degree in architecture and a master's degree in Environmental Planning from the University of California - Berkeley and a doctorate in Environmental Structures from the School of Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Sao Paulo, José Pedro de Oliveira Costa has taught for over 40 years, is the Program Coordinator at the Tropical Forest Business School at the Institute for Advanced Studies for USP, and has been responsible for the creation of over one hundred state, national, and international protected areas. These areas include the state parks of Serra do Mar and Ilhabela, the Juréia ecologic station, Serra do marantiqueira, the Tumucumaque national parks, Serra Bodoquena, the recognition of Serra do Mar and the Atlantic Forest Biosphere Reserves, and the inclusion of various sites in Brazil as World Heritage sites. Oliveira is a founder of the Brazilian Committee on Primates and the Standing Committee for the Protection of Native Primates of Sao Paulo, Pro-Primates. He has been a public servant for the State of Sao Paulo since 1973, with 40 years of work dedicated to the protection of nature in his state.

CHILE

Francisco Urrutia

Francisco Urrutia Gaona holds a law degree from the University of Chile and a certificate in Local Development. Since March, 2016, he has served as the Executive Secretary for the National Forest Corporation (CONAF), under the Ministry of Agriculture of Chile. Urrutia has worked for CONAF since 1994, as counsel in the Los Lagos Region, with a focus on forest oversight and topics of biodiversity and protected areas. He has specialized in recent years in payment-for-results mechanisms and real conservation rights in the framework of REDD+ and its implementation in Chile.

COSTA RICA

Mario Coto Hidalgo

Mario Coto is a forestry engineer with a master's degree in Environmental Management. With vast professional experience, Mario Coto has served in Costa Rica as the Director of the Tortuguero and Pacífico Central Conservation Areas, National Coordinator for the Biological Corridor Program, Manager for Territorial Planning and watersheds, Technical Director of the SINAC, and since July, 2016, he has served as the Executive Director of SINAC. Internationally, Coto has participated as an expert in the Global International Waters Assessment, events for the Convention on Biological Diversity as an expert on ecologic connectivity and protected wildlife areas, and he has promoted coordination among countries as part of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and architect of the corridors Directive Plan. Mario Coto has represented Costa Rica in official negotiation delegations on climate change within
the Framework Convention on Climate Change, among other events.

**Jorge Mario Rodríguez**

Jorge Mario Rodríguez is an agronomist with a master’s degree in Business Administration, and is a graduate of the Sustainability Management Program at the Central American Institute for Business Administration (INCAE). He is a specialist in Environmental Services (PSA), with over 17 years of experience in developing and implementing financing mechanisms and resource mobilization efforts for PSA. Rodríguez has been a delegate in negotiations on Free Trade Agreements, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Conference of the Parties for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Biodiversity. He represents Costa Rica in REDD+ negotiations. Currently, Jorge Rodríguez serves as the Executive Director of the National Forest Financing Fund (FONAFIFO).

**CUBA**

**Oscar Labrador Llanes**

Oscar Llanes holds a bachelor’s degree in Social Communications and a degree in Labor Law. He has served as a union leader for 23 years, and was later designated as the deputy director for the production base at the Ministry of Agriculture. In July, 2015, he was named the Director of Forests, Plants, and Wildlife at the Ministry of Agriculture in Cuba. Llanes holds a certification in Public Administration, Accounting, and Finance, Objective-Based Leadership, and Business Development, and has been trained in Practical Agriculture Techniques in the People’s Republic of China.

**HONDURAS**

**José Antonio Galdámes**

Mr. José Galdámes is the Minister of Energy, Natural Resources, the Environment and Mining in Honduras. He has worked over 17 years in the public sector and has been Government Coordinator of International Cooperation Projects across different Ministries, including the Ministry of Forest Development and Conservation, Protected Areas and Wildlife (ICF), where he served as Vice Minister of Protected Areas and Wildlife Conservation. He is a Forest Engineer with a Master’s degree in Gender and Education, currently serving as President of the Board of the National Electric Energy Company.

**Marlon Escoto**

Marlon Escoto holds an Agronomic Engineering degree and a master’s degree in Human Settlements and the Environment. He currently serves as the Presidential Commissioner on Climate Change, and manages the Master Plan on Forests, Water, and Soils for Honduras. Previously, Escoto served as the Minister of Education and the Rector of the National Agriculture University.

**EL SALVADOR**

**Lina Pohl**

Lina Pohl was named Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador in 2014. She holds a master’s degree in Social Sciences with a specialty in social movements and alternative development models in Latin America, as well as a master’s degree in Social Economics. Pohl is currently completing her doctorate in Sociology from the Autonomous University of Mexico. Prior to serving as the minister, Lina Pohl led the Heinrich Böll Foundation office in El Salvador. Lina Pohl has years of experience in human rights, democracy, and sustainable development.

**GUATEMALA**

**Sydney Alexander Samuels**

Sydney Alexander Samuels holds a degree in civil engineering from San Carlos University in Guatemala, a doctorate in leadership and local public administration from the University of Jaén, Spain, and a doctorate in public administration from Atlantic International University. He is currently the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala. Dr. Samuels has produced led research studies in Central America on sustainable spatial and territorial management. He has served for over 30 years in management positions at public administration institutions, in the private sector, and international organizations related to municipal administrations, programs and projects for municipal decentralization and strengthening, and territorial management. Dr. Samuels currently works as a consultant on development projects and a professor in the master’s program in the fields of sustainable development.
development, project evaluation, and public policy at the Mariano Gálvez University in Guatemala.

NICARAGUA

Javier Gutiérrez

Javier Gutiérrez currently serves as the Co-Director General on Climate Change at the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of Nicaragua. Additionally, he is the lead technical liaison for Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) programs, and Landscape Restoration Programs in the region, providing specialized knowledge for conservation and the fight against climate change.

PANAMA

Yamil Daniel Sánchez

Yamil Sánchez is the current serving Vice-Minister at the Ministry of the Environment of Panama. Previously, he served as the Director for Protection and Environmental Quality. Sánchez is responsible for the overseeing commitments and compliance with environmental norms in activities, works, and projects on a national level, as well as monitoring the status of environmental variables at the National Environmental Authority. From 2001 to 2014, Yamil Sánchez served as an advisor, consultant, professor, and head of sustainability project management for the mining, energy, and construction industries, as well as the public sector, private sector, and in international organizations. Additionally, he is knowledgeable on integrated quality management systems, the environment, occupational health and safety, and other fields.

CCAD

Salvador Nieto

Salvador Nieto currently serves as the Executive Secretary of the Central American Commission on the Environment and Development (CCAD). Nieto holds a law degree and a master’s degree in Environmental Legislation and Policy from Paulo Freire University in Nicaragua. Previously, he served as a legal specialist to support compliance with the environmental objectives under the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) at the Central American Integration System, SICA, with the CCAD-USAID Cooperation Agreement. From May 2006 to July 2009, Nieto served as the Liaison Officer for Legislation and Environmental Policy at the CCAD. From February 2005 to May 2006, he worked within the Project to Strengthen Environmental Management in El Salvador (FORAGES), by the European Union and Ministry of the Environment.

CBD

Catalina Santamaria

Catalina Santamaria is the Forest Program Manager for the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). She leads the development and implementation of the Work Program on Forest Biodiversity, and manages several portfolios on conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of forest resources. Through technical analysis, direct advice to countries, and strategic coordination with organizations, her work has supported activities to meet the Aichi Targets on forests. Her work also includes managing and coordinating the Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (FERI), and the joint programs for the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration, and the ITTO/CBD Joint Initiative for Tropical Forest Biodiversity.

EMBASSY OF GERMANY IN HONDURAS

Beatrix Kania

Beatrix Kania has served as the German Ambassador to Honduras since 2014. She holds degrees in Public Administration, Political Science, History, and Law, from Germany. In her professional career, she has served as a political advisor for the German Embassy in Turkey, the Deputy Head of Division at the Directorate for the United Nations and Global Affairs at the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Deputy Head of Mission for the German Embassy in Kuwait.

FAO

María Julia Cárdenas

María Julia Cárdenas Barrios was named Representative of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Honduras. She holds a degree in Agronomic Engineering, with a master’s degree and concentration in Vegetable Protection. Previously, María Julia Cárdenas served as the assistant representative for the FAO in
Cuba, and the Director General for International Affairs at the Ministry of Agriculture in Cuba. Additionally, she has been the Deputy Director of the National Center for Vegetable Health, Director for International Affairs, Technical Services and Development Programs, and International Cooperation at the Vegetable Health System, among other relevant posts.

**IICA**

**Katia Marzall**

Katia Marzall is an agronomist, with a doctorate in Rural Studies. Currently, she leads the Flagship Project on Resilience and Integrated Management of Environmental Risks in Agriculture at the Inter-American Institute for Agriculture Cooperation (IICA). Marzall coordinates the implementation of diverse cooperation instruments, encouraging, promoting, and supporting IICA member states in North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean in their efforts to address multiple risks from climate change in the agriculture sector. Until recently, Katia worked at the Ministry of Agriculture in Brazil, involved in the implementation of the National Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Plan to Build a Low-Carbon Economy in Agriculture.

**IUCN**

**Grethel Aguilar**

Grethel Aguilar has led the work of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean as the Regional Director, since 2005. Previously, she worked as a consultant for the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Central American Commission on the Environment and Development (CCAD), Ramsar Convention, and for the governments of the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico, and others. In her current position as the Regional Director for the IUCN, she is responsible for the implementation of projects on sustainable development, climate change, and environmental protection.

**RAINFOREST ALLIANCE**

**José Román Carrera**

José Román Carrera is the current Director of Strategic Alliances and Development for Latin America at the Rainforest Alliance. Previously, he led the TREES Program at the Rainforest Alliance for Central and South America, and was the director of the SMARTWOOD Certification Program in Central America and the Caribbean. José Roman has over 25 years of experience working in the forestry and environmental sector. He has worked in the government sector as the Regional Director of the National Council on Protected Areas (CONAP), and has led several projects on Sustainable Development, Climate Change, Business Development, and Conservation of Biodiversity and Payment for Environmental Services in local and international non-governmental organizations. José Román is a forest engineer, with a master's degree in Biodiversity Conservation and Tropical Forest Management.

**UNDP**

**Alissar Chaker**

Alissar Chaker came to Honduras in January, 2016. Her previous postings were as the Deputy Director for the UNDP in Syria (2013-2015); Coordinator of Recovery and Crisis Prevention at the Regional UNDP Office in Cairo (2012-2013), and Assistant Country Director for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in Timor-Leste (2007-2012). Chaker joined the UNDP in late 2005 through the UNDP Leadership Development Program for young professionals. Previously, she served in the fields of environment and sustainable development at the World Bank, Swiss Agency for Development, United Nations Institute for Professional Formation and Research, and the European Commission, in Switzerland, the Middle East, and North Africa. Ms. Chaker holds masters’ degrees in Engineering and Environmental Management from the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), in Switzerland, and in Contamination and Environmental Control from the University of Manchester, United Kingdom. Alissar is Lebanese and speaks Arabic, English, French, and Spanish, as well as basic German, Italian, and Portuguese.

**UNEP**

**Leo Heileman**

Leo Heileman is the Director and Representative for the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC), and he holds a master’s degree in Environmental Contamination Control and Research Operations, as well as a bachelor’s
degree in Natural Sciences, and graduate certificates in Marine Contamination Chemistry and Management Studies. He also has over 20 years of experience in the environmental field, with a focus on environmental management, program coordination, and environmental assessments.

**UNIQUE**

**Till Pistorius**

Till Pistorius is a recognized international expert in climate policy and biodiversity. The main focus of his work has been development and monitoring of environmental policy on REDD+, Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR), and other areas of land use. Since 2006, he has served as a member of the German delegation at negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

**WRI**

**Walter Vergara**

Walter Vergara is a climate specialist with a longstanding interest in a variety of topics related to adaptation and mitigation. As a lead researcher at the World Resources Institute, Walter directs the 20x20 initiative, a restoration effort that seeks to contribute substantially to reducing the carbon footprint of land use. He also has served as the director for UNEP-DTU for the production of Carbon Zero Studies. Before joining the WRI, Walter Vergara retired from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), where he served as the Head of the Department on Climate Change and Sustainability. For 25 years prior to this, Mr. Vergara worked at the World Bank, where his last position was as the leader of the Global Team of Experts on Climate Change. Mr. Vergara organized and led the first climate change team on Latin America at the World Bank. Over the course of his career, he has authored or co-authored 14 books and numerous technical articles. He was an opinion editor of the Fifth IPCC Assessment Report.

**WWF PERU**

**Lucía Ruíz**

Lucía Ruíz is the Conservation Director at WWF Peru, and holds a law degree and master’s degrees in Business Administration and Sustainable Development as well as studies in Governance and Political Management, Environmental Law, and Natural Resources, among others. Ruíz has over 20 years of experience working in the public and private sectors on topics related to natural resource management, with an emphasis on water resources, forests, and natural protected areas. Among other public positions in Peru, she was the Cabinet Head at the Ministry of the Environment (2011-2013), a member of the Directive Council at the National Service for Natural Protected Areas (2012-2017), and a member of the National Tribunal for the Resolution of Water Disputes and the National Water Authority (2014-2017).
Participants list

**Germany**

Jochen Flasbarth, State Secretary for the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

Anja Betker, advisor to the State Secretary for the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.


**Belize**

Marcelo Windsor, deputy Forest Director at the Forestry Department under the Ministry of Fisheries, Silviculture, Environment, and Sustainable Development of Belize.

Darlene Padron, senior officer for Sustainable Development at the Sustainable Development Unit in the Ministry of Fisheries, Silviculture, the Environment and Sustainable Development of Belize.

**Chile**

Francisco Urrutia, executive secretary of the National Forest Corporation.

Osvaldo Quintanilla, professional of the Climate Change and Environmental Services Unit at the National Forest Corporation.

**Costa Rica**

Mario Coto Hidalgo, director of the National System of Conservation Areas.

Jorge Mario Rodríguez, director of the National Forest Financing Fund of Costa Rica.

**Cuba**

Oscar Labrador Llanes, director of Forests, Plants, and Wildlife at the Ministry of Agriculture in Cuba.

Jesús Guerra Bell, lead specialist at the Department for International Relations of Cuba.

**Ecuador**

Mario Ruales Carranza, advisor to the Minister of the Environment of Ecuador.

**El Salvador**

Lina Pohl, Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador.

Jorge Quezada, advisor to the Office of the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador.

**Guatemala**

Sydney Samuels, Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala.

Alfonso Alonzo Vargas, vice-Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala.

Juan Carlos Díaz, coordinator of the International Cooperation Unit at the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of Guatemala.

**Honduras**

José Antonio Galdámes, Secretary of State for Energy, Natural Resources, the Environment and Mines - MiAmbiente.

Rosibel Martínez, advisor to the Secretary of State for Energy, Natural Resources, the Environment and Mines - MiAmbiente.
Honduras

Marlon Escoto, presidential commissioner on Climate Change, and Manager for the Master Plan on Forests, Water, and Soils for Honduras.

Roberto Portillo, REDD+ Project Technical coordinator at the Secretariat for Natural Resources and the Environment of Honduras

Nicaragua

Javier Gutierrez, co-director General on Climate Change at the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of Nicaragua.

Panama

Yamil Sánchez, vice-Minister of the Environment of Panama.

Raúl Gutierrez, analyst at the Climate Change Unit for the Ministry of the Environment of Panama.

Dominican Republic

Pedro García Brito, director on Climate Change at the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic.

Francisco Cuevas, advisor and Director of Forest Management at the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic.

CCAD


CDB

Catalina Santamaría, Forest Program officer, Convention on Biological Diversity.

Embassy of Germany in Honduras

Beatrix Kania, ambassador of Germany to Honduras.

FAO

María Julia Cárdenas, national representative for FAO in Honduras.

GIZ

Hans-Peter Debelius, resident director of the GIZ in Tegucigalpa.

Doris Beerling-Henestrosa, resident director of the GIZ in San Salvador.

Laszlo Pancel, lead advisor for the REDD+ Landscape / CCAD-GIZ Program

Jan Bock, lead advisor for the REDD+ Landscape II / CCAD-GIZ Program

Mario García, sector specialist for the REDD+ Landscape / CCAD-GIZ Program

IICA

Katia Marzall, lead for the Flagship Project on Resilience and Integrated Management of Environmental Risks in Agriculture at the Inter-American Institute for Agriculture Cooperation.

IUCN

Grethel Aguilar, regional director for Mesoamerica at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Rainforest Alliance

José Román Carrera, Rainforest Alliance director for Latin America.

UNEP

Leo Heileman, director of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Environment Program.

UNDP

Alissar Chaker, deputy resident Representative for the United Nations Development Program.
UNIQUE

Till Pistorius, lead delegate for the Climate Division of Unique Forestry and Land Use.

WRI

Walter Vergara, specialist on Forests and Climate at the Global Restoration Initiative in Latin America for the World Resources Institute

WWF

Lucía Ruíz, Conservation director at WWF Peru.