

Mexico Program



Mexico is a country where life exists in abundance, where wild creatures roam through vast landscapes, where human history has deep roots and people claim their place amidst nature's riches.

Ancient ruins, snow-capped volcanoes, life-giving watersheds and an amazing collection of flora and fauna are found in Mexico, the fourth most biodiverse country in the world. It is characterized by a multitude of opposing landscapes: from the white sand beaches and pristine coral reefs of the Yucatán, to the rugged coastlines and sheltered gulf waters of Baja California, to the cloud forests and raging rivers of southern Mexico and to the stark beauty of the desert landscapes in the north, Mexico is a country that eludes definition.

Within this enormous range of natural habitats, The Nature Conservancy is striving to save some of the last great places on Earth.

*“One does not explain Mexico.
One believes in Mexico, with fury, with passion.”*

—Carlos Fuentes, *Where the Air is Clear*



Places and Projects

Baja and the Gulf of California

Isla Espíritu Santo
Land of the Giants
Loreto Bay Marine Park
San Quintín Bay
Isla Guadalupe

Chihuahuan Desert

Janos Valley Grasslands
Cuatro Ciénegas Valley
La Soledad/Salttillo Grasslands

Gulf of Mexico Watersheds

Laguna Madre
River of Raptors

Maya Forest

Calakmul Biosphere Reserve
Pantanos de Centla/
Laguna de Términos
El Ocote Biosphere Reserve
Maya Forest Ecoregional Plan

Sonoran Desert and Grasslands

San Pedro River Basin
Colorado River Delta
El Pinacate Biosphere Reserve

Southern Pacific Watersheds

El Triunfo/La Encrucijada
La Sepultura

Yucatán Coastal Wetlands

Pez Maya/Sian Ka'an
Mesoamerican Reef
Ría Lagartos/Isla Holbox/
Yum Balam

Migratory Bird Program

Gulf Wings
Prairie Wings
Pacific Wings

In partnership with Mexican conservation organizations, government agencies, local communities and a variety of stakeholders, the Conservancy is employing a variety of strategies to protect critically-threatened lands and waters in the following geographical landscapes throughout Mexico:

BAJA AND THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA: Where the desert meets the sea, the Baja California peninsula and 600-mile long Gulf of California boasts some of the most unique marine and terrestrial environments in the world.

CHIHUAHUAN DESERT: Located between Mexico's eastern and western Sierra Madre mountain ranges and extending into Texas and New Mexico, the Chihuahuan Desert is the largest in North America and supports an incredible diversity of cacti, migratory birds and desert aquatic species.

GULF OF MEXICO WATERSHEDS: Extending more than 4,000 miles across five U.S. states and six Mexican states, the Gulf of Mexico serves as a major source of food, minerals and energy and hosts an amazing array of wildlife.

MAYA FOREST: This five-million acre lowland forest, containing numerous archeological sites of the ancient Maya civilization, extends into Belize and Guatemala and forms Mexico's largest tract of tropical forest.

SONORAN DESERT AND GRASSLANDS: Stretching across the northwest Mexican state of Sonora, this region is characterized by rugged mountains, meandering rivers, vibrant green riparian corridors, grassland prairies, volcanic regions and spectacular cactus gardens.

SOUTHERN PACIFIC WATERSHEDS: Flowing from the tropical cloud forests of the Sierra Madre de Chiapas Mountains, 14 rivers drop 3,000 feet to the Pacific Ocean. These watersheds capture 10 percent of Mexico's total rainfall and nourish critical coastal wetlands and marine fisheries.

YUCATAN COASTAL WETLANDS: The mosaic of barrier islands, salt flats, fresh water springs, mangrove swamps and lowland forests of the Yucatán coast form a concentration of diverse habitats for a range of species from jaguars and sea turtles to flamingos, monkeys and manatees.

MIGRATORY BIRD PROGRAM: Organizationally-situated under the Conservancy's Mexico Program, the Migratory Bird Program strives to protect critical habitats for birds throughout the Western Hemisphere by fostering coordinated conservation across multiple ecoregions, states and countries.

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