CONTRIBUTIONS OF COMMUNITY FORESTS TO FOREST RESTORATION AND GREEN GROWTH IN MEXICO

CCMSS
Mexican Civil Council for Sustainable Silviculture

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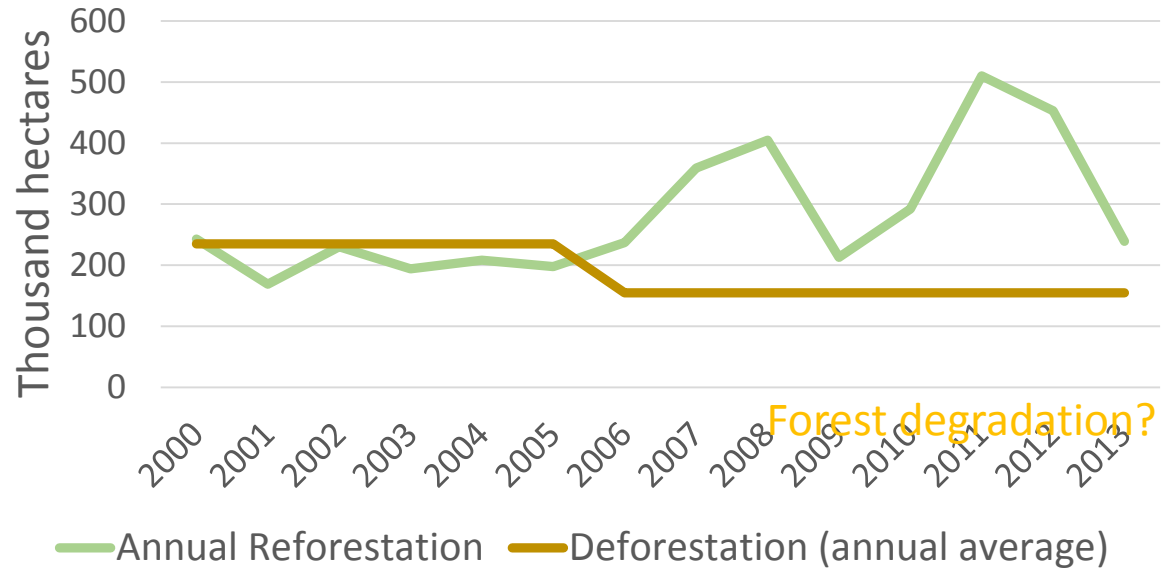June 2015

MEXICAN CONTEXT

❖ 70% of Mexico's forests are owned by *eijdos* and *comunidades agrarias** that manage them through forms of social organization.

❖ Over 11 million people inhabit forest regions in Mexico. These social groups are characterized by the highest levels of poverty and marginalization.

❖ Despite being a country with significant forest resources, the Mexican trade deficit of timber reached $ 1,100 million USD by 2014. The total forest products deficit was $ 6,200 million USD.

❖ **There are 599 *comunidades* and *ejidos* with forest enterprises in Mexico. More than 50 of these communitarian enterprises have FSC certification (~ 800,000 hectares).**

❖ Risk: Mexico could privilege a simplistic view of protecting and restoring forests just for carbon capture and storage.

MEXICAN CONTEXT

❖ Mexico restored 3.95 million hectares from 2000 to 2013.

Mexico

Forest loss vs restoration 2000-2013

Forest degradation?

Annual Reforestation — Deforestation (annual average)

COMMUNITY FORESTRY IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GREEN GROWTH IN MEXICO

(EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE)

- ❖ Poverty reduction and temporary jobs in underserved communities through governmental workfare programs and reforestation.

- ❖ **Recovery of water sources, improvement of forest resources and environmental services that sustain people's livelihoods.**

- ❖ Increased resilience to natural disasters and impacts of climate change.

- ❖ **Enhancement of rural productive systems (eg: bee-keeping, small livestock and charcoal production).**

- ❖ Reduction of environmental costs by loss and degradation of natural capital (Green GDP).

- ❖ **Decrease in costs of maintenance and repair of strategic infrastructure for the country (oil extraction, roads, urban infrastructure).**

MAIN ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY FOREST RESTORATION

FOREST MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION MUST BRING ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

(INCENTIVES, PERMANENCE, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT)

MAIN LESSONS FROM THE MEXICAN EXPERIENCE

❖ Forest restoration is more economical and effective when performed by people who inhabit forest regions.

❖ It is necessary for restoration to have well-established objectives and links with economic development in rural regions.

❖ **Restoration should be social (enforcing the recognition of rights of use and community control) and ecologically viable (using local species).**

❖ ***Proárbol* and *Pronafor*: 8 years of mistakes and achievements.**

COMMUNITY RESTORATION CAN DEVELOP ECONOMIES, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND INCENTIVES FOR FOREST CONSERVATION OVER TIME

(BOTTOM-UP GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAM DESIGN)

- ❖ **An excessive regulation (red tape) from the government that affects the use of forest resources by the communities can hinder restoration and forest management** (eg: restoration of secondary rainforests of Campeche).

- ❖ Government programs aimed at restoring forest resources must be properly designed and targeted.

- ❖ Restoration should not focus only on carbon sequestration but must include the generation of local economies (combating poverty and marginalization) and the enhancement of livelihoods of those who inhabit forests (sustainability and adaptation).

- ❖ Restoration should be part of forest landscape planning and management of resources by communities.

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES TO BE ADDRESSED IN MEXICO TO FOSTER RESTORATION AND FOREST MANAGEMENT

Communities with recongnaized rights are very effective to restore forests and stop deforestation

If it doesn't work for people, Why green economic growth?

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