



sierra madre de chiapas, mexico



The mountain chain of the Sierra Madre de Chiapas in southern Mexico is globally significant for biodiversity and is one of the most important coffee production areas in Mexico.

These mountains are home to approximately 27,000 people and serve as a water catchment area for urban centers, surrounding towns and agriculture. Much of the forest cover outside of protected areas is coffee, grown under traditional forest shade.

CI has partnered with local communities, government agencies and the private sector to integrate the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services into land-use decisions and policies in Sierra Madre. The work is a model for demonstrating how protecting natural areas that provide ecosystem services results in benefits for people.

CI's initial work in Sierra Madre focused on protecting species through conservation areas. But to do this, it was essential that local people led the process and could pursue their livelihood aspirations. To that end, CI partnered with local cooperatives, government agencies and others to implement a set of Conservation Coffee Best Practices that promoted shade grown coffee production to maintain the forest canopy and connect farmers applying the best practices to international markets with the aim of securing better prices for their coffee.

Effective partnerships have been a key component of our success in this region. In 1998, Starbucks and CI began a partnership to promote coffee production practices that protect biodiversity and improve the livelihoods of coffee farmers. As a result, coffee farmers benefit from improved partnerships with commodity traders and buyers, improving their incomes and their ability to provide their families with better food, education and health services.

CI and Starbucks continue to collaborate in Chiapas to demonstrate that coffee can be grown in ways that support communities and preserve the environment. The newest phase of our partnership integrates coffee and carbon sequestration in order to link local farmers to voluntary carbon markets. As a result, farmers are receiving tangible benefits from their climate change mitigation work, such as reforestation and agroforestry. In addition, CI is working with partners to support farmers in their climate change adaptation strategies by conducting vulnerability assessments and modeling climate scenarios and their impacts on coffee cultivation.

The most recent development in the Sierra Madre work is the inclusion of watershed-level management planning in the area to ensure that conservation strategies target ecosystem services and that local people benefit from the results. Through this effort, CI is working with watershed committees to improve their management and to ensure long-term water provision from the Sierra Madre Mountains. The initiative will also mainstream ecosystem services and biodiversity into land use policies, as well as increase access by farmers to payment-for-ecosystem-services mechanisms to provide incentives for the implementation of watershed development strategies that conserve ecosystem services and biodiversity values and improve local livelihoods.



demonstrating how **healthy ecosystems benefit human well-being** in Chiapas

human well-being

- improved coffee revenue
- forest carbon revenue
- 27,000 people with water



ecosystem services

- reduction of deforestation below historic rate



healthy ecosystems

- 1.8 million hectares (nearly 4.5 million acres) conserved
- 106 critically endangered species

