

# Regenerative Management of the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve

## Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda México

### February 2023

Prepared by Martha Isabel Ruiz Corzo, Laura Pérez-Arce and Alejandro Diaz for the, "Investing in Landscapes: A Challenge for Finance Innovation, A Wealth of Opportunity," virtual event convened by the 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People initiative, Laudes Foundation and IKEA Foundation on February 22, 2023.



# Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve

Querétaro State, México



**70%**

Private  
property

**27%**

Communal

**3%**

Federal

1. Sierra Madre Oriental ecoregion, Mexico's most eco-diverse area, ranging from semidesert to temperate, cloud, riparian and tropical forests.
2. Cattle ranching and land use changes, logging, wildland fires, human settlements growth.

# Conservation participatory model

1. Key partners include local communities, forest owners, local entrepreneurs, recyclers, teachers and municipalities.
2. Active since 1987
3. Sierra Gorda was under severe siege of human development and growth of its local population (deforestation, sewage, poaching, public works without regulation, etc.). This is a long-term process to regulate, improve and catalyze local action for the well-being of our landscape.



# Our vision and transformation strategy

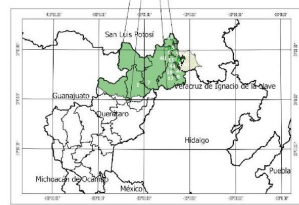
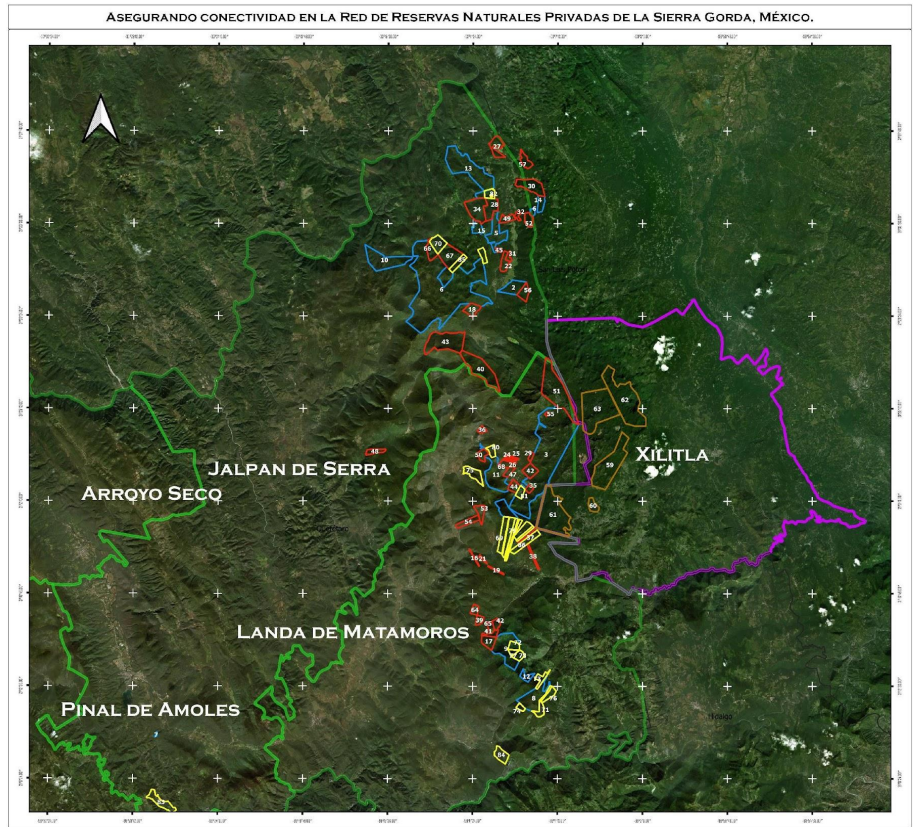
1. **Vision:** To be a living experience that inspires civil and institutional actions to protect the heart of Mexico.
2. The Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve Management Plan, as development reference and rule for the region, helps address different interests and tensions between land users.
3. We have a common vision and goals with our local partners thanks to decades of education, developing projects together and mutual trust.



# Landscape actions



# Synergies among the actions



Asegurando conectividad en la Red de Reservas Naturales Privadas de la Sierra Gorda, México.

Reservas Naturales Privadas	SUPERFICIE
Sierra Gorda, Querétaro	2,500 has
Xilitla, San Luis Potosí	3,020 has
Reservas Naturales Privadas	7,487 has

Sistema de Coordenadas: WGS 1984 ZONA 14 N	
	GRUPO ECOLÓGICO SIERRA GORDA
	BOSQUE SUSTENTABLE SIERRA GORDA
	JUGU DEL NIVEL



# Building a landscape investment portfolio

# ACHIEVEMENTS

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Project Area All Sites [Search] [Map]

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- Chava [Share] [Info] 1) Educación ambiental en localidades de la Sierra Gorda  
Community Area Conservation
- Chava [Share] [Info] 2) Corredor Biológico Sierra Madre Oriental  
Natural Forest Conservation
- Chava [Share] [Info] 3) Manejo regenerativo de suelos y producción de alimentos sanos  
Agriculture Conservation Community Area
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Infrastructure
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Infrastructure Community Area Conservation
- Chava [Share] [Info] 6) Red de Centros de Acopio  
Infrastructure Community Area
- Chava [Share] [Info] Área de influencia de la Reserva de la Biosfera Sierra Gorda  
Community Area

Page: 1 1-10 of 52 Sites [Previous] [Next]

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Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda

# Current financial support

*Public and private finance, national and international sources*

Leading Funding Sources 2018-2022	Type of institution	Amount of funding MXN	Programs						
			Environmental education	Sierra Gorda Earth Center	Productive Projects & Ecotourism	Primary Production	Forest regeneration and sustainable harvesting	Solid-Waste Management	Investments in farmers
World Land Trust	International NGO	10,066,636					x		
State of Querétaro	Public	7,323,933	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
National Monte de Piedad IAP	National Foundation	7,108,947	x		x				
Sierra Gorda Tourism Products and Services	Project-operated business	6,423,561			x				
Interamerican Development Bank	International	4,966,634				x	x		x
The Overbrook Foundation	International Foundation	2,557,321	x	x		x	x		x
Fomento Social CitiBanamex AC	National Foundation	2,500,000	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Earth Day Network	International	2,485,997					x		
Spanish Agency for International Cooperation	International	1,490,195			x		x		x
Global Giving	International	1,049,404	x	x	x		x		



# State tax to finance biodiverse carbon

1. Under our advice and partnership, the Querétaro State Government has launched a Carbon Tax on vehicles and industry, recognizing the Biodiversity Carbon project for CO2 reductions in lieu of 20% of the tax obligation, therefore, financing to regenerate landscapes and enhance a conservation economy.
2. And along with the State Education Authority, a Climate Change Action Diploma has been launched for the teachers of public and private schools, launching multiple activities to protect our landscapes.



# De-risking investments/activities

1. Global warming is a challenge. Drought, heat waves, and wildfires are the biggest risk to human communities and wildlife.
2. We are developing different actions for climate change adaptation (such as regenerative management of grazing and croplands, and rainwater capture) and improving wildfire management capacities.
3. At a subnational model, we have a successful financing mechanism to regenerate forests (CO2) and landscapes



# Financing needs

1. USD 2 million in grant funding over the next 2 years for Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda convening
2. Financial resources to mobilize society to adopt a regenerative culture with the communities who own the landscape
3. Investments to strengthen the circular economy for conservation
4. Philanthropy seeking non-financial returns, focused on the common good and the pleasure of giving and sowing hope for a healthy planet and society



# Levels of support for impact investors

**Level 1: Support for annual operational costs in the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve:** approximately \$800,000 USD per year

**Level 2: Support for expansion to the broader Sierra Gorda Bioregion:** approximately \$336,750 USD per year

**Level 3: Support for replication of the Querétaro Model in other states of Mexico:** approximately \$283,807 USD per year



# Landscape investment: lessons learned

1. Invest in long-term efforts and actions that mobilize action across sectors and prioritize local solutions.
2. Earth's regenerative capacities are significant. Valuing ecosystems in a way that benefits their users is the key to healing landscapes.
3. Focus on projects and actors that are embedded in local areas and avoid complicated protocols and costly consultants.
4. We need investment in landscape development and regeneration now, not more diagnostic activities.



A landscape photograph of a forested hillside. The foreground and middle ground are filled with dense trees, some with green foliage and others with brown, dry-looking leaves. The background shows a clear sky with a bright, full moon in the upper right quadrant. The overall scene is a natural, outdoor setting.

## For More Information

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