

Latin America and the Caribbean



A jaguar (Panthera onca) in Costa Rica.
Credit: Emmanuel Rondeau



Spanning Central America, South America and the Caribbean islands, the Latin America and Caribbean region comprises

some of the planet's richest landscapes and supports an astounding forty percent of the world's biodiversity. From tropical rainforests to arid deserts, the towering Andes to the coral reefs of the West Indies, this region is home to an array of species including jaguars, maned wolves, macaws, manatees and giant anteaters. The diversity of wild places and wildlife makes Latin America and the Caribbean one of the most ecologically important regions on earth.

Unfortunately, the landscapes and wildlife of Latin America and the Caribbean are under severe threat. Habitat loss and degradation, invasive species, pollution, over-exploitation, and increasingly, climate change are placing the biodiversity of the

region at risk. At the root of most of these threats are social, political, and economic factors including human poverty, population growth, inadequate policy planning, and implementation.

The Wildlife Without Borders Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (WWB-LAC) recognizes that while people are the primary threat to the region's biodiversity, they also represent the greatest resource and opportunity for conservation. The conservation of biodiversity is fundamentally a human issue and requires a strong focus on working with people to conserve nature for the benefit of both. The question is no longer whether to involve key actors at the individual, organizational or group level, but how.

Over the past 30 years, WWB-LAC has provided critical funding to the region's efforts to conserve and

manage biodiversity. The program has supported building the capacity of future conservation leaders through training programs, fostering networks to facilitate learning and collaboration across sites, and motivating conservation actions by raising awareness of and support for biodiversity conservation.

In the coming years, the WWB-LAC program will build upon its long and successful track record and its commitment to work with people to achieve solid conservation results in the region. The three focal areas for support will be: threatened landscapes of high conservation value, threatened species whose conservation benefits additional species and their habitats, and regional training programs for early conservation professionals that strengthen the capacity of local people and organizations to manage and conserve species, habitats, and ecological processes for generations to come.



Community recycling competition in Guatemala.

Credit: ORCONDECO

The Wildlife Without Borders – Latin America & the Caribbean program has supported conservation projects since 1983. In 2013, the program leveraged over \$1,365,690 and funded over \$849,156 towards 13 projects in countries throughout the region. Projects include:

- Increasing sustainable economic activities for rural communities and reducing dependence on forests critical to cotton-top tamarin conservation in Colombia. **In partnership with Fundación Proyecto Tití.**
- Expanding My Island-My Community Climate Change Awareness and Adaption program to produce innovative radio communications and implement local community action campaigns for climate change resilience and biodiversity conservation across five Caribbean islands. The project conducted training on effective communications and entertainment education for the Caribbean Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders program. **In partnership with PCI Media Impact.**
- Supporting institutional strengthening of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds to achieve long-term sustainability through the development of a strategic plan, fundraising strategies, and information sharing. **In partnership with the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds.**
- Conducting community consultations and educational workshops with indigenous communities in Northwestern Alta Verapaz, Guatemala on locally-suited wildlife conservation and sustainable subsistence hunting. The project will also strengthen Ecological Monitoring program for Laguna Lachuá National Park. **In partnership with Organización para la Conservación de la Naturaleza y Desarrollo Comunitario (ORCONDECO).**
- Implementing an executive study tour in Costa Rica to familiarize and educate senior professional staff of U.S. Members of Congress about international conservation in a field based setting. Participants visited conservation projects and met with key stakeholders to discuss conservation strategies, challenges, and solutions. **In partnership with the International Conservation Caucus. Foundation.**



A Cotton-top tamarin (Saguinus oedipus) in Colombia.
Credit: Chase Pickering

Latin America & the Caribbean Program Funding 2006 to 2013	
Total Number of Grants Awarded	265
Total Funds Distributed Through Grants	\$6,263,000
Total Partner Contributions Leveraged by Grants	\$114,468,000
Total Number of Countries that Received Program Support	22

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August 2013



School visits for conservation action in St. Lucia.
Credit: PCI Media Impact