



ITTO

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL
TIMBER ORGANIZATION

ITTO: Promoting nature's true economic value

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**Valuing Forest Ecosystems in National Policy and Strategy:
Experiences, Challenges, and the Way Forward**

06 May 2025 | UNFF 20 | New York



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ITTO'S WORK ON ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Sustainable tropical forest management (SFM) is a *gateway* to an effective Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES)

- PES can boost SFM by providing income to forest owners, reducing deforestation, alleviating poverty, and restoring degraded lands.
- *It's not all about the money!*
 - PES works by internalizing the environmental value of forests—offering non-financial incentives like tenure security or food security support to encourage good stewardship.
- ITTO promotes PES and REDD+ initiatives across the tropics, helping scale up successful models and increase global recognition of the value of tropical forest services.



COSTA RICA



[Promoting SFM and local wood consumption through capacity building and improving regulation](#)

BENIN



[Rehabilitation and sustainable management of sacred forests on Ramsar sites](#)

GHANA



[Enrichment of young forest plantations with selected NTFPs for livelihood improvement and support of forest fringe communities in Atwima Mponua district](#)

CAMBODIA



[Enhancing capacity of local communities and forest administration to effectively implement community forestry programme in Kratie and Mondulhiri](#)

GUYANA



[A sustainable management model in the Iwokrama rainforest](#)

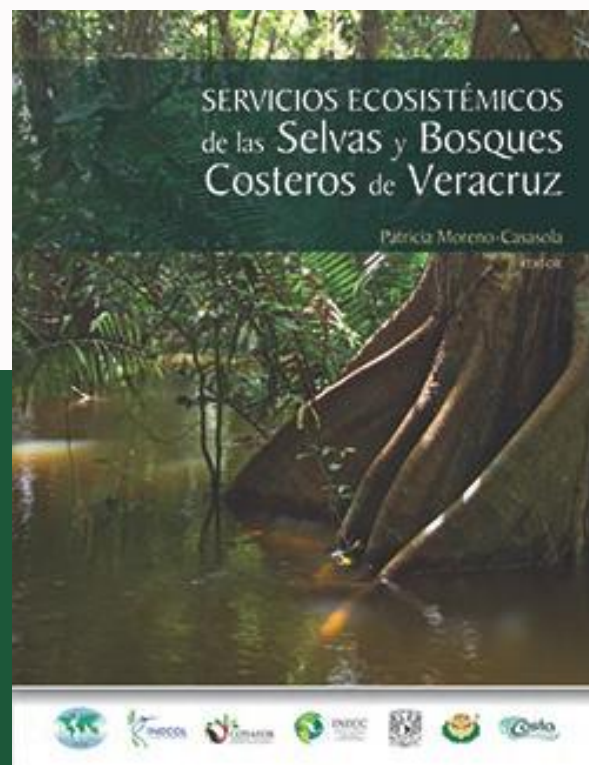
IN FOCUS: MEXICO

Strengthening the resilience of Indigenous Mayan communities

- The Maya Train megaproject, though aimed at boosting employment and economic growth, raises significant environmental and social concerns, particularly for ecosystems and Indigenous communities.
- Researchers, students, and local communities are collaboratively assessing ecosystem services and traditional ecological knowledge through field research, community training, and outreach across five communities.

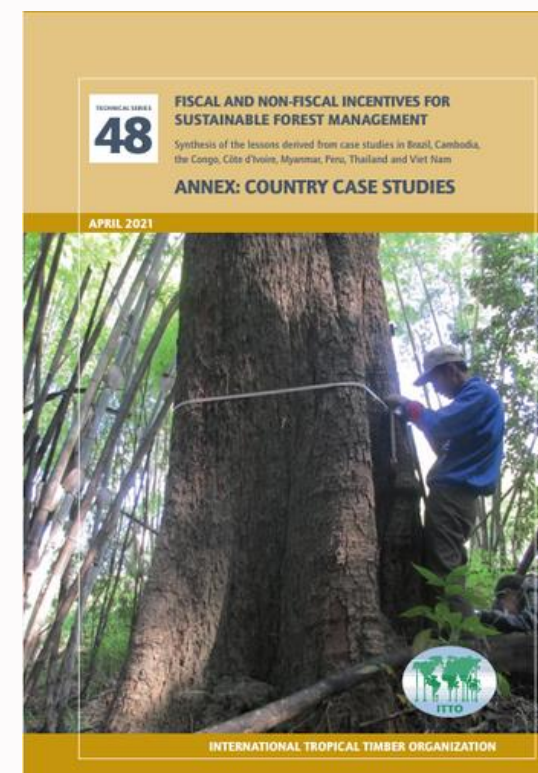
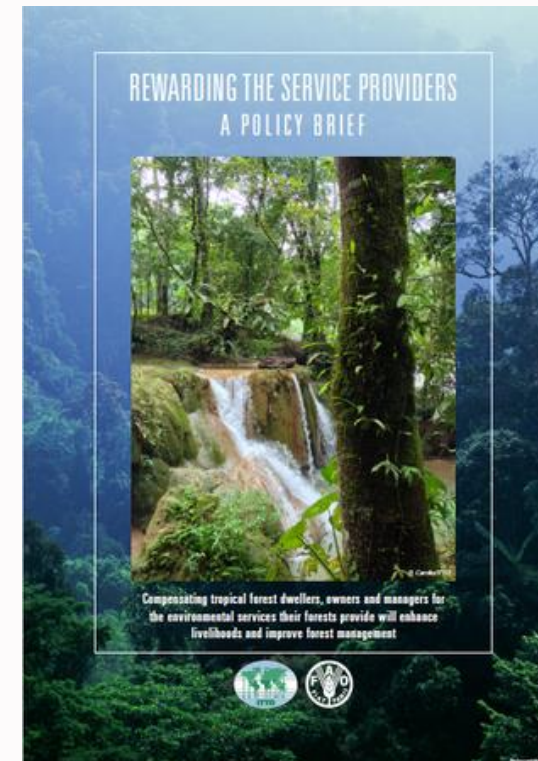
Ecosystem services of tropical and coastal forests of Veracruz

- Flooded forests and wetlands in Veracruz deliver ecosystem services that far surpass the economic value of cattle-grazing lands that often replace them.



ITTO'S LESSONS FROM ALMOST 40 YEARS IN THE FIELD

- **PES makes SFM more competitive** by assigning value to environmental services like carbon storage and biodiversity.
- **SFM under PES maintains forest health**, with low carbon loss and strong conservation outcomes for biodiversity and watersheds.
- **Certification and PES can complement each other**, but certification alone often lacks financial incentives—PES helps fill that gap.
- **PES delivers social and climate benefits**, but needs broader funding, stronger evidence, and better cross-sector coordination to scale effectively.



Key ingredients for PES schemes to successfully drive forest conservation and restoration programmes:



Long-term, innovative financing mechanisms



Investments in systemic changes



Clear regulations



Recognition of tenure and property rights



Stronger research and evidence




Cross-sectoral coordination



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