

UK aid helps to reduce illegal wildlife trade in green corridor between Guatemala and Mexico

The British Ambassador to Guatemala, Nick Whittingham, visited Peten on 8-10 March to check on progress of a UK funded project to tackle illegal wildlife trade in the Guatemala-Mexico border.

A [three-year project \(2020-2023\)](#) is addressing increased poaching of valuable hardwood species and fauna, which is affecting Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve (Peten), the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve and Balamku State Reserve in Mexico (Campeche).

Official reports show that it has been 22 months without the presence of illegal loggers in the border area. Additionally, 11 people have been arrested linked to activities damaging the environment in the area, and some goods used by traffickers were seized.

The project is also helping more than 100 people to develop sustainable livelihoods for communities in the Carmelita road. It consists of entrepreneurship that foster the production of chicken, beekeeping, ecologic restoration of landscapes and sustainable exploitation of xate.

Ambassador Whittingham visited the San Miguel La Palotada community, one of the focus areas where activities are carried out with communities benefiting from economic alternative projects for the population that is vulnerable and affected by wildlife trafficking.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is implementing the project in collaboration with Asociación Balam, ACOFOP, CECON/USAC, Foro de Justicia Ambiental de Petén, FUNDAECO, CONAP and the Public Prosecutor's Office in Guatemala; and ProNatura Península Yucatán, CONANP, and SEMABICC in Mexico.

The UK is committed to protecting endangered animals and plants from poaching and illegal trade around the world. The Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund (IWTCF) provides funding for practical projects around the world that help eradicate illegal wildlife trade and, in doing so, reduce poverty.