



Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas in Mexico

National Perspective

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ICCAs history in Mexico



- Aztec *Calpulli* and Mayan *chinamitl*
- Property titles granted to indigenous peoples by Spanish crown in the Colony

- Mexican Revolution strengthened land property and natural resource use schemes for *campesino* communities

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ICCAs in Mexico today

- 40% of Mexican territory is community land
- Community forestry efforts in the 80s
- Interaction among NGOs, government and communities
 - Territorial Community Planning → formalisation or creation of ICCAs
- Up to 2007 Mexican ICCAs could be certified by CONANP
- The **LGEEPA** modification on May 2008
 - strengthens protected area status
 - reinforces certification of voluntary PAs

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Lessons learned

1. Legal recognition of community control over territories and resources → contribution to good governance
2. Traditional management and internal organisation maintain healthy landscapes
3. Community conservation projects promoted by external agencies with a Westernised, academic approach
4. How official recognition of ICCAs is related to local needs?
5. Seeking government funds is an incentive encouraged by external agencies



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Lessons learned



5. Community conservation projects success depends on community capacities to:

a. Understand external pressures

b. understand and apply laws and regulations

c. design, administer, develop and evaluate own projects

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Pending Issues



1. After the new law amendment:

Coopting community efforts and diminishing local governance of ICCAs?

Pros and cons of official recognition of ICCAs

2. Real benefits and contradictions of economic incentives

3. Indigenous communities opposing to legal recognition of their protected areas



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