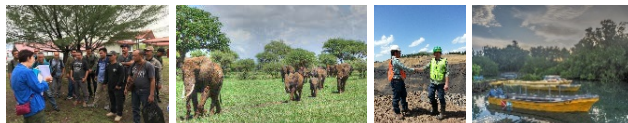




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



DOI-ITAP

GUATEMALA

NEWS BULLETIN

Guatemala’s Supreme Court to Strengthen Prosecution of Environmental Crimes

Supreme Court Supports Environmental Protection: On November 3, 2017, Guatemala’s Supreme Court announced that it would directly support improved environmental crimes prosecutions through a new “Guatemala Strategy to Strengthen Environmental Justice 2012-2018.” Once drafted, the Supreme Court will apply this strategy as its new national policy for the country.

The Guatemalan Protected Areas Council (CONAP), Asociación Balam, the Environmental Justice Forum of Petén (EJF) and the Alliance for the Right to the Environment and Water will support the Supreme Court on drafting this strategy.

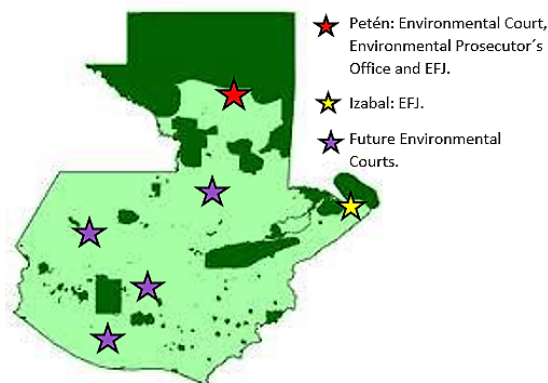
Replication of Successes: As part of this strategy, the Supreme Court will help to establish the following, nationwide:

- (1) Environmental Courts,
- (2) Environmental Prosecutors’ Offices, and
- (3) Environmental Justice Forums (EJF).

These will replicate the successful models already created and fully operational in the Petén region.

New EJF Established in Izabal: On the same day, the President of the Supreme Court inaugurated the new EJF in Izabal. (EJFs are venues for interagency coordination, to strengthen environmental crimes prosecution, and facilitate training for judges and prosecutors.)

U.S. Government Recognized: The President of the Supreme Court recognized the U.S. Department of the Interior’s International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP), as one “that favors the strengthening of the rule of law that contributes to the development of Guatemalan justice.” For over 6 years, DOI-ITAP has supported these efforts through its partners Asociación Balam and the Wildlife Conservation Society.



The Supreme Court announced the future establishment of new environmental courts in Alta Verapaz and the western highlands in 2018. Locations above of existing and future environmental courts, etc. Map: CONAP, protected areas in dark green.



Left: Over 75 representatives of national and municipal government agencies, courts, and civil society showed their support at the inauguration of the Izabal EJF. Right: Bayron Castellanos, Executive Director of the DOI-ITAP In-country Partner, Asociación Balam, receives a plaque from the Supreme Court’s President, José Antonio Pineda Barales, on behalf of DOI-ITAP. (Photos: DOI-ITAP)