



## Keepers of the Wild: Defending the world's wilderness

Another way to protect Guatemala's threatened habitats and wildlife is by donating funds to employ reserve rangers. Without rangers it is impossible to adequately protect the reserve. Rangers also carry out vital on-the-ground conservation activities and work with local communities to build environmental awareness. See WLT's website: [www.worldlandtrust.org](http://www.worldlandtrust.org) for more details on the **Keepers of the Wild** appeal.



## How you can help

The World Land Trust works with local partner organisations to fund the purchase and protection of threatened habitats across the world, creating safe havens for wildlife.

In Guatemala we are working with our partner FUNDAECO to help protect what is considered to be the single most threatened habitat in the Caribbean Guatemala region. For just £100 an acre (£50 for half an acre or £25 for a quarter), you can help save vital habitats for some of the Earth's most threatened species - from the Jaguar, to the Harpy Eagle and the West Indian Manatee.



### Cover picture

An aerial photograph of the Laguna Grande-Sarstún Reserve, protected by WLT partner organisation FUNDAECO. The inset image is of a West Indian Manatee, one of many species of wildlife hidden in the reserve's network of lagoons.

Photo credits: Cover (main) Robin Moore, (inset) Germanico Barrios; Page 2 (top) Marco Cereza, (below) David Tomlinson.

World Land Trust is a registered charity:  
No. 1001291

Buy an acre today, either for yourself or as a gift, and receive a personalised certificate recording your support and the latest news on WLT's conservation work. Your generous support can help save tropical rainforests and secure the long-term survival of its wildlife for as little as £25.

## Message from WLT Patron, Sir David Attenborough

*"The WLT's policy of buying and protecting land is the most direct and certain road to conservation. It deserves the support of all who care about the survival of the wild places of the world."*

Sir David Attenborough, OM CH FRS  
Patron, WLT

[www.fundaeco.org.gt](http://www.fundaeco.org.gt)

World Land Trust  
Blyth House, Bridge Street  
Halesworth  
Suffolk IP19 8AB, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1986 874 422  
Fax: +44 (0) 1986 874 425  
Email: [info@worldlandtrust.org](mailto:info@worldlandtrust.org)



WORLD  
LAND  
TRUST

[www.carbonbalancedpaper.com](http://www.carbonbalancedpaper.com)

US donors may contact: [info@worldlandtrust-us.org](mailto:info@worldlandtrust-us.org)  
[www.worldlandtrust-us.org](http://www.worldlandtrust-us.org) Registered US-based 501 (c) (3) public charity in the USA.

[www.worldlandtrust.org](http://www.worldlandtrust.org)

Designed by [www.wearredrab.net](http://www.wearredrab.net) 0112

Project Brief: Guatemala



WORLD  
LAND  
TRUST



**Above:** This image of the Laguna Grande-Sarstún Reserve was taken from the Rio Sarstún River, which separates Guatemala and its neighbour Belize. The reserve is protected by WLT's partners, FUNDAECO.

The Belizean side of the river is already a National Park, so plans to extend the reserve along the Guatemalan side of the river will help joint conservation efforts with Belize.

World Land Trust (WLT) first began helping save tropical rainforests and other threatened habitats of Guatemala in 2008, working with our local partner organisation FUNDAECO (Fundación Para el Ecodesarrollo y la Conservación). Together we have already secured 1,668 acres (675 ha) of tropical rainforest, turning it into a permanent wildlife reserve called the **Laguna Grande-Sarstún Reserve**.

The reserve protects a system of lagoons, mangroves and tropical forests that stretch from sea level up over 350m high mountains. It is considered by many to be the single most threatened habitat in the Caribbean Guatemala region. Less than 20 per cent of the area's original forest remains, the rest has been logged and cleared for cattle ranching and agriculture.

## Why are Guatemala's tropical forests important?

The forests of Guatemala fulfil a unique ecological function and have an important value for biodiversity. The region WLT is helping to protect, along the Rio Sarstún river that separates Guatemala with neighbouring Belize, harbours a high diversity of species many of which are only found in this one area. This high number of endemic species, combined with continued habitat destruction, makes protecting the tropical forests of Guatemala an urgent conservation priority.

**Left:** The Jaguar is one of five big cat species found in this region of Guatemala. Other mammals include the River Otter, the Mexican Black Howler Monkey, and West Indian Manatee. It is also an important habitat for bird species, including the impressive Harpy Eagle and Reddish Egret.

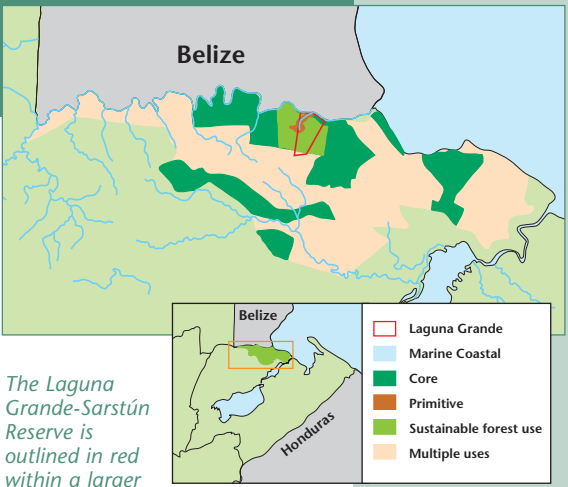


## Protecting the Laguna Grande-Sarstún Reserve

Established as a conservation organisation 20 years ago, FUNDAECO have been extremely influential in helping develop the Guatemalan Protected Areas Network and have secured over 24,700 acres (10,000 ha) of land to safeguard some of Guatemala's most threatened habitats and species.

Part of the organisation's conservation plan, supported by WLT, is to purchase privately owned land along the Rio Sarstún river to extend Laguna Grande-Sarstún Reserve. This will protect land along the river bank, already a National Park on the Belizean side, greatly strengthening the area's protection. It will also help to consolidate Guatemala's bi-national conservation efforts with Belize.

*As well as the wildlife that depends on these ecosystems, the land that has been purchased already was vital to secure as it creates a corridor between the Sarstún-Temash National Park in southern Belize, the southern tip of the Belizean Barrier Reef to the north and east, and the Chocón-Machacas/Río Dulce National Park to the south.*



The Laguna Grande-Sarstún Reserve is outlined in red within a larger protected area on the Guatemala-Belize border

## Working with local communities

An important part of securing the long-term success of FUNDAECO's conservation programme is to ensure that local communities understand the importance of their work and are actively involved. FUNDAECO are working with the Q'eqchi' communities living to the south of the reserve to develop a wide range of outreach activities including environmental education. FUNDAECO are also helping create alternative employment opportunities; two successful projects so far include the training of Q'eqchi' women as tourism caterers and working with local fishermen to set up an aquaculture project to farm native fish species, with the aim of moving away from harvesting wild fish and depleting populations. Providing alternative employment opportunities for local communities gives them greater financial security and reduces the risk of encroachment on the protected reserve.

## Saving Wildlife

**1,825**  
The region is known to hold at least 1,825 species of plants, 57 species are endemic (only found in this one area).

**100**  
It is an important stop over and breeding site for more than 100 species of neo-tropical migratory birds.

**84**  
The area is home to at least 84 species of mammal, many of which need extremely large areas to ensure their continued survival.

**49**  
There are 49 species of amphibians, including three endemic salamanders.