

Letter of Common Interests or Common Ground

Alianza and GCF

We, the Mesoamerican Alliance of People and Forests, hereby express our interest in deeper collaboration with the Governor's Climate and Forest Initiative, given our shared goals of supporting the peoples and authorities of the world's tropical forest jurisdictions that are most willing and able to protect their forests and thereby combat climate change.

The Mesoamerican Alliance of Peoples and Forests brings together indigenous authorities and community forest managers with an influence in a large portion of the forest ecosystems stretching from Mexico to Panama. 60% of our region's forests have achieved formal recognition of indigenous or community rights over forests. This legal recognition has allowed us to develop our own systems of territorial management which have achieved a diversity of documented successes in low emissions rural development, including pioneering experiences in incentives for sustainable forest management in Mexico, Costa Rica and Guatemala. We actively participate in the region's REDD+ processes, emphasizing the importance of community forest rights, and offering our experiences as key lessons and cornerstones for addressing deforestation in our jurisdictions.

We have sought to build on the basis of these achievements, not only amongst organizations in Mesoamerica, but also through partnership and collaboration with other indigenous organizations around the world, such as REPALF and AMAN. Together with these organizations, we have called for international action to tackle the climate crisis through the recognition of indigenous territorial rights, financial support for indigenous territorial authorities, the implementation of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, as well as an immediate halt to the criminalization of indigenous environmental defenders.

We believe we share many common characteristics and core beliefs with the jurisdictions represented in the GCF. Like them, we are the leaders endowed with authority over large forest areas in our own regions, with a deep concern for the climate crisis and a strong commitment to affect coordinated global change through action in our own jurisdictions. We believe this change can come about by bringing new actors together to leverage increased support to the peoples that reside and depend upon tropical forests.

We join the GCF in calling for greater technical and financial support from the international community for jurisdictional level action to halt deforestation and mitigate climate change. This support is urgently needed given the burgeoning threats of deforestation in the form of expanding cattle ranching, agriculture, infrastructure, logging and extractive projects. We offer our experience in forest management to this fora, and are eager to learn and participate in the generation of new partnerships and pathways towards on-the-ground progress towards tackling climate change.
