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Mexican Fund for the Conservation of Nature

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INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

The Mexican Fund for the Conservation of Nature (FMCN in Spanish) is a private, non-profit institution that had its origin at the Earth Summit of Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Under the original guidance of the World Wildlife Fund US, and with the financial support of donors, such as The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and Bankers Trust, a multidisciplinary group of 21 specialists conducted an extensive consultation process to design the FMCN with the participation of over 400 representatives from 250 Mexican conservation organizations in Mexico. In 1994 the FMCN was legally incorporated and the first Board of Directors was formed.

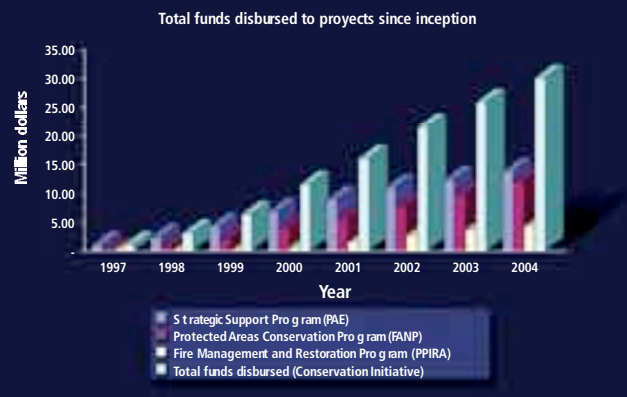
During 1996 the FMCN consolidated its initial endowment with donations from the USAID and the Mexican Government for US\$20 million and US\$10 million respectively. As a result, the FMCN published, in early 1997, its first call for project proposals aimed at ecosystem and species conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and institutional strengthening. Through this Strategic Support Program (PAE) the FMCN disbursed, in eight years, approximately US\$14 million to conservation projects throughout Mexico. At the beginning of

year 2005, PAE evolved into two more specific programs: The Watersheds Conservation Program, and the Marine Conservation Program.

At the end of 1996, the National Council for Natural Protected Areas (CONANP), an advisory body to the Mexican Environmental Ministry, selected the FMCN to receive and administer a US\$16.48 million from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in support of ten strategic protected areas in Mexico. The design of this endowment, its inclusion into FMCN, and the rules to spend the earned income, were completed in mid-1997. This Protected Areas Conservation Program (FANP in Spanish) is now a successful example of a public-private partnership that has received additional endowment contributions for US\$35 million from GEF and other sources, such as The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The Summit Charitable Foundation, The Ford Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Marisla Foundation, Wick Communications, Inc., the Mexican Government, the states of Mexico and Michoacán, and Fundación Gonzalo Río A rronte, IAP. Since 1998 FANP has disbursed approximately US\$12 million to p ro tected areas. By the end of 2005

it will be supporting basic conservation activities in 20 key protected areas.

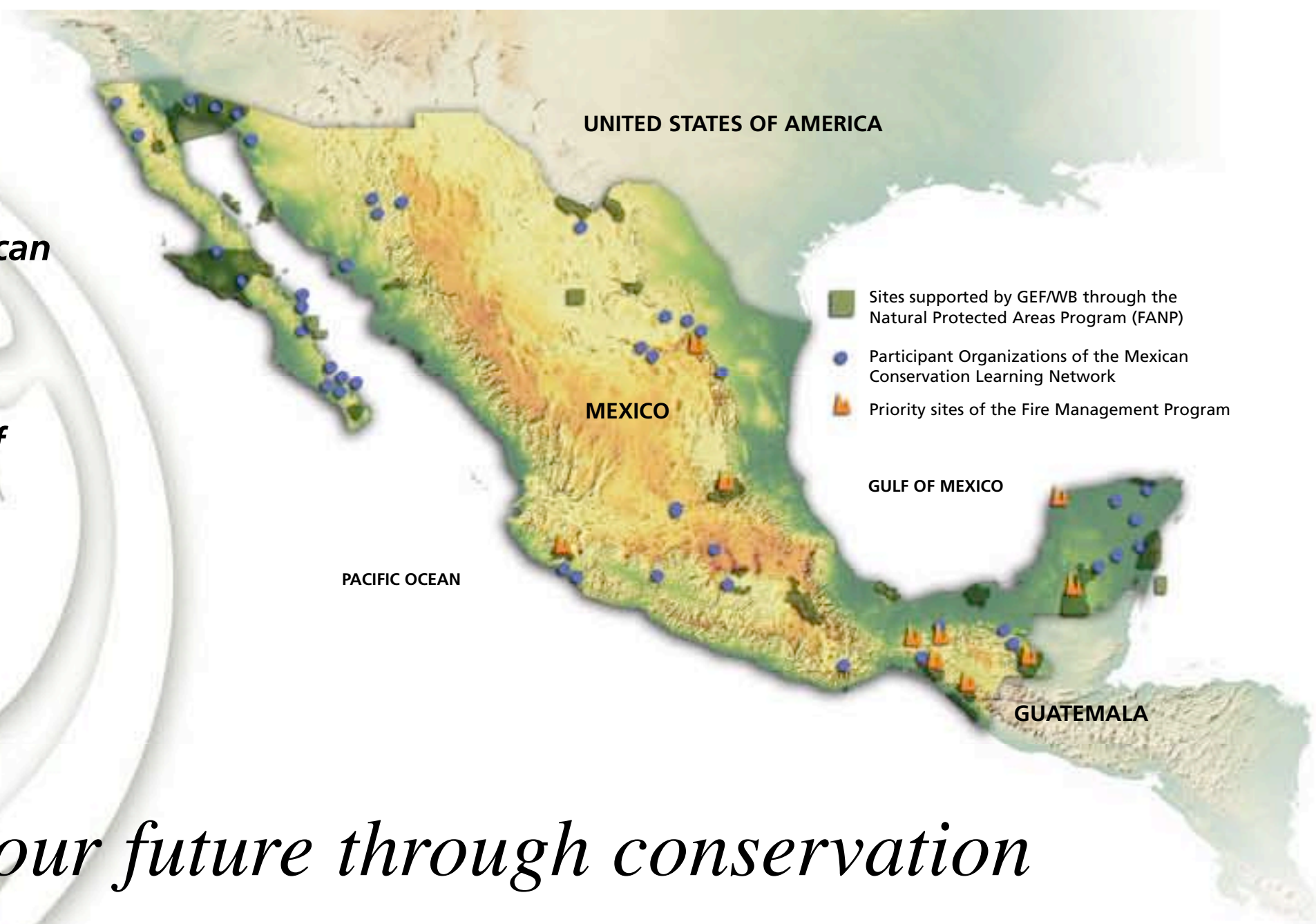
In 1998 the FMCN signed a five year period agreement with the USAID earmarked for wildfire prevention and restoration efforts within protected areas. The first phase of the Fire Management and Restoration Program (PPIRA in Spanish), which ended in December 2004, disbursed US\$4.29 million to support 46 projects on fire prevention, restoration, environmental education and training of local groups. The second phase will follow through an earmarked endowment from FMCN of US\$4.5 million and additional US\$300,000 from the US Forest Service. Its main objectives are to increase the participation of society in managing forest fires and to restore burnt areas of high biodiversity.



MISSION

To conserve Mexican biodiversity and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources through financial support and strategic actions

Building our future through conservation



PROGRAMS

1. Conservation Initiative
 - Watersheds Conservation Program
 - Watersheds and Cities II
 - National Enabling Environment for Mexico (NEEM)
 - San Pedro Initiative
 - Priority Watersheds
 - Marine Conservation Program
 - Marine Reserves
 - Gulf of California Conservation Fund (FCGC in Spanish)
 - Gulf of Mexico Program
 - Fire Management and Restoration Program (PPIRA in Spanish)
 - Protected Areas Conservation Program (FANP)
 - Consolidation of the National System of Protected Areas
 - Monarch Butterfly Conservation Fund (Monarch Fund)
2. Special Projects
 - Business Sustainability
 - Energy and Biodiversity
 - New Ventures-Mexico
 - Base of the Pyramid (BOP)
 - Cooperation Schemes
 - Environmental Education and Communication Fund (FEA in Spanish)
 - Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund)
 - The Latin American and the Caribbean Network of Environmental Funds (RedLAC in Spanish)
3. Mexican Conservation Learning Network (IMAC in Spanish)

CORE CHALLENGES

- To establish priorities in conservation and improve the FMCN grant selection process and monitoring mechanisms in order to effectively contribute to the conservation of Mexican biodiversity
- To serve as a catalyst for the establishment of independent programs and regional environmental funds in Mexico
- To raise the Mexican NGO's organizational capacity and financial stability through learning communities, cooperation and knowledge management
- To raise the awareness of the public and the media on the importance of conserving Mexican natural resources
- To further conservation schemes in private and public protected areas
- To increase five-fold the amount of resources available for funding conservation projects and strategic initiatives

The FMCN supports today only 30% of the high quality requests we receive each year through our different calls for proposals. Our protected areas program covers just 17 of the 56 protected areas in Mexico.

The FMCN keeps a lean and efficient operation and administration staff of less than 30 persons in its Mexico City headquarters and a regional office in Xalapa, Veracruz.

The scale of the challenge to conserve Mexico's natural resources demands a permanent fund raising effort as well as a robust and long-term capacity building program for national NGO's and rural organizations.

Your support can make a difference. Please consider registering yourself as a potential donor at www.fmcn.org. We will contact you and provide additional information about our work and programs.

From the beginning, the FMCN has promoted capacity building and institutional strengthening of conservation organizations. In 2000 these efforts led to the formation of the Mexican Conservation Learning Network (IMAC in Spanish), a collaborative effort of the FMCN, Private Agencies Collaborating Together, Inc. (PACT) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

The FMCN has fostered cooperative efforts with other international donors. These include the support of The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation for the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources Research Program in southern Mexico; The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, which issued a grant to design and operate the Gulf of California Conservation Fund; The Summit Charitable Foundation, which financed the Population and Environment Program and the design and initial operation of the Mesoamerican Reef Fund; AES Corporation, which provided resources for the Celestún Reserve Conservation Program; and the European Community, the Spanish International Cooperation Agency and Fomento Social Banamex A.C., which supported financial

sustainability initiatives in protected areas. The FMCN also participated in the establishment of the the Latin American and the Caribbean Network of Environmental Funds (RedLAC) and the Environmental Education and Communication Fund (FEA).

The FMCN has successfully fulfilled the goals and objectives established at its inception. To date, the endowment has reached US\$80 million. The GEF and Mexican Government have pledged an additional US\$13.4 million. Over the years, the FMCN has strived to develop sound investment policies, efficient management of resources, and transparent project selection and monitoring systems. It has facilitated the communication among conservation organizations, provided a platform for the incubation of new conservation programs and successfully met the challenges created by new opportunities to further the conservation of natural resources.

The FMCN organizational structure is composed of advisory honorary positions and an operative staff balanced in a

compact, but well coordinated institutional framework. The General Assembly is the highest authority of the organization and is composed of 32 honorary members. The General Assembly's responsibilities include approving the composition of the Board of Directors and the annual audited Financial Statements, as well as adjusting the by-laws to meet the evolving operational needs of the institution.

The Board of Directors consists of 19 representatives from various sectors of society, such as business, academia, and civil organizations. The Board is responsible for supervising the operation of FMCN, including project selection and budget allocation. The Board performs its tasks through four standing committees: the Investment Committee, the Conservation Committee, the Protected Areas Technical Committee and the International Advisory Committee. Each one is composed of experts from across the country and is chaired by a member of the Board of Directors. The General Assembly, Board of Directors and all standing Committees are made up of volunteers.

