**Region: Mesoamérica**

Countries included: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Nicaragua

**Threats to Biodiversity, Environment, and IPLC Regional Context:**

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| Country | Threats to biodiversity and environment | Threats to IPLCs, and Root Causes |
| Belize | * Fifty percent of mangrove loss is due to human activities (corresponding to approximately 344 acres per year) and 50 percent to storm damage. Belize’s coral reef ecosystems and certain terrestrial ecosystems were found to be at a higher risk from the impacts of climate change due to their low temperature tolerance ranges. Other major threats to the indigenous biodiversity include those associated with the spread and introduction of invasive species, as well as the loss and fragmentation of habitat primarily associated with the expansion of the agricultural and tourism sectors.[[1]](#footnote-0) * From 2001 to 2018, Belize lost 217kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 12 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 70.0Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Belize, the top 3 regions were responsible for 68 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Corozal had the most relative tree cover loss at 18 percent compared to an average of 12 percent. | * Belize is ranked 114th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been consistently improving across most economic and social indicators for the past decade. Human rights, group grievances, and security apparatus relations have been somewhat worsening. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Costa Rica | * The main direct pressures on biodiversity include:: habitat loss (land use changes), unsustainable mining/overexploitation of resources, pollution/sedimentation and climate change.[[2]](#footnote-1) * From 2001 to 2018, Costa Rica lost 233kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 6.0 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 81.6Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Costa Rica, the top 2 regions were responsible for 52 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Alajuela had the most relative tree cover loss at 8.6 percent compared to an average of 5.5 percent. | * Costa Rica is ranked 147th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It had been consistently improving across most social, economic, and political indicators over the past several years. The main indicator which has been consistently worsening is related to the security apparatus of the country. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| El Salvador | * Direct threats to Salvadoran biodiversity include: habitat reduction and fragmentation caused by land use changes; over-exploitation of biological resources; contamination of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems; biological invasions; and climate change.[[3]](#footnote-2) * From 2001 to 2018, El Salvador lost 74.4kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 7.5 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 21.7Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In El Salvador, the top 6 regions were responsible for 57 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. San Vicente had the most relative tree cover loss at 13 percent compared to an average of 7.5 percent. | * El Salvador is ranked 93th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been experiencing increasing displacement since 2014 as well as worsening scores related to the security apparatus. It has been improving in terms of economic inequality and political indicators such as state legitimacy. * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |
| Guatemala | * Biodiversity loss is primarily due to the lack of mainstreaming and management of biodiversity components; insecurity about property rights and land use; lack of awareness, including in regard to the goods and services provided by biodiversity; lack of policy/legislation and institutional enforcement; high population growth, poverty and unemployment; prevailing agrarian structure.[[4]](#footnote-3) * From 2001 to 2018, Guatemala lost 1.39Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 18 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 436Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Guatemala, the top 1 regions were responsible for 58 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. This region had the most relative tree cover loss at 27 percent compared to an average of 9.6 percent. | * Guatemala is ranked 58th /178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). Group grievances have been steadily increasing for the past decade, whereas improvements across economic, political, and social indicators have been inconsistent and slight. * According to Global Witness, at least 32 land defenders were killed in Guatemala between 2016-2018 |
| Honduras | * The main threats to biodiversity in Honduras remain inadequate planning in relation to production activities, deforestation, forest fires, illegal hunting, uncontrolled extraction of forest resources, introduction of alien species, ecosystem pollution and urban sprawl. The main natural hazards are the general cumulative effects of climate change.[[5]](#footnote-4) * From 2001 to 2018, Honduras lost 1.01Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 13 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 334Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Honduras, the top 3 regions were responsible for 53 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Colón had the most relative tree cover loss at 21 percent compared to an average of 11 percent. | * Honduras is ranked 64th/178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). While group grievances have been declining since 2015, human rights, security apparatus, and displacement indicators have been worsening over that same time period. * According to Global Witness, at least 23 land defenders were killed in Honduras between 2016-2018 |
| México | * From 2001 to 2018, Mexico lost 3.67Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 6.9 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 891Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Mexico, the top 6 regions were responsible for 57 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2017. Baja California had the most relative tree cover loss at 27 percent compared to an average of 4.8 percent. | * México is ranked 98th/178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). Economic indicators have been consistently improving over the past decade, and political indicators have been improving since 2017. However, Displacement and security apparatus indicators have been progressively worsening during this time. * According to Global Witness, at least 32 land defenders were killed in México between 2016-2018 |
| Nicaragua | * Primary anthropogenic threats and threats from natural phenomena include: Ecosystem transformation, exploitation of resources, pollution, climate impacts.[[6]](#footnote-5) * From 2001 to 2018, Nicaragua lost 1.40Mha of tree cover, equivalent to a 18 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 541Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Nicaragua, the top 3 regions were responsible for 81 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Río San Juan had the most relative tree cover loss at 31 percent compared to an average of 9.9 percent. | * Nicaragua is ranked 62nd/178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). Human rights, security apparatus, and state legitimacy indicators have been sharply worsening since 2018, while economic and social indicators are slightly improving or flat. * According to Global Witness, at least 15 land defenders were killed in Nicaragua between 2016-2018 |
| Panama | * The main threats to Panamanian biodiversity are associated with the expansion of the agricultural frontier, land use changes, deterioration and loss of soils, deforestation and habitat fragmentation, water and soil contamination, creation and expansion of human infrastructure inside protected areas, other human hazards, climate change and natural disasters, and emerging diseases.[[7]](#footnote-6) * From 2001 to 2018, Panama lost 380kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 6.7 percent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and 147Mt of CO₂ emissions. * In Panama, the top 5 regions were responsible for 52 percent of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2018. Herrera had the most relative tree cover loss at 10 percent compared to an average of 6.6 percent. | * Panama is ranked 140th/178 on the [fragile states index](https://fragilestatesindex.org/country-data/). It has been consistently improving across most indicators since 2014 * No data on whether land defenders have been killed since 2015. |

1. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=bz#facts> [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=cr#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. <https://www.cbd.int/countries/?country=SV> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=gt#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=hn#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=ni#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/?country=pa#facts [↑](#footnote-ref-6)