# [***Mangrove forests are disappearing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:661R-5D01-DYY9-01XC-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

***Mangrove* forests are disappearing three to five times faster than the world's forests.** Today, National Audubon Society and Panama Audubon Society are working in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and the Embassy of the United Kingdom to support the conservation of these ecosystems in the country.

Every year, on July 26, several countries around the world celebrate the International ***Mangrove*** Ecosystem Conservation Day with the aim of preventing the advance of the destruction of these ecosystems that not only affects nature, but also the human settlements that are located in areas surrounding this type of environment.

The Panama Audubon Society reiterated on this date the conservation of these ecosystems for their great benefits: ***mangroves*** contribute to food security, filter the waters that flow into the oceans and reef systems and protect coastal communities around the world from storm surges, tsunamis, sea level rise and erosion, therefore, their conservation is a priority.

Rosabel Miró, Executive Director of Audubon Panama, said that ***mangrove*** ecosystems are home to a rich and enviable biodiversity. "The fish and crustaceans that grow in ***mangroves*** are sources of income for adjacent populations and have become an effective weapon to combat climate change thanks to the tons of carbon they capture. By teaching schools and the general public about the multiple benefits of ***mangrove*** forests, we can continue to add allies who act to protect and conserve them," said Miró.

Meanwhile, Julio Montes de Oca, from the National Audubon Society, pointed out that ***mangroves*** are our first line of defense against climate change. At the same time, he affirmed: "Because of the coastal protection they provide and the services they supply to communities, we must redouble our efforts to conserve and restore them.

To understand the magnitude of the importance of these ecosystems, the Panama Audubon Society stated that one hectare of ***mangrove*** can store 3,754 tons of carbon. The destruction of ***mangroves*** would release the stored carbon into the atmosphere, thus increasing global warming.

This year 2022, global actions have grown to support these ecosystems, because despite all the benefits they provide us, ***mangrove*** forests are disappearing three to five times faster than the world's forests, with serious ecological and socioeconomic impacts. Threats include coastal construction, pollution, and pressures from agriculture and aquaculture.

To help conserve Panama's ***mangroves***, the National Audubon Society and Panama Audubon Society have been working together since last year to value, protect and enhance the coastal natural capital of Panama Bay and Parita Bay with funding from the UK government, administered through the IDB's Natural Capital Laboratory, with support from the Ministry of Environment and the UK Embassy in Panama.

This project has as part of its priority interest the conservation of ***mangrove*** ecosystems, the establishment of a ***blue carbon*** baseline, the knowledge and dissemination of the importance of these two components and the strengthening of public policies that promote the conservation and restoration of ***mangroves***, so they will continue to strengthen this alliance to make these benefits effective.

To complement these actions, a virtual regional meeting will be held on Thursday, July 28 under the title '***Blue Carbon*** and ***Mangrove*** Conservation: Experiences of Panama and Colombia'. Experts such as Julio Montes de Oca from National Audubon Society (Costa Rica), Yenifer Diaz from Panama Audubon Society, and Maria Claudia Diaz Granados and Fabio Arjona from Conservation International (Colombia) will participate in this meeting.

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