

ACTIVITY DOCUMENT

Submitted by the Government of Guatemala

TITLE: Establishment of a forensic laboratory for timber identification and description in the implementation of legal proceedings and traceability systems for CITES listed products

SUMMARY

There is currently no systematized information on macroscopic and microscopic botanical identification of timber and other characteristics of Guatemalan species listed in CITES Appendix II.

As a result, the legal system has no scientific certainty to support legal proceedings against offenders within the national legal framework. Because of this, many offenders have been given the benefit of the doubt, leaving environmental crimes unpunished and promoting recurrent fraud in the trade of macroscopically similar species.

Given that illegal trade in high-value species is increasingly becoming a significant threat to biological diversity in Guatemala, it is necessary to ensure the implementation of immediate actions by the relevant authorities through mechanisms such as the establishment of a forensic laboratory for timber identification in order to develop a scientific database to facilitate technical inspections and law enforcement.

The laboratory to be established will include the required installed capacity of equipment such as microtome, microscopes, and personnel for the handling and collection of samples in specific areas of the country, so as to ensure the scientific evaluation of collected samples of Guatemalan timber species listed in CITES Appendix II.

EXECUTING AGENCY

Fundación Naturaleza para la Vida –FNPV (*Nature for Life Foundation*)

COLLABORATING AGENCY

Faculty of Agricultural Science, University of San Carlos of Guatemala (FAUSAC)

DURATION (in months) - 24 months