

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

## A Conversation on Conservation

EcoViva prepares to co-host 5th Mangrove Forum in El Salvador



Photo: Ana Luisa Altamirano

Participants from the 4th Mangrove Forum held in the Bay of Jiquilisco in 2017.

**“Last year’s record-breaking Mangrove Forum brought together around 350 people, with some traveling from the far reaches of the country to participate.”**

**E**coViva and the Mangrove Alliance in El Salvador are co-hosting an international conference on conservation to discuss mangrove restoration policy and progress, sea turtle conservation, and community co-management

of natural protected areas. The 5th Mangrove Forum will take place on October 23rd in the central coast of El Salvador in the Estero de Jaltepeque, a Ramsar recognized wetlands complex that contains the second largest swath of mangrove forests in the country.

Last year’s record-breaking Mangrove Forum brought together around 350 people from community organizations, NGOs, academia, and government agencies, with some traveling from the far reaches of the country to participate. Over 20 community organizations

as well as municipal, state and national governments will send representatives from across the Salvadoran coast. Even the Minister of the Environment, Lina Pohl, is planning to attend. People from across the Northern Triangle region, Mexico, Cuba and the United States, will attend virtually and join via video conference feed.

This year will also include a graduation ceremony of the country’s first class of “Community Scientists Program,” an intensive training led by EcoViva, the

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## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

### Science in Action! *Científicos Comunitarios*

**A**sociación Mangle and EcoViva have developed the School of Citizen Scientists which will strengthen the capacity of local leaders to contribute to the conservation and restoration of environmental ecosystems, like mangroves in the Lower Lempa of El Salvador.

Santos Rigoberto Martínez, a program participant from the Network of Local Environmental Observers says, “It is a good initiative because it opens up a process for us to strengthen the capacities and knowledge of our members. Community leaders

will be able to manage and use technology to support the community and the environment.”

The program educates participants about the successful grassroots framework and model developed by Asociación Mangle with support from EcoViva. The program utilizes learning and social exchanges with organizations like the Environment and Risk Management program, the Salvadoran Ministry of the Environment and local conservation committees of the Biosphere Reserve and the Bay of Jiquilisco.

Session topics include lessons on

how to use tools like Google Earth and GIS mapping to improve the content of reports, which include first-hand observations about the region. Participant Silvia Lorena Ramos believes this training will provide local leaders with visual information and data to increase environmental management and community engagement.

Asociación Mangle expects that the School of Community Scientists will become a train-the-trainer program and that it will be implemented by other organizations at the departmental level. ■

## DISASTER RESPONSE IN HONDURAS

### Inclusive Disaster Preparedness

**E**arlier this year Red COMAL, our partners in Honduras who work on strengthening *campesino*-led initiatives for environmental sustainability and economic self-sufficiency, was honored by CODEM – (Municipal Committee for Emergency Preparedness) for their work on inclusivity and disaster preparedness. CODEM is a municipal government institution in Honduras that is responsible for coordinating disaster preparedness and disaster responses. They are responsible for saving lives and protecting property and it is an honor to have our partners’ work recognized by such an institution.

#### So, what is “Inclusive Disaster Preparedness” and why does it matter?

Global climate change is affecting all living things on the planet. Extreme weather events are becoming more intense and frequent. The effects of these events are not equally distributed. Some countries are more vulnerable than others, with Honduras being cited by the think tank Germanwatch as one of the most extreme weather event-vulnerable country in the world. And some populations are especially vulnerable, namely people with disabilities. A UN study observed that people with disabilities were



Photos: Courtesy of Red COMAL

twice to four times as likely to die in natural disasters as people without disabilities. Inclusive Disaster Preparedness leverages the experiences of people with disabilities to design the built environment and emergency protocols with accessibility in mind. Red COMAL has been a leader in training members of municipal bodies in this inclusive approach. ■

Photos: EcoViva Staff



EcoViva is joining the Center for Exchange and Solidarity for the 13th International Election Observer Mission. On February 3, 2019, the people of El Salvador will elect the President and Vice President of El Salvador. If there is not a candidate who wins more than 50% of the vote, there will be a run-off election on March 10, 2019. At stake is the political future of a country that is attempting to rebuild after a legacy of US intervention, economic stagnation, vulnerability to extreme weather events, and violence. There are several options for participation. Visit [cis-elsalvador.org](http://cis-elsalvador.org) for more information.



This year, Emily Parker, a recent graduate of Scripps Institution of Oceanography collaborated with EcoViva and the Mangrove Association on a research project. She also produced a short film about the turtle conservation and preservation model of the *tortugeros* in El Salvador. Distressed by the news that the sea turtle hatchery of Isla Montecristo lost its biggest funder and might have to close its doors, Emily decided to start a facebook fundraiser to bring awareness and #SavetheHatchery.

Thousands of eggs will be saved with the funds raised by the campaign. You too can be a Turtle Savior

Watch the video and then share it with friends:

[bit.ly/turtlesaviors](http://bit.ly/turtlesaviors)

Donate here:

[bit.ly/turtlefund](http://bit.ly/turtlefund)



Logo: Ana Luisa Altam

## A Conversation on Conservation *(continued from page 1)*

Mangrove Association and the Ministry of the Environment that builds the capacity of select members of the national network of environmental observers (ROLA). We also anticipate that the eight municipal mayors slated to attend will come together to declare a regional Mangrove Day to commemorate and raise awareness about this critical ecosystem. Email [ana@ecoviva.org](mailto:ana@ecoviva.org) if you are interested in joining this event online. ■



Photos: Ana Luisa Altam

### CONNECT! FROM ROOT CAUSES TO GRASSROOT SOLUTIONS



Join us December 7th for a night of connection and celebration featuring award-winning author, Lauren Markham. We will also honor the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity and the SHARE Foundation by presenting the Hal Baron Spirit of the Mangrove award to Rev. Deborah Lee and José Artiga. Purchase tickets now to take advantage of the earlybird rate: [bit.ly/ECOVIVA](http://bit.ly/ECOVIVA)



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Photo: Emily Parker

## CREATE IMPACT

### MAKE A YEAR-END GIFT

We know the end of the year is a busy time, often full of gatherings with friends and family. We hope you can take a time to make a contribution to EcoViva before 2018. Your gift will go a long way in supporting locally-led initiatives and strengthening our partners' efforts to build a sustainable future in Central America.



Donate today: [bit.ly/donateECOIVA](https://bit.ly/donateECOIVA)

### WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

You can help restore crucial ecosystems and build thriving rural economies for years to come by including EcoViva in your will or other legacy giving plan.



Email [legacy@ecoviva.org](mailto:legacy@ecoviva.org) to learn how you can make a lasting impact