



GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

MAY 2006



USAID's crosscutting environmental program in Honduras has assisted the country in protecting its natural resources, thus increasing the resilience of ecosystems and mitigating the potential effects of climate change. Through continued USAID assistance, Honduras will likely maintain and expand its protection of carbon stocks as well as increase its capacity to deal with natural disasters.

Background. Located in the middle of Central America, Honduras covers an area of 112,090 square kilometers, with Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean coastlines. The country features hundreds of miles of white sand beaches along its Caribbean coastline and the reef-rich Bay Islands just off shore. Its mountainous interior includes one of Central America's largest unspoiled tropical forests in the Mosquitia region and the archeological site at Copan, a major cultural and commercial center of the ancient Mayan culture.

While Honduras is largely unaffected by the earthquakes that afflict other Central American nations, the country's biggest natural threat comes during the tropical storm season in the form of hurricanes and frequent flooding along the north coast and other regions of the country. USAID provides technical assistance, training, and logistical support to the Honduran government and private sector in forest, protected area, and water resource management, as well as in disaster prevention, preparedness, response, and mitigation.

Sector-Specific Climate Change Activities

Sustainable Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Conservation of Carbon Stocks. USAID is providing technical assistance and training to nearly 1,000 small and medium-sized commercial farmers who have crops planted on more than 3,000 hectares, and to approximately 1,300 hillside subsistence farmers covering 1,500 hectares, to improve and expand sustainable agricultural systems, including higher crop yields and soil conservation and erosion control, which reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by maintaining carbon levels in soil and biomass in tropical grasslands and pasture.

In recent years, USAID/Honduras, through its Integrated Watershed Resources Management (MIRA) Project, has been supporting the improved management of Honduran protected areas and forests. The project's protected area management component is strengthening the technical, administrative and financial capacities of the personnel in charge of managing the 17 protected areas. These activities are increasing Honduras' capacity to meet the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by contributing to carbon storage in the land use and forestry sector and will ultimately bring 160,000 hectares under improved management by 2007. Additionally, this project provides assistance to protected area managers to increase income and visitors to parks, and broaden awareness of conservation issues.

