

Mexico - Valle de Bravo

Pro Cuenca Valle de Bravo Fund

SUMMARY

Local initiative linked to national PSAH Program. Input-based. The fund Pro Cuenca- Valle de Bravo was created to pool private voluntary contributions and public funds and invests in conservation projects of the forests and rivers of the region.

MATURITY OF THE INITIATIVE

Ongoing since 2000, and on standby as of 2008 (ongoing negotiations). In 1999, a group of local residents and visitors in Valle de Bravo decided to join efforts to work and protect the forest of the area. The Fund was officially created in February 2000. No payments were made in 2008 due to ongoing negotiations and the implementation of a new environmental payment mechanism that collects contributions from water users in bimonthly bills,

DRIVER

Proponents of the Fund argue that deforestation is the main cause of reduction in river flows into the reservoir. According to the National Water Commission this reduction could be as high as 50 per cent in some rivers. Half of the watershed is forested, and it has constant water flows throughout the year. The main water reservoir lies within its limits as well as a large hydroelectric facility and recreation activities.

Deforestation has resulted in over 84 million cubic metres of sediment. Additional pollution comes from wastewaters from agriculture, industrial and domestic users.

The watershed provides 10 per cent of the water used in Mexico City.

STAKEHOLDERS

Supply

The fund targets upland communities linked with river pollution (domestic, agricultural and industrial sources of pollution have been identified and quantified). The main target group at the moment is farmers who have forested land, or are interested in agro-forestry activities upstream.

Ten thousand hectares were identified for priority investment, beginning with interventions in 2000 hectares in the first stage.

Demand

Local private and public sources have made voluntary contributions to the Pro-Cuenca Valle del Bravo Fund.

Intermediary

The Pro-Cuenca Valle de Bravo Fund is a non-profit private organisation that funds and supports conservation activities in the region (forests, rivers), as well as protecting the wellbeing of local communities. It collects national (public and private) and international funding and has now joined forces with the Cuenca Amanalco Environmental Fund for access to national-level sources. In 2005, the Cuenca de Amanalco-Valle de Bravo Environmental Fund contributed approximately US\$226,000 for forest conservation.

Facilitator

Major funds come from the Mexican Fund for Nature Conservation (FMCN). The National Mexican University (UNAM) provided training for monitoring. Mexican Health Institute and the National Health and Safety Commission (COFEPRIS), Instituto Nacional de Ecología (INE) have also contributed.

MARKET DESIGN

Service

Water quality and quantity.

Commodity

Improved management practices through the promotion of agroforestry activities.

Payment mechanism

- User fees: In the future, Procuencia expects to create an additional water fee to be collected every two months through the general water bills.
- Voluntary, tax-free donations can also be made to the fund.
- Since, 2004, the scheme also promotes the Mexican national hydrological Payment for Environmental Services (PES/PSAH) programmes and facilitates the access of local landowners.

Terms of payment

The Fund provides financial support for projects that can contribute to forest conservation and protection of the watercourses in the watershed.

Funds involved

Unclear how much funds have been invested since 2000. In 2005, the Amanalco-Valle del Bravo Watersheds Environmental Fund approved funding of about US\$200,000 (2.5 million Mexican pesos) for the following year.

ANALYSIS OF COSTS AND BENEFITS

Economic

Expected benefits

The project aims to increase the return from sustainable agriculture and forestry sectors and so reduce incentives for conversion and over-exploitation.

Actual costs and benefits

No information available.

Environmental

Expected costs and benefits: By avoiding forest conversion and promoting activities to reduce pollution, the initiative seeks to reduce improve water resources. The scheme also works with local government authorities and the general population encouraging better infrastructure for wastewater treatment.

Results from community monitoring suggest that water quality in forested areas receiving payments is good, but it declines in lower areas of the watershed, suggesting potential problems with fish farms, and domestic or industrial wastewaters (Manson 2008).

Social

One of the main impacts of the Procuencas Fund is the active engagement of different stakeholders, including government, private sector and civil society, in the search for an integral solution to environmental problems in the region.

The fund sponsored an environmental awareness campaign aimed at civil society about the threats to the environment in the watershed.

LEGISLATION ISSUES

The Fund has created an integral Land Use Plan for the watershed (*Plan de ordenamiento territorial*) to guide its investments.

MONITORING

The Fund commissioned studies for water quantity and quality in the rivers and dams. It has provided the equipment and training for carrying out monitoring. Local stakeholders-led hydrological assessments (municipality, indigenous groups, NGOs, weekend home owners, universities, etc.).

One such study geographically identifies areas with high, moderate, low and very low levels of impact on health, and provides one of the few detailed descriptions of methodology, training and state/organisation/community involvement in monitoring for water quality (see <http://www.todovalle.com/boletin/masagua4.htm>). The study is able to make direct recommendations for preventative action (upstream) but also for immediate use of the water (i.e. 'shower after swimming in this river, but do not drink').

MAIN CONSTRAINTS

Presumably lack of constant sources of funds to expand its conservation activities and awareness-raising campaigns.

MAIN POLICY LESSONS

Stakeholder involvement: There was substantial and active stakeholder engagement right from the outset (even before the availability of funds for conservation from the National Government).

Important preparatory steps: Participatory of management plan, baseline studies for quality and quantity and equipment and training for monitoring.

OTHER INFORMATION

No information available.

CONTACT

Horacio Bonfil Sánchez, Director Procuencia: fondoprocuenca@prodigy.net.mx.

REFERENCES

Manson, R. H. 2008. Efectos del uso del suelo sobre la provisión de servicios ambientales hidrológicos: monitoreo del impacto del PSAH. Informe Final., Instituto de Ecología, A.C.

Procuencia (2004) Fondo Pro Cuenca Valle de Bravo- Newsletter 2004.
<http://www.todovalle.com/boletin/masagua4.htm>.



Procuena (2006) Website Fondo Pro Cuenca Valle del Bravo. Mexico
<http://www.procuena.org/fondo.htm>.

LINKS

Procuena website: www.procuena.org (latest information 2003).

Procuena Newsletter: <http://www.todovalle.com/boletin/masagua4.htm> (latest information 2004).