



PR#079-26

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Belize, Guatemala, and Mexico Sign MoU to Protect the Greater Maya Forest**

*Belmopan, March 24, 2026.*

The Governments of Belize, Guatemala, and Mexico have signed a Trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen cooperation in the conservation and sustainable management of the Greater Maya Forest, one of the largest and most significant tropical forest systems in the Americas.

Building on the Calakmul Declaration signed on August 15, 2025, this agreement formalizes coordinated actions under the Greater Maya Forest Biocultural Corridor to protect biodiversity, maintain ecological connectivity and address shared environmental threats. For Belize, this marks a critical step in safeguarding national natural assets, strengthening climate resilience and reinforcing its role in regional environmental leadership.

The agreement brings together key national institutions, including Belize's Forest Department under the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Solid Waste Management, Mexico's Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), and Guatemala's Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) in its role within the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP).

Priority actions include strengthening the conservation and connectivity of protected areas, enhancing climate change mitigation and adaptation, and scaling up joint efforts to combat forest fires, illegal logging, wildlife trafficking, and environmental pollution.

For the period 2026–2027, the countries will prioritize joint monitoring and enforcement, including coordinated protection of key species such as the jaguar and scarlet macaw, which are vital indicators of ecosystem health.

A central focus of the MoU is the direct benefit to local communities. The initiative promotes sustainable livelihoods through regenerative agriculture, community-based tourism, and renewable energy, ensuring that conservation efforts translate into tangible social and economic opportunities, particularly for forest-dependent and indigenous communities in Belize.

The MoU will remain in force for an initial five-year period, with an option for renewal. It reflects the shared commitment of Belize, Guatemala, and Mexico to long-term environmental stewardship and to work collaboratively in protecting biodiversity and ensuring the sustainable management of the Greater Maya Forest Biocultural Corridor.

The three countries also call on local stakeholders, civil society, and international partners to support and join this collective effort to expand conservation impact across the region.

## **Ends**

For more information, please contact:

Mr. John Pinelo

Acting Chief Forest Officer

Contact number: (501) 822-1524

Hotline number: (501) 610-1524

Email: [secretary@forest.gov.bz](mailto:secretary@forest.gov.bz)

Facebook: Belize Forest Department

Instagram: @FD\_Belize