



EcoLogic Development Fund • Annual Report 2015–2016

KNIT Communities, Remarkable Transformations



What is KNIT?

It's extremely important to us at EcoLogic that you—our kind friends and generous supporters—are deeply connected to us and the work that we do, which means making sure you understand the scope of our mission and how we accomplish our vital goals.

The KNIT acronym provides a framework to clarify the complex and intimate nature of what EcoLogic does: We provide access to useful and usable Knowledge, Networks, Incentives, and Tools to help rural and indigenous communities in Central America and Mexico thrive while restoring and protecting the natural environments in which they live.

Please read this annual report not just as a financial statement or year-in-review, but as a guide to the “why?” of our work and the logic behind it, the importance of our approach, and how all of our actions—every experience you have with EcoLogic, such as the one you're having right now—powerfully impact our ability to save tropical ecosystems and preserve rural and indigenous ways of life.



OUR IMPACT IS YOUR IMPACT

Dear Friends and Supporters,

For EcoLogic, the importance of your support cannot be overstated. Our unique way of working is truly unlike that of any other organization. Our local approach, personal commitment, and lasting impact provide rural and indigenous peoples with life-giving resources while protecting and restoring biodiversity. Our way of working is woven into our identity as an organization and the culture of our community; it is what allows EcoLogic, daily, to always find a path, even if at times unfamiliar, to affirm our commitment to rural and indigenous communities in Central America and Mexico. It is what inspires us.

So, we want to thank you. Your participation in our mission in 2015—whether as a supporter, partner, ally, or friend—helped us empower rural and indigenous peoples to restore and protect the natural areas in which they live, and on which they depend, in more ways than we ever have before. It has not been a year without challenge—which is something inherent in such pressing, cross-cultural work—but I can say with the utmost confidence that EcoLogic is positioned to push further and create more impact than ever before in our history.

As you read our annual report, consider these pages an invitation to engage with us more deeply. This is an opportunity to reconnect and review our progress, so that you can see where we are and consider how you might continue to support us and root us on as we strive for even deeper and broader impact.

Muchas gracias,



Barbara Vallarino
Executive Director



EcoLogic Executive Director, Barbara Vallarino, visits with volunteer forest guardians in Totonicapán, Guatemala.

WHERE WE WORK



In 2015, EcoLogic and our partners
**empowered 154 rural
and indigenous communities
to restore and protect
their tropical ecosystems**
in Central America and Mexico.

Opposite: Colorful and intricately knit fabrics used to make traditional clothing in Totonicapán, Guatemala.



Fernando Recancoj, EcoLogic Field Technician, proudly showcasing a mural made of recycled materials, designed by youth conservationists in Totonicapán, Guatemala.

“Communities like Totonicapán, and other indigenous communities across Latin America, will show that the world can be different.”

Fernando Recancoj,
EcoLogic Field Technician, Totonicapán, Guatemala

FROM **KNOWLEDGE** TO INNOVATION

Knowledge. Our first step. The knowledge possessed by rural and indigenous communities directly contributes to the protection and restoration of the remarkable biodiversity of tropical ecosystems in Central America and Mexico. The transfer of this knowledge also safeguards unique local practices and cultural traditions that have ensured community and ecological resilience for centuries. Incorporating this diverse knowledge—as each community and context is different—into our conservation work can be a challenge. However, when respectful relationships that benefit both local communities and the planet are created, local knowledge and sustainable development initiatives can merge successfully. This

integration leads to the design and implementation of truly innovative, effective, practical strategies that have lasting impact.

EcoLogic ensures this equitable transfer of knowledge by holding:

- participatory workshops where people define, analyze, and discuss problems and solutions
- trainings where people learn new skills and techniques for sustainable development and conservation
- learning exchanges where people share what they've learned, what has been successful, and what needs changing



Amanda Foster

Rosario Concepción Morales Tzic facilitating a “seed ranking” activity during a participatory workshop in Chiyax, Guatemala.

In 2015, EcoLogic and our partners

**conducted 141 workshops,
trainings, and learning
exchanges**

**empowered 3,117 people
to protect and restore their
ecosystems**

KNOWLEDGE



Members of AJAASSPIB and FARCO sharing knowledge from years of dedication to community development and conservation.

MEXICO & HONDURAS

A Learning Exchange Between Grassroots Organizations: A Young Partner and a Pioneer in Watershed Conservation

In the fall of 2015, the leaders of two grassroots organizations that are local partners of EcoLogic—AJAASSPIB (Association of Water Committees of the Southern Sector of Pico Bonito National Park in Honduras) and FARCO (Regional Environmental Collaborative for the Chinantla Region of Oaxaca, Mexico)—met in Mexico for a bilateral learning exchange. FARCO is a relatively new organization that takes a community-led approach to conserving more than 138,000 acres of forest in the upper Papaloapan River Watershed. Given AJAASSPIB's years of effective conservation in Honduras, EcoLogic brought the two groups together so that AJAASSPIB could share their learnings and advice directly with FARCO.

Twelve participants came together for this two-day workshop in Mexico to discuss community water committees and the legal and on-the-ground steps necessary to organize effective, lasting water stewardship. The two groups discussed important community concerns and considerations such as improving sanitation, creating equitable payment systems, and the importance of engaging community members in complementary conservation activities, such as reforestation—which are critical to maintaining water quality and watershed health.

THE RESULT: *With the encouragement and new learning from AJAASSPIB, FARCO has conducted 18 workshops with 527 community members on sustainable watershed management and agriculture practices and has legally established a regional community-based water committee.*

MEXICO

Participatory Trainings Build Community Capacity to Monitor Forests

EcoLogic's REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Plus) approach focuses on strengthening the knowledge and capacity of local people to monitor the carbon stored in the forests where they live. By enabling local communities to be active participants, they can inform decisions about land-use policy at the local level and advocate for local communities to receive more benefits from REDD+.

Our work builds the local-level technical rigor, accountability, and consensus needed for REDD+ to be effective and beneficial for rural people so that they can lead in forest conservation long term.

In 2015, EcoLogic coordinated a multi-state coalition of civil society, governmental, and academic actors in Mexico to train community brigades made up of university students, indigenous landowners and young community members on how to estimate the volume of carbon that the forests contain. This included a range of methods and technologies, including how to measure tree height and diameter and how to use GPS to locate plots.

In October 2015, EcoLogic and our partners trained 32 community leaders in Nahá, Chiapas, on biomass and soil carbon estimation. This was the first in a series of five workshops.

THE RESULT: *32 community leaders in Nahá now have the skills they need to actively participate in the monitoring and management of their forests and inherent carbon resources. In total, through this series, 189 community members from 4 different states were trained and 5 new community brigades were formed.*



Carlos Herrera

Monitoring teams learning how to measure carbon stored in forests in Nahá, Chiapas.

FROM NETWORKS TO SOLIDARITY

The threats to the ecosystems upon which rural and indigenous communities depend are too large, pervasive, diverse, and elusive for communities and local institutions to effectively address alone. So EcoLogic helps communities unite and work together. Within each of the landscapes in which we work, EcoLogic connects people from local communities, institutions, academia, and the public sector to coordinate efforts and align interests to make individuals and communities exponentially more powerful.

EcoLogic also connects local leaders to regional and global networks so that they may contribute their perspectives, amplify their voices, and learn from others. As an organization, we engage with a global network of conservation and development practitioners to advocate the importance of our model and approach and collect new knowledge and techniques to bring back to our partners.



EcoLogic Regional Program Director, Gabriela González (left), leads a meeting of fishing cooperatives and associations of the Amatique Bay.

IN 2015, ECOLOGIC AND OUR PARTNERS PARTICIPATED IN:

NINE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES where our partners were honored or we shared our knowledge and innovations. Some highlights include:

- **The Yale Chapter of the International Society of Tropical Foresters** (ISTF) honored our local partner in northern Honduras, the Association of Water Committees of the Southern Sector of Pico Bonito National Park in Honduras (AJAASSPIB in Spanish), as the winner of the 2015 ISTF Innovation Prize for “outstanding initiatives in biodiversity conservation at the landscape level.”
- EcoLogic was invited to the **2015 Congress of the Ibero-American & Caribbean Society for Ecological Restoration** (SIACRE) in Argentina to present on our experience in capacity building for conservation, which then led to collaboration on a publication addressing this topic.
- EcoLogic’s Regional Program Director, Gabriela González, and Senior Manager for Impact, Learning, and Innovation, Dave Kramer, were invited to join the **2015 Conservation Coaches Network** (CCNet) Rally. They shared EcoLogic’s focus on empowerment as an integral component to conservation.

FOUR LANDSCAPE-LEVEL CONSERVATION COALITIONS focused on:

- Illegal logging prevention in Totonicapán, Guatemala
- Sustainable fishing on the Caribbean border between Guatemala and Belize
- Buffer-zone protection and restoration around Pico Bonito National Park, Honduras
- Community inclusion in climate change policy via forest carbon monitoring, reporting, and verification working groups in Chiapas, Campeche, Jalisco, Quintana Roo, and Tabasco, Mexico

FOUR GLOBAL-LEVEL COALITIONS:

- People and Reforestation in the Tropics (PARTNERS)
- Landscapes for People, Food, and Nature Initiative (LPFN)
- Conservation Coaches Network
- Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves



partners-rcon.org

The PARTNERS Network in 2015: Barbara Vallarino (center left) and EcoLogic board members Dr. David Bray (back center-left) and Dr. Robin Chazdon (front center-right).

GLOBAL

Coming Together to Build Resilience in Communities Across the World

The PARTNERS Network exemplifies the global communities with which EcoLogic collaborates. The organization is led by EcoLogic board member Dr. Robin Chazdon, a professor at the University of Connecticut—a relationship that benefits us with a depth of connections and opportunities.

In 2015, PARTNERS grew to include a vast array of academics, students, and influential institutions. One example of the great opportunity that this network has brought to EcoLogic is our collaboration with Dr. Marc Mayes from Brown University. Dr. Mayes and his students helped EcoLogic apply satellite-based remote sensing to map changes in our project sites, which enabled EcoLogic and its local partners to visualize the landscapes in which we work and make important decisions on conservation strategies.

THE RESULT: *Dr. Mayes and his students facilitated two data-methods workshops for EcoLogic staff focused on building EcoLogic's capacity for on-the-ground data collection techniques to better analyze changes in land use and forest cover, assist in mapping project sites, and make project adjustments.*

Beekeepers in Ixcán, Guatemala pose for a photo after a long day harvesting honey in the apiary.

GUATEMALA

Connecting Beekeepers to Markets that Bring Revenue to Local Communities

For the past two years, EcoLogic has worked with communities in Ixcán, Guatemala, to identify and pilot new livelihood options that advance conservation and provide reliable income. In January 2015, after a year of keeping an eye on EcoLogic's exciting beekeeping initiatives, the Beekeepers' Comprehensive Production Cooperative of Southwest Guatemala (COPIASURO for its Spanish acronym), which produces and distributes certified fair trade Guatemalan honey to international markets, met once again with EcoLogic staff.

Inspired by the dedication, enthusiasm, and progress COPIASURO saw from the local honey farmers since the last year, the partnership became official. In 2015, thanks to EcoLogic's partnership with COPIASURO, 163 community beekeepers were trained in records management, honey packaging, and marketing.

THE RESULT: *Together, 163 community beekeepers and COPIASURO were able to produce 7,000 pounds (3,175 liters) of honey. These beekeepers were able to market and sell their product and earned an income of 52,500 quetzales (\$6,967 USD).*



Antonio Reyes Montejo

FROM INCENTIVES TO INCOME

Rural and indigenous communities in Mesoamerica face extreme economic marginalization. According to the UN, indigenous peoples are estimated to make up only 5% of the world's population—but comprise about 15% of the world's poor and 33% of those suffering from extreme poverty. Given this devastating reality, EcoLogic understands that in order for communities to focus on conservation, their basic needs must be met.

EcoLogic takes the time to research and understand the unique issues that each community faces in order to identify or connect with existing incentive programs that align with their ways of living, address their needs, and create activities that are effective, meaningful, and above all, generate income sustainably.

We partner with local communities to co-create or tap into incentive programs that encourage conservation and produce income at the same time. This approach makes long-term conservation possible, as these incentive strategies—which are often called payment for ecosystem services programs—not only generate income for local individuals and institutions, but also build their capacity to oversee activity, monitor progress, and report successful conservation efforts.

At the heart of these incentive programs are a host of tangible benefits for protecting the resources, cultural values, and ways of life most important to rural and indigenous communities. These incentives help ensure the survival of ecosystems for present and future generations, and are thus an important part of EcoLogic's approach.



Community Members in Mexico taking a tree inventory to help calculate the amount of carbon within the forest.

Carlos Herrera

In 2015, EcoLogic and our partners enabled

1,982 acres of forest protected

under conservation incentive programs

690 individuals active

in sustainable income-generating activities

\$216,028 income generated

for rural and indigenous people from sustainable practices and enterprises

INCENTIVES

HONDURAS**Household Water Payment Plan Puts Access to Water and Sustainability in Hands of Local Community**

Water quality within the Aguan River Valley in northern Honduras is critical to the wellbeing of rural villages and towns. To focus on conserving a key subwatershed of the Aguan, in 2011 EcoLogic joined with its local partner, AJAASSPIB (introduced on page 6), and the Municipality of Olanchito to coordinate efforts to protect and finance the conservation of the Uchapa-Pimienta watershed, a 16,000-acre area in the valley that supplies water to the town of Olanchito (population ~26,000).

AJAASSPIB brings a progressive approach to incentive programs by educating communities about the connection between declining water supply, deforestation, and unsustainable agricultural practices—and encouraging them to take development and conservation into their own hands. AJAASSPIB's community-led water committees collect funds for water system maintenance as well as land conservation from each household in its membership. The success of this inclusive, grassroots model led to its replication at the municipal level.

In 2015, we trained 60 volunteers who helped map and mark the entire perimeter (more than 13 miles) of the Uchapa-Pimienta subwatershed. This made it possible to pin down specific data and discuss innovative solutions during negotiations between Olanchito's mayor and citizens.

THE RESULT: *The negotiations ultimately led to establishing the funding to ensure water keeps flowing to the city's 40,000 residents. City residents overwhelmingly agreed to a 25¢ increase in their monthly water bill, and in early 2015, this fee was included in residents' monthly bills. In addition, Olanchito agreed to create a separate public water council with representation from the municipal government and civil society to manage the city's water resources as well as the environmental fund, making for a long-lasting, transparent, and sustainably financed conservation effort.*



EcoLogic field staff and volunteers after a successful day of reforestation in Olanchito, Honduras.

GUATEMALA**Payments for Small-Scale Producers Lead to Protection of Landscapes**

For the past two years, EcoLogic has connected families with an incentive program offered through the forestry service in Guatemala. This initiative, the Program of Incentives for Small-Scale Agricultural Producers (PINPEP), provides rural landowners with income for reforestation and sustainable land use. EcoLogic technicians train participants in reforestation techniques and sustainable land use systems—such as agroforestry—so that they have the skills and knowledge to access this source of income. In addition to training, EcoLogic technical staff provides assistance with enrollment paperwork and acts as a liaison between the state and the people.

This program directly contributes to conservation and addresses issues of development and poverty while teaching farmers the benefits of leaving behind unsustainable agricultural practices such as slash-and-burn agriculture. Participants learn the many environmental and economic benefits of reforestation and agroforestry while receiving financial compensation for taking a risk on unfamiliar or forgotten methods.

THE RESULT: *243 families trained by EcoLogic received an average of \$670 each for protecting and restoring 1,072 acres of forest in 2015; 71 additional families were trained in 2015 to protect and restore 292 acres, which will result in an estimated payment of \$625 per family in 2016.*

FROM **TOOLS** TO LIFE

Empowering rural people to actively restore and protect nature requires the provision of useful, usable tools that both safeguard and restore life. EcoLogic puts conservation directly in the hands of rural people by introducing effective tools and allowing for adaptation and refinement. We can then collaborate within each specific context to protect nature, benefit families, strengthen communities, affirm local cultures, and foster prosperous livelihoods in the various landscapes in which we work.

Fuel-efficient stoves

To curb the rate of deforestation while improving household health, EcoLogic provides fuel-efficient cookstoves to replace open-pit fires and other inefficient cooking techniques that are prevalent throughout rural areas in Mexico and Central America.



Anne Elise Stratton

An agroforestry parcel surrounded by trees to help nutrient recycling.

Agroforestry

EcoLogic supports smallholder farmers in adopting sustainable agriculture techniques, particularly agroforestry, that involve planting crops alongside trees—simultaneously improving biodiversity and local food security.



Dan Grossman

A family in Guatemala talking to EcoLogic staff during a routine visit to ensure they have the training and materials needed to use their new fuel-efficient stove.

828 fuel-efficient stoves installed

515 farmers trained on agroforestry system setup and maintenance

210 acres of agroforestry systems established



Watershed management

EcoLogic implements watershed-related activities that include physical identification, mapping and demarcation of watershed areas, reforestation, waste cleanup, patrolling, and environmental education campaigns as the need for clean and reliable freshwater remains a foremost concern of rural and indigenous peoples.

Reforestation

EcoLogic helps local communities build nurseries and greenhouses, harvest native tree seeds, teach local volunteers, organize regular transplanting efforts, and facilitate environmental education activities to restore some of the most important forest in Central America and Mexico.



A river near EcoLogic project sites in Belize which is part of a critical watershed for surrounding communities.



Melissa Haley

Don Augustín displaying pine tree saplings in a nursery in Totonicapán, Guatemala.

135 community-led water committees in operation

255,697 acres of watershed under effective community management

258,335 trees planted; 684 acres reforested

FINANCIALS 2015

Summarized Statement of Activities for 2015 Fiscal Year

SUPPORT & REVENUE

Grants, Contributions, and Royalties	1,486,858
In-Kind Donations	53,864
Contract Income	370,540
Interest and Other Income	229
Rental Income	9,500
Loss on exchange rate conversion	(2,501)
Loss on disposal of equipment	(5,486)
Loss on investment in subsidiary	(4,615)
Total Support & Revenue	1,908,389

EXPENSES

Program Services	1,510,688
Management & General	331,220
Fundraising	235,179
Total Expenses	2,077,087

Change in Net Assets

Net Assets—Beginning of Year	1,075,961
Net Assets—End of Year	907,263
Total Change in Net Assets	(168,698)

Statement of Financial Position at the End of the 2015 Fiscal Year

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash and Short-term Investments	312,548
Pledges and Accounts Receivable	551,978
Prepaid Expenses	11,137
Total Current Assets	875,663

Other Assets

Deposit	7,102
Investment in Subsidiaries	25,937
Pledges receivable, long-term	23,810
Total Other Assets	56,849

Fixed Assets

Property & Equipment Less Depreciation	47,172
Total Fixed Assets	47,172

Total Assets	979,684
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LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

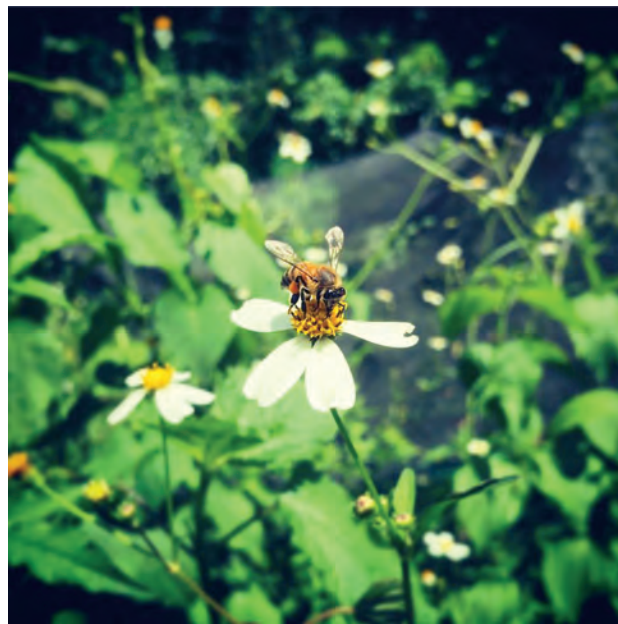
Accrued Expenses	35,599
Note payable (current portion)	12,920
Total Current Liabilities	48,519

Long-Term Liabilities

Note payable	23,902
Total Long-Term Liabilities	23,902

Net Assets

Unrestricted	362,470
Temporarily Restricted	544,793
Total Net Assets	907,263
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	979,684

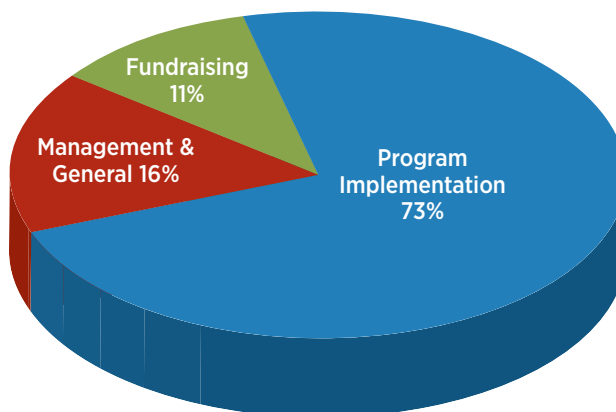


Antonio Reyes Montejó

A honey bee photographed by EcoLogic field technician, Antonio Montejó, near the apiary site in Ixcán, Guatemala.

Expenditures

In 2015, 73% of EcoLogic's expenditures went directly to implementing programs in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. Crucial to our success on the ground is the fact that the amount of direct investment by EcoLogic is only a small piece of the overall support generated by our funding. We could not achieve the results we do without the commitment and investment of our local partners and the communities with whom we work!



Annual audits are conducted by Gonzalez & Associates, P.C. For a complete audited statement, please contact EcoLogic.

ECOLOGIC'S WORK WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR DONORS IN 2015

We are deeply grateful to the many loyal donors who supported our work with gifts up to \$1,000. This Annual Report provides special recognition to the following individuals and organizations that contributed \$1,000 or more.



Antonio Reyes Montejó

Native flowers blossom near a project site in Ixcán, Guatemala.

Individuals and Institutions

AgroAmerica
 Alstom Foundation
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 Blossom Fund
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 World Wildlife Foundation, Education for Nature Conservation Workshop Grants
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 to lend your
 support today!**

We honor our donors and regret any errors or omissions. To correct an oversight, please contact Alexa Piacenza at 617-607-5143 or apiacenza@ecologic.org.

US Staff

NOVEMBER 2016

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Executive Director

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*Program Officer for
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*Director of Finance and
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Laura Powell
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NOVEMBER 2016

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GUATEMALA

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*Mancomunidad de Municipios
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Fernando Recancoj
*Forest Commission of the
48 Cantones*

Elmer Urizar Reyes
*Mancomunidad de Municipios
Frontera del Norte*

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Bacilio Martínez
AJAASSPIB

MEXICO

Severiana Dominguez
FARCO

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Andrea Savage
Senior Manager

Felicia Line
Field Coordinator

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NOVEMBER 2016

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NOVEMBER 2016

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NOVEMBER 2015–
NOVEMBER 2016

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Flor Monroe
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Christine Gregory
Madeleine Lehner
Nell Thorne

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• Rachel Tan
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EcoLogic
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“EcoLogic promotes the participation and empowerment of communities in processes of conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems, which represents the ethos of EcoLogic’s approach.”

– Carlos Duarte Euraque, Program Officer for Honduras

