

TEAK PLANTATIONS IN THE MAYAN BIOSPHERE RESERVE, GUATEMALA

A view from the
Conservation Eye



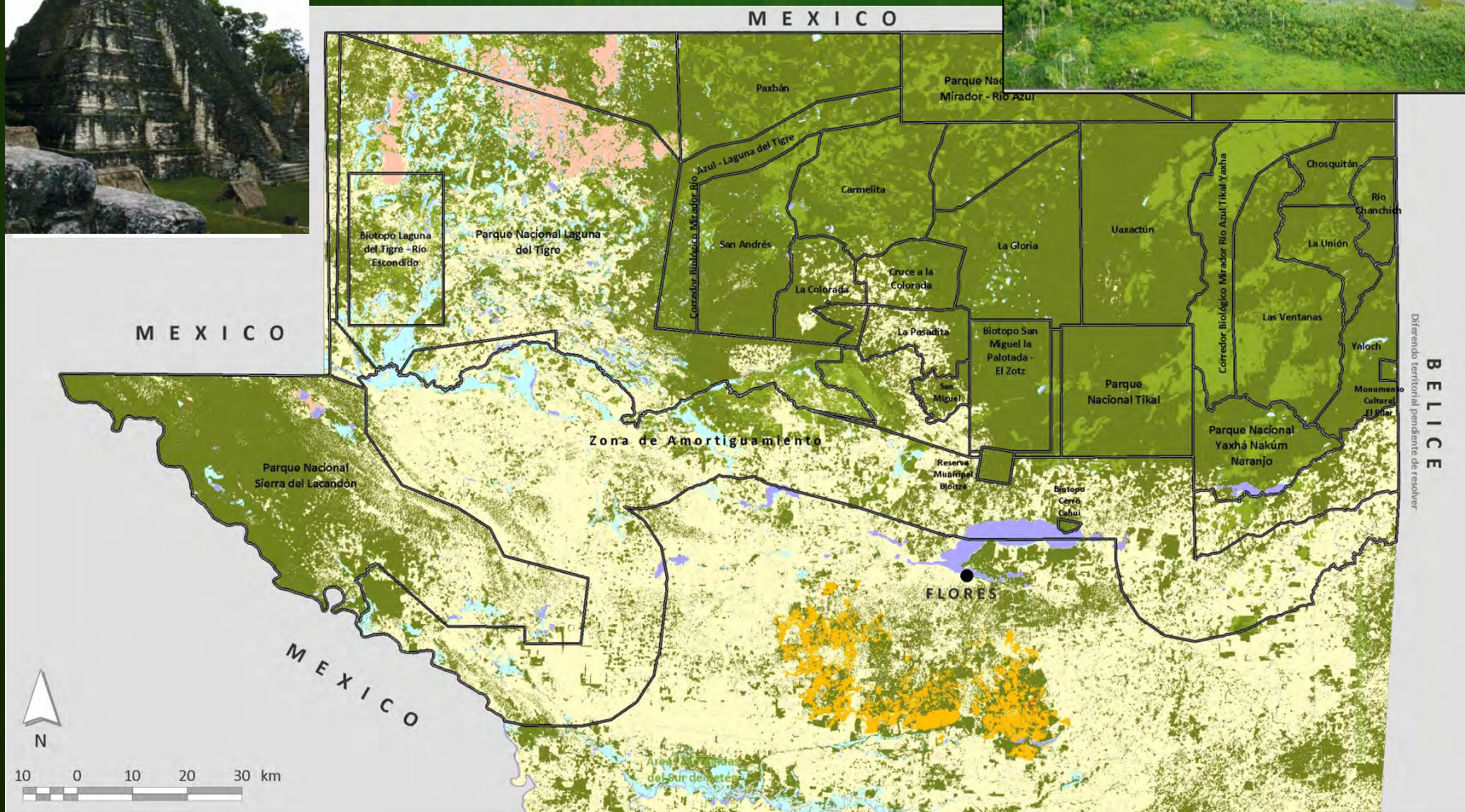
Javier Márquez, sept. 2014

OUR WORK

- Reserva de Biosfera Sierra de las Minas
- Refugio de Vida Silvestre Bocas del Polochic
- Parque Nacional Naciones Unidas
- Parque Nacional Sierra de Lacandon
- Valle del Motagua
- Jardín Botánico



MAYAN BIOSPHERE RESERVE, GUATEMALA



BACKGROUND ON PLANTATIONS

Guatemala has been promoting forest plantations thru a couple of laws

- Since 1989 reducing the payment of taxes
- Since 1996: PINFOR (Forest Incentives Program for Reforestation, Protection and Production)

TEAK PLANTATIONS IN THE MAYAN BIOSPHERE RESERVE

- Teak plantations were established by individual owners thru PINFOR mechanism since 1996
- Green Millenium and Forestal Ceibal began establishing Teak plantations in 2002 and in 2007 in the buffer zone of the Mayan Biosphere Reserve



GREEN MILLENIUM

- 16,000 has under teak plantations
- 130 has on conservation
- Hard to find out information about GM
- Financed thru private funding and Governmente incentives (PINFOR)

TEAK PLANTATIONS

- We don't have the actual area covered by Teak Plantations but only GM have planted 16,000 hectares and their goal is to have 30,000 has.

- Almost 6% would be covered by Teak Plantations in the Buffer zone of MBR

- Most of these plantations were established in agriculture / cattle areas, owned by individual owners.



PRINCIPAL THREATS OF PLANTATIONS TO THE MBR

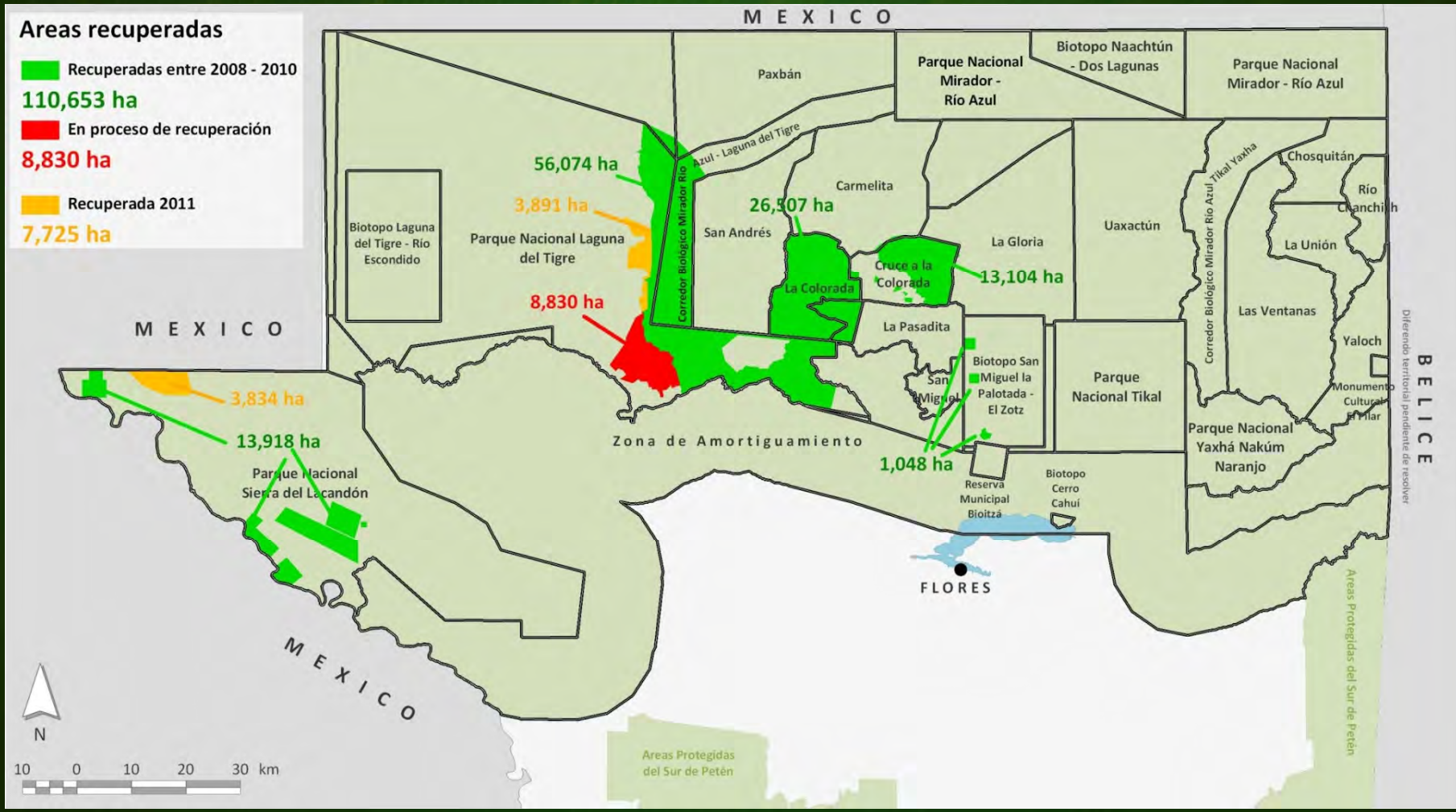
- Teak Reforestation Projects are buying properties from little and middle landowners. Most of them who sell their land are under poverty conditions. These people migrate mostly to natural areas in the MBR and others.

Since 2004 thru date there have been an increase of invasion of people in the Mayan Biosphere Reserve, specially in Sierra Lacandón Natural Park and Laguna del Tigre NP.



Photo of illegal settlement in NP Sierra del Lacandón

AREAS RECOVERED IN THE LAST YEARS IN THE MBR



THREATS TO SOCIETY

- The loss of communities is evident: Where the majority of people in the communities sold their lands, the social infrastructure had been given to the Teak Projects
- The loss of areas for agriculture has a strong impact on livelihoods and food security.



¿Benefits?

- Increase of forest coverage doesn't help biodiversity
- It is questionable that teak plantations reduces illegal logging of precious woods
- Local Employment: reduce the jobs / hectare



IMPROVE TEAK PLANTATIONS!

- Include small and middle landowners to have plantations (receive PINFOR incentives)
- Instead of having a monoculture, start implementing mixed species plantations using native – productive species (old spice, ramón, chicle and others). This would help connect ecosystems and wildlife habitats.