

YOUTH IN ACTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA:

Association of Producers from Comalapa, Guatemala



ASPROC-COMALAPA

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**Eco-friendly
youth farmers
in the midst of
climate change**

THE ASSOCIATION

The Association of Producers from Comalapa (ASPROC-COMALAPA), is a youth-led organization formed in 2011 that works towards the sustainable development of the agricultural Mayan community from the municipality of Comalapa, located in the province of Chimaltenango in central Guatemala.

The leaders of the association saw a need to organize the small producers of their community, who all worked on their plots in isolation, without access to agricultural training, and technologies for sustainable water use, among other issues. Conventional agricultural practices that were used were not sustainable, but extractive, polluting and inefficient. Crops were regularly low quality and quantity; production loss was common and recurring.

WATER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The climatic conditions have been their biggest concern: droughts have been more frequent and prolonged, rainfall patterns have changed, including rainfall with recurring winds and hail and/or frost that has led to increased and more resistant pests and diseases. This in turn, has resulted in the use of more pesticides.

YOUTH IN ACTION

The association has benefitted the Mayan community, through capacity building efforts regarding better agricultural techniques - drip irrigation systems, use of greenhouses, organic fertilizers, among others - as well as organizational aspects including participation in municipal processes regarding environmental issues and natural resources.

Results of their work include: generating more than 50 jobs which has benefitted the same number of families, the use of drip irrigation systems that has optimized the water in at least 60%, they have reduced their dependence on chemical fertilizers by 50%, and decreased their use of pesticides by 70%, the association has several small greenhouses that together amounts to 18,000 m², they have trained around 450 farmers from around Guatemala, the quality and quantity of their crops have opened doors to other markets, and the income of the farmers have been improved by at least 50%.

The 17 young people that began the association dreamed of making the lives of their communities better. They are an example of how youth are leading initiatives that are changing lives through water management in the context of climate change.

Asproc-Comalapa is the winner of the Youth Action Project Contest in Central America promoted by GWP Central America, the Central American Youth Water Network and La Ruta del Clima. More at www.gwp.org



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Global Water
Partnership
Central America



LaRutadelClima

CENTRAL AMERICAN CONTEST

GWP has supported the consultation process of francophone youth from 21 countries in the creation of a White Paper, which expresses the role of youth in the management of water in the context of climate change. The paper was presented at COP21 in Paris last year. GWP Central America and partners have now launched a contest for youth based on the recommendations of the White Paper.

Building on this dynamic and on other work streams, several youth organizations and networks elaborated and made a global commitment during COP 21 within the Lima-Paris Action Agenda. While originally Francophone, this initiative has now a global dimension (in addition to the French version, the White Paper exists in English and Spanish) and is a strong basis for further concrete action.

To include young people from the Americas, GWP Central America, together with the Central American Youth Water Network and La Ruta del Clima launched a Central American contest for youth regarding an action project based on the recommendations of the White Paper presented at COP 21.

Young people were asked to submit an action project that is underway and responds directly to any of the recommendations of the White Paper, in any of the four main areas identified: water and agriculture, water and health, water services and water and climate change.

ASPROC-COMALAPA was chosen as the winner by a regional committee. They will receive a seed fund of 1000 Euros to continue their good work and the funding for a representative of the project to participate at COP22.

Contest in brief

What was the objective?

The objective of the contest was to promote dialogue among the youth in Central America regarding water management in the context of climate change and to have young people share concrete actions that are being done at the national and regional level.

Who could participate?

Youth (between the ages of 18-35) from the countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, who are involved in raising awareness campaigns, education initiatives, infrastructure improvement projects, among others - related to water and climate change

When was the contest?

Call for proposals was from August 1 thru September 16, 2016.

What was the prize?

A seed fund of 1000 Euros and the funding for a representative of the project to participate at COP22.

The organizers:

GWP Central America

Includes 214 partner organizations from academia, private sector, civil society and government of the countries of Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. www.gwpcentroamerica.org

La Ruta del Clima

Is a Latin American youth focused NGO aimed at fostering the engagement of youth citizens with climate change governance, through different media activities. www.larutadelclima.org

Central American Youth Water Network

Is a regional network whose objective is to encourage youth participation in the integrated water resources management. www.facebook.com/redjovenesporagua