



GREPALMA

GREMIAL DE PALMICULTORES DE GUATEMALA

SEED FOR THE FUTURE



GREPALMA members of



15 years

Representing the oil palm
sector of Guatemala

Guatemalan oil palm, a key link to building sustainable development

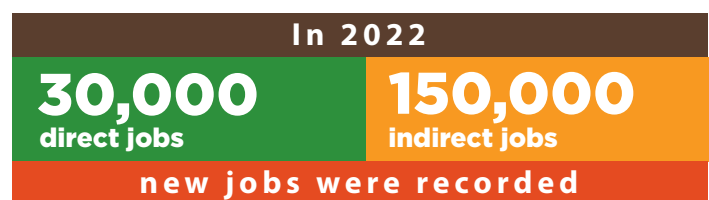
Guatemala's palm oil agribusiness is an engine of economic development for the country. It accounts for 2.28% of the Gross Domestic Product and contributes to local economies through job creation. In addition to the contribution by oil palm production to the revitalization of the country's economy, **70% of Guatemala's palm oil production is certified sustainable**, as it meets international standards such as RSPO and ISCC, making Guatemala a leader in sustainable production in Latin America.

Crude palm oil production in Guatemala grew by 8% during 2022 compared to the previous year, with a global market share of 1.25%. A total of one million twenty thousand metric tons was produced, making Guatemala the sixth producer country worldwide and the second one in Latin America.

Guatemala is the third exporting country in the world, with palm oil being one of the main export products included in various trade agreements currently in force for the country (with the European Union, Central America, and Mexico). Exports volume grew by 7%, with 818,500 tons of palm oil sold to different countries worldwide, to main destinations that include the Netherlands (36%), Spain (21%), Mexico (12%), and Italy (8 %). The European market, particularly, has increased its demand for oil from Guatemala due to its multiple international sustainability and quality certifications.

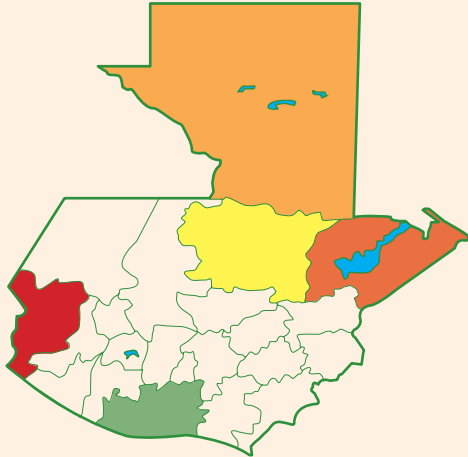
During 2022, prices for this commodity remained relatively stable. In the case of palm oil from Guatemala, the average export price was US\$1,150, which led to a 32% increase in foreign currency earnings, to a total of US\$ 940 million, which makes it of the most important agro-exports sectors for the economy of the country.

The Guatemalan palm oil agro-industry continues to make important contributions to the country's economy through job creation, foreign exchange earnings, and tax payments, among others. In addition to this, our sector continues to implement efficient and environmentally friendly agro-industrial practices with the vision of becoming a benchmark in productivity and sustainability worldwide.



Promoting formal and secure employment represents growth opportunities for workers and their families. Based on the minimum wages established in the current legislation in Guatemala, the palm oil agroindustry exceeds US\$ 130,000,000 in wages earned in the country, especially in the northern, northeastern and southern regions of Guatemala, where palm growing operations can be found.

**At department level,
the oil palm crop contributes:**



- **36.86% of the GDP** of the Department of Petén.
- **12.88% of the GDP** of the Department of Izabal.
- **9.93% of the GDP** of the Department of Alta Verapaz.
- **3.92% of the GDP** of the Department of San Marcos.
- **3.39% of the GDP** of the Department of Escuintla.

As of March 2023, according to information from Satelligence -an internationally renowned organization specializing globally in the scalable processing of radar images and optical satellites- Guatemala cultivates an estimated 180,614 hectares of oil palm, covering 1.66% of the national territory and 2.46% of Guatemala's arable land.



PRODUCTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE PROCESSES

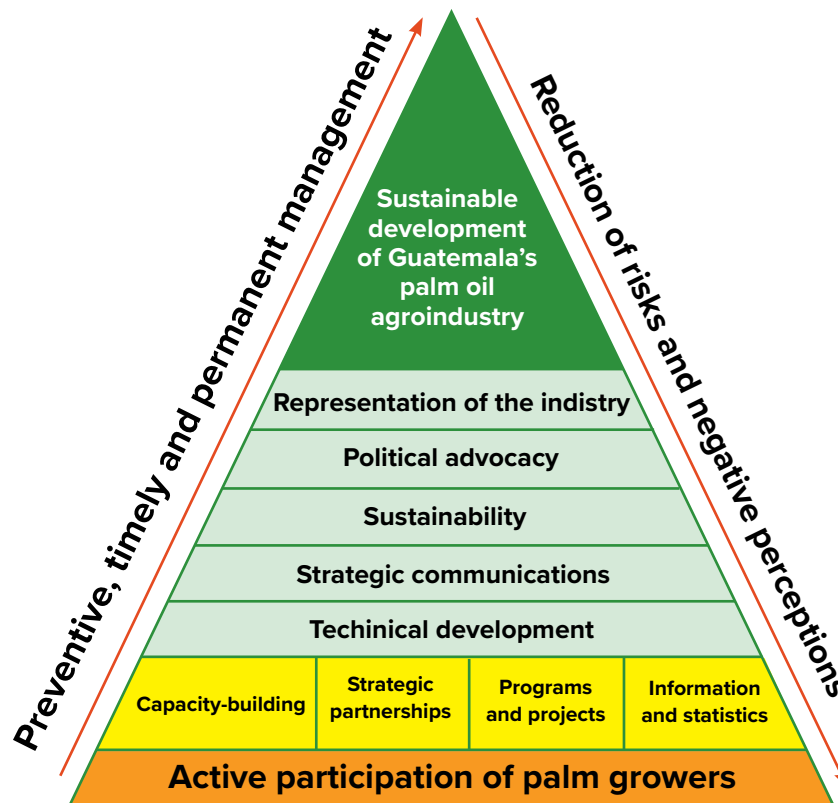
Palm cultivation in Guatemala has seen the progressive incorporation of agricultural and industrial practices aimed at sustainability, the implementation of continuous improvement processes, backed by qualified human resources, efforts of modernization and installed capacity. This set of elements has led to the achievement of increasingly efficient production of Guatemalan palm oil, guiding the sector to operate under principles of a circular economy.

In that path of joining efforts and visualizing sustainable palm culture as a feasible option to generate opportunities and contribute to the country's development, in 2008 the Oil Palm Association of Guatemala (**GREPALMA**) was created as a non-profit organization that gathers small, medium-size and large oil palm producers in Guatemala. For fifteen years -since its foundation- it has been

representing the palm sector, working together with its partners, adding value to their operations, and promoting continuous improvement, thus ensuring that the sector remains a national and international benchmark in sustainable oil palm production.

Through preventive, timely and ongoing associative management, **GREPALMA** operates under five strategic pillars: 1) Association Representation; 2) Political Advocacy; 3) Sustainability; 4) Strategic Communication; and 5) Technical Strengthening, which are all consolidated and executed under four operational areas: 1) Capacity Building; 2) Strategic Partnerships; 3) Programs and Projects; and 4) Information and Statistics.

Thus, **GREPALMA** continues to promote efficiency in the production chain, positively influencing the development of Guatemala.



● S T R A T E G I C P A R T N E R S H I P S T H A T ●

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

GREPALMA promotes the development of programs and projects with the participation of multiple actors from civil society and the Government that allow aligning efforts to make progress in the sustainable production of palm oil produced in Guatemala and, at the same time, in the integral development of the areas of influence where the palm oil agro-industry operates. Currently, **GREPALMA** participates in strategic partnerships that are aligned with its vision of sustainable development and contribute to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, through the following:

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Technical cooperation agreement between the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala and the Forestry Association of Guatemala

This inter-institutional partnership came about in 2019 to enable technology transfer (through education and training) that promotes sustainable forest management and care for the environment among its strategic partners and allies. Additionally, it pursues joint actions for the design and implementation of forestry projects that will contribute to increasing the forest cover in Guatemala. Along these lines, Gremial Forestal is part of the Inter-Institutional Working Group for Zero Deforestation, established in 2021 as one of the lines of action of the National Monitoring System for the Sustainable Development of Palm Oil in Guatemala, promoted by **GREPALMA** and its partners.

Memorandum of understanding between Fundación Solidaridad Latinoamericana and Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala

This strategic partnership was entered into in October 2019 for promoting the management of projects related to the sustainable production of palm oil, integrated landscape management programs, activities within the framework of the Mesoamerican Sustainable Palm Partnership Program, as well as actions for the preservation, conservation and responsible and sustainable use of natural resources.

Both institutions work in joint spaces such as the Consortium led by Solidaridad, where issues related to RSPO certification and to the Inter-Institutional Working Group for Zero Deforestation led by GREPALMA are addressed.

In 2021 they worked hand in hand in the National Working Group (NWG) that included multiple stakeholders for the National Interpretation process of the 2018 RSPO P&C for Guatemala, referring to the Principles and Criteria of the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO).



Inter-institutional cooperation agreement between the Palm Growers Association of Guatemala and Agrequima



The partnership between **GREPALMA** and **AGREQUIMA** was born in 2019 to pull together technical cooperation efforts and contribute to the development and implementation of **AGREQUIMA**'s programs Cuidagro and CampoLimpio. The contribution to the development of a culture of care for the environment became a pillar of this partnership, for its protection and improvement, while building the technical capacities of each link of the palm growers' value chain in Guatemala, for the safe use and management of agricultural inputs.

Both institutions established collection days for empty containers, which are delivered to the CampoLimpio program in charge of recycling these materials and providing proper disposal for them. In 2022, **GREPALMA** delivered to this program 69,785 kilos of empty containers that were originally used to hold crop protection and nutrition products. This is the result of the joint efforts by companies and associated producers from the areas of influence of the oil palm sector.



Memorandum of understanding between the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala

The Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala (**GREPALMA**) signed a memorandum of understanding in July 2021 aimed at aligning efforts and defining high impact actions and projects that meet the RSPO Latin America commitments and accelerating the mission of making sustainable palm oil the norm for companies in Latin America.

The primary objective of this partnership is achieving a 75% certification level for palm oil produced in Guatemala, for which a joint planning process has been developed for the 2021-2025 period.

GREPALMA Governance Roundtable: Sectoral Governance Model

In May 2021, the **GREPALMA** Governance Roundtable was established for the Northern Area, Petén, which included representatives from 9 palm companies, both members and non-members of **GREPALMA**, located in the department of Petén.

The working group supports the project "Instance for Conflict Prevention in the Southern Area of Petén." Within the framework of this project, a cooperation agreement between the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala and the Departmental Government of Petén was consolidated for strengthening the governance, management, prevention, and transformation of social conflict in the department of Petén.





Tripartite technical cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food -MAGA-, the International Organization for Agricultural Health -OIRSA- and the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala -GREPALMA-

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA, for its Spanish acronym), the International Regional Organization for Agricultural Health (OIRSA) and the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala (**GREPALMA**) signed a tripartite technical cooperation agreement in May 2021 for a period of five years, with the objective of providing technical assistance to the palm growing sector to strengthen the prevention, protection, inspection and control of pests and diseases of quarantine and economic importance in the production of oil palm.

The tripartite agreement was created to preventively and correctively address the risks posed by high potential pests and diseases that can infest oil palm plantations in Guatemala. This will allow the development of joint technical

actions aimed at the agronomic management of plantations, considering that the impact of pests and diseases can affect the crop's productivity and, therefore, affect job creation and

For the implementation of the technical cooperation agreement, the signatory entities developed the 2022 action plan and continue programming plans, projects, activities, programs, and campaigns for the prevention, control and eradication of pests and diseases that affect the health of oil palm crops in the country, among other actions to be carried out in the coming years in the northern, northeastern and southern regions, where the palm growing sector operates.

Agreement between Wilmar Europe Holdings B.V and the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala

In September 2022, representatives of Wilmar Europe Holdings B.V and representatives of the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala (**GREPALMA**) signed an agreement to allow the sharing of information about GREPALMA partners who are being monitored by satellite by the Dutch organization Satelligence, with the joint purpose of ensuring the zero deforestation of the oil palm growing area in Guatemala.

This unprecedented partnership will also allow joint actions to focus efforts on environmental conservation and restoration projects, promoting shared responsibility in the value chain.

*“Wilmar supports efforts related to non-deforestation as part of its sustainability policy. Providing concrete and well-backed evidence on non-deforestation in the supply chain is highly important to the European Union. We must talk about co-responsibility for a clean supply chain. To this end, it is necessary to work together and in partnership. With the satellite monitoring that **GREPALMA** is carrying out in its partners' area to show non-deforestation, it becomes easier to face these European regulations, while that information for us, as buyers, is essential”, emphasized Daphne Hameeteman, Wilmar's Sustainability Leader during her participation in a panel of experts within the framework of the XX Palm Oil Conference, held in Cartagena, Colombia.*



Memorandum of Understanding between the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, the International Biodiversity Partnership and the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala

The International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), the International Biodiversity Partnership, and the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala established a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2022 to work together on scientific solutions that allow us to face global challenges related to food security, climate change, biodiversity, and the environment.

This partnership contributes to the Guatemalan palm oil agro-industry's growth in digital agriculture by leaps and bounds, helping producers in their decision-making based on applied science and technology. Digital agriculture involves geospatial and georeferenced analysis, the use of drones, precision technologies, statistical analysis for evaluating data, prioritizing and measuring the decisions made in agricultural applications, early warnings, and models that guide actions to improve crop productivity and sustainability.

Within the framework of this partnership, CIAT representatives visited a palm plantation in the southern region of Guatemala in February 2023 and learned about the agricultural activities that affect the sustainable production of oil palm. Likewise, the conference “Digital agriculture, data analysis and intelligence to support decision-making in the palm oil agro-industry” was held, with workshops to address the challenges of the Guatemalan palm oil sector and the solutions provided by data intelligence, among other relevant issues for decision-making in the sustainable management of the crop.

GREPALMA will continue to promote the creation of strategic partnerships that involve multisectoral actions and allow progress in the sustainable development of the northern, northeastern, and southern regions of Guatemala where the palm oil agroindustry operates.

Partner in the integral development of the Guatemalan people



The Guatemalan oil palm sector has in place a number of actions to contribute to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically, the SDGs that frame efforts in good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, clean water and sanitation, responsible production and consumption, climate action, life of terrestrial ecosystems, and promotes strategic partnerships to achieve the objectives, contributing to the country's efforts to advance in the integral development of Guatemalans.

Regarding health and food security, about 46,000 people benefit each year, through investments of over US\$ 840,000. To deal with the health crisis in 2020, companies in the palm sector contributed US\$ 1.2 million to five hospitals for the medical care of patients with COVID-19. Contributions continued throughout 2021, specifically for COVID-19 care, benefiting more than 26,000 people through more than US\$ 220,000 in contributions.

It is estimated that the palm grower sector develops 89 initiatives per year to support the education of Guatemalan children, for which **GREPALMA** member companies invest over US\$ 110,000, benefiting around 12,000 children.

About 15 thousand people benefit from programs and projects for access to local utilities with more than US\$1.1 million in annual investment.



The contributions by the Guatemalan oil palm sector

to the local development of neighboring communities goes beyond the creation of employment and the revamping of local economy, to promote the well-being of people.



Environmental conservation, pillar of the palm-growing sector

The motivations of the Guatemalan palm oil agribusiness to contribute to the preservation of natural resources and minimize environmental impacts are various, but at their core is social benefit, especially of the populations that live in areas adjacent to palm cultivation and milling.

In addition to social benefits, numerous actions that help mitigate negative impacts also improve efficiency, which builds a more competitive sector. Therefore, environmental goals take into account reality and economic feasibility to ensure that balance can be attained and maintained among the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social and environmental) in palm oil production in Guatemala.

Some of the major actions in the area of environmental conservation that the palm-growing sector is implementing in Guatemala are:



By 2022, 70% of the palm oil produced in Guatemala was certified as sustainable by international standards such as RSPO and ISCC.



80% of oil palm plantations in Guatemala rely on rainwater; only 20% use efficient irrigation systems, making responsible use of water resources.



All of **GREPALMA** member processing plants reuse water resulting from the industrial process of extracting palm oil for fertilization-irrigation, providing nutrients to palm plantations and avoiding disposal into receiving bodies.



Recovery of waste from palm oil extraction is carried out using treatment or final disposal technologies, namely: septic tanks, biodep, treatment plants, composting, 'fertigation' and biodigesters.



More than 122,300 metric tons of compost are added periodically to **GREPALMA** member palm plantations. This organic fertilizer, obtained from the empty bunches resulting from the extraction of palm oil, reduces the use of around 11,000 metric tons of chemical fertilizers per year.



A contribution is made to the physical, chemical and biological improvement of the soil, through nutrients provided by the organic fertilizer applied to oil palm plantations.



More than 11,000 hectares of conserved forests within palm farms of **GREPALMA** members contribute to the preservation of biodiversity.



The riparian zones located within palm farms provide multiple benefits to the ecosystem of the area where they are planted, among them: they regulate the hydrology of the area, conserve soil and riverbanks, and are the habitat of terrestrial and aquatic animals.



50% of **GREPALMA** members perform biodiversity studies or monitoring, which has allowed knowing the richness of the biotic resources of the areas under study. Its results have been key to implementing actions aimed at balancing the ecosystem where oil palm is one of its elements.



Projects have been implemented for the protection and conservation of mangroves and species within the mangrove ecosystem in the palm region in the south of the country.



High Conservation Value studies have identified protected ecosystems, areas and species, conserved by companies certified under international sustainability standards.



To promote environmental protection, conservation projects have been carried out in the Maya Biosphere, in Laguna del Tigre Park and in El Rosario National Reserve. It is estimated that 28,400 hectares of forest are currently preserved in the Maya Biosphere Reserve and in Laguna del Tigre Park.



50% of **GREPALMA** members build renewable energy projects: hydro, solar, biomass, and methane gas, thus contributing to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.



52% of **GREPALMA** members have assigned human resources to address environmental issues and comply with national laws applicable to oil palm operations, as well as international certification processes and environmental conservation commitments assumed.



The carbon footprint measurement by the sector shows that emissions from palm oil production in Guatemala amount to 0.45% of total emissions by the country. Even so, actions are prioritized to reduce GHG generation.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

13 CLIMATE ACTION 	15 LIFE ON LAND 	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
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● A D V A N C I N G I N T H E ●

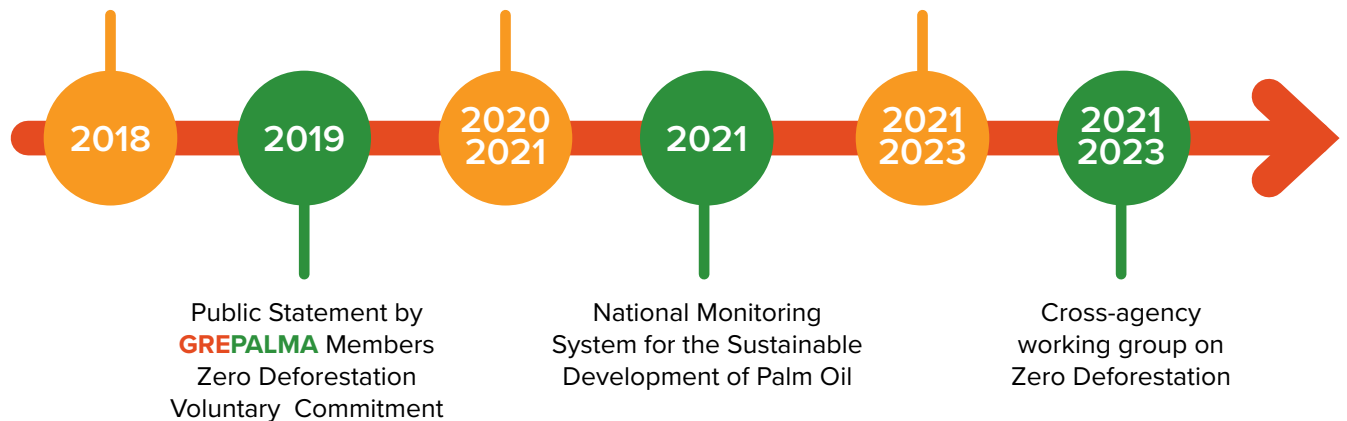
ZERO DEFORESTATION VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT

Actions undertaken by **GREPALMA** and its members in the period 2018-2023

Environmental and Climate Change Policy by **GREPALMA** and its members

Satellite Monitoring Study for the sustainable development of palm oil production in Guatemala

Permanent satellite monitoring of palm plantations and surrounding areas



The Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala (**GREPALMA**) published in 2018 the **Environmental and Climate Change Policy by GREPALMA** and its Members, whose objective is to provide strategic guidelines for the improvement of environmental management, adaptation and mitigation of climate change throughout the palm oil production chain, including actions for monitoring and evaluating progress.

In response to Strategic Pillar 5: **Conservation and Restoration of Biological Diversity** and its three action lines: 1) Avoid the loss of natural forests in new areas of cultivation; 2) Forest restoration within the lands managed by palm producers and in strategic zones within their areas

of influence and; 3) Establishment of biological corridors or connectivity zones for isolated ecosystems, **GREPALMA** and its members signed, in 2019, the **Zero Deforestation Public Voluntary Commitment Statement**.

GREPALMA has promoted specific initiatives to advance in the fulfillment of this commitment, namely: 1) Implementation of the Satellite Study for the sustainable development of palm oil production in Guatemala carried out between 2020 and 2021 by Satelligence; 2) National Monitoring System for the Sustainable Development of Palm Oil, implemented in 2021.

SATELLIGENCE REPORTS

FOR 2020 - 2022

Monitoring period reported on by Satelligence	Hectares deforested to grow oil palm (GREPALMA member farms)
October – December, 2020	0 (zero hectares)
January – March, 2021	0 (zero hectares)
April – June, 2021	0 (zero hectares)
July – September, 2021	0 (zero hectares)
October – December, 2021	0 (zero hectares)
January – March, 2022	0 (zero hectares)
April – June, 2022	0 (zero hectares)
July – September, 2022	0 (zero hectares)
October – December, 2022	0 (zero hectares)

[More information here](#)

● CONTRIBUTIONS TO ●

BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

in Sustainable Oil Palm Plantations in Guatemala



In May 2023, the Center for Environmental Studies and Biodiversity of Del Valle University of Guatemala (CEAB-UVG), published the results of their study: **Assessment of existing biodiversity in the oil palm plantation system in Guatemala**, which was developed in coordination with **GREPALMA** throughout the previous year.

The main purpose of the research was to characterize biodiversity and assess the contribution of oil palm plantations to the provision of regulating ecosystem services (pollination, pest and disease control, seed dispersal) in the main producing regions of the country: North (Petén), Northeast Verapaces, Northeast Caribbean and South.

The indicator groups identified within palm plantations were butterflies, amphibians, reptiles and birds. 232 species of insects - butterflies, 48 species of amphibians and reptiles, and birds, and 163 species of birds were documented. Within these species, the so-called “flag species” were identified, i.e., species that suggest the use of good agricultural practices that support sustainable management of resources in operations.

In the Northern region alone, a total of **133 species of insects** were found, of which a significant percentage (47%) act as pollinators, among them daytime butterflies. This finding highlights the importance of preserving and conserving habitats to guarantee the pollination and reproduction of plants in the area. The abundance of beetles and butterflies, as well as the presence of amphibians such as *caecilians* and *salamanders* is indicative of responsible use of agrochemicals within the plantations.

Regarding **amphibians and reptiles**, 25 species play a key role in pest control, thus contributing to the regulation of insect populations and other organisms considered pests in the region.

The palm-growing regions of the Northeast Caribbean and Verapaces presented the best conditions to house threatened fauna in the long term and maintain the provision of ecosystem services to the surrounding landscape.

The preservation of riparian forests within oil palm plantations, the conservation of forest remnants within or

in their vicinity, as well as a lower intensity of lane logging in the plantations and a targeted use of agrochemicals, are sustainable practices that are implemented in companies in the sector that contribute to maintaining the richness of species and the provision of ecosystem services.

This information was digitized and incorporated into the National Information System on Biological Diversity of Guatemala (SNIDBgt), including its entry into the databases of the Biological Collections of the University of the Valley of Guatemala.

“This study is the starting point for both private sector initiative and academia to work together to generate solid data that can guide management actions, which should be guided by production and sustainability issues. All the data is available on the platform and the photo catalogues. We believe that next steps should include the drafting of the Book on Biodiversity of the palm growing agricultural ecosystem under sustainable production, promoting a Study for the use of the palm landscape by fauna as a corridor or refuge; training on biodiversity and wildlife management techniques” explains Daniel Ariano Sánchez, researcher in charge of Del Valle University of Guatemala.

Indicator species associated with sustainably managed oil palm plantations in Guatemala



Species: *Heliconius sapho*

Species Data: This butterfly feeds on the *Passiflora* sp. Plant. It is a species that inhabits places with good cover and diversity of undergrowth and with controlled or minimal application of herbicides.



Species: *Eumaeus toxea*

Species Data: This butterfly feeds on the *Zamia* sp. Plant. It is a species that inhabits places with good cover and diversity of undergrowth and with controlled or minimal application of herbicides.



Species: *Megasoma elephas*

Species Data : This species inhabits “mature” forests since both in its larval stage and in its adult stage depend on decaying wood, the sap of some trees and ripe fruits.



Species: *Bolitoglossa mexic*

Species Data: Salamanders are very sensitive to contaminated environments, so their presence is an indicator of good management of the use of agrochemicals within the plantation.



Species: *Craugastor loki*

Species Data: This species needs leaf litter or good soil cover to survive, which is why it is an indicator of good undergrowth management within the plantation.



Species: *Tretanorhinus nigroluteus*

Species Data : The orange-bellied swamp snake is an aquatic species that feeds mainly on small fish, tadpoles, and prawns. Their presence indicates that the water quality is good enough to support sizeable populations of their prey, which are quite sensitive to contamination.



Species: *Micrurus apiatus*

Species Data : Corals feed almost exclusively on other snakes, so their presence indicates that there is a healthy population of these snakes and their prey within the plantations.



Species: *Ramphastos sulfuratus*

Species Data: A decline in the populations of the King Toucan has been observed in recent years, which is why it is in the category of Near Threatened. This species inhabits forests, as it has a high preference for nesting and living in the treetops, so its presence could indicate well-preserved forest remnants in the area of influence of the observation site.



Species: *Sporophila moreletti*

Species Data: This bird is a granivorous species. Its presence is common in sites with dense soil cover that provides enough seeds to support its diet. Therefore, it benefits from sites with no or minimal use of herbicides and with growth of diversity of herbaceous plants.

[More information here](#)



● R E S P E C T F O R ●
HUMAN RIGHTS
A CROSS-CUTTING PILLAR

in the sustainable production of oil palm



Advances in terms of respect for Human Rights 2014-2023

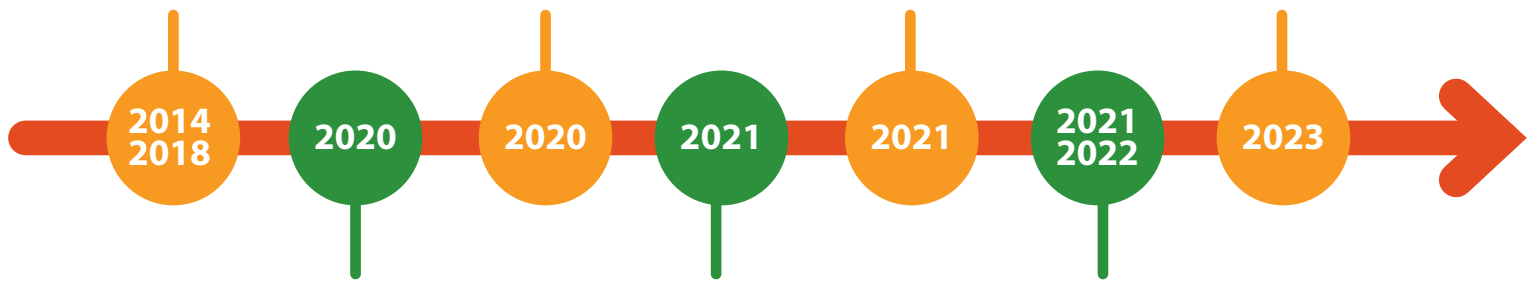
GREPALMA and its members sign a commitment to respect human rights, thus joining the effort started by business organizations. (CACIF and Agricultural Chamber Policy)

GREPALMA y and members' policy on Respect for Human Rights.

Built within the framework of ILO's Program

Virtual Resource Center Business Due Diligence and Fair Hiring

Development and implementation of a tool to measure installed capacity in the implementation of due diligence processes



Program for the inclusion of respect for human rights in business practices in the palm sector

Guide on risk management in Human Rights in the Palm Oil Agroindustry

Ongoing education in human rights and due diligence

Policy Implementation

In 2014, **GREPALMA** joined the efforts of the Guatemalan organized business sector in human rights and business and adopted the Institutional Business Policy on Human Rights of Guatemala's Coordinating Committee of Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial and Financial Associations (CACIF) and the Human Rights Respect Policy of the Chamber of Agriculture published in 2018.

In 2020, Industria de Jabones y Detergentes Las Palmas, S.A.; NaturOils, S.A.; and Reforestadora de Palmas del Petén, S.A. (REPSA), **GREPALMA** members, participated in the **Program for the adoption of human rights respect practices in business in the oil palm sector** developed with the support of the International Labor Organization (ILO), and backed by the Chamber of Agriculture and **GREPALMA**.

At the same time, within the framework of the REFRAME Project of the International Labor Organization (ILO) financed by the European Union, **GREPALMA** worked with the organization CEGESTI and the backing of the Chamber of Agriculture on two phases of work in the field of human rights and business: The first phase was **GREPALMA** and its members' Policy on Human Rights, published in 2020. The

second phase involved the creation of the **Guide on Human Rights Risk Management in the Palm Oil Agribusiness** and of the **Virtual Resource, Due Diligence and Fair Hiring Center of GREPALMA**. Both tools are part of the Policy's implementation.

Ongoing training is a fundamental pillar in the policy implementation process, which is why training programs on Human Rights and Due Diligence were developed in 2021 and 2022.

With ILO's support, tools have been developed in 2022 and 2023 to determine and assess the installed capacity in oil palm companies for the integration of due diligence practices in Human Rights.

The palm oil sector was the first agricultural sector in Guatemala to adopt and launch a human rights policy in the country, reaffirming its commitment to respect human rights as it has been doing in this cross-cutting matter, linked to advances in the sustainable production of palm oil in Guatemala, which is, in turn, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).



● I N T E R N A T I O N A L ●

GLANCE AT GUATEMALA PALM GROWING

Better prepared supply chain to meet the new requirements of the European market



In September 2022, the TPSDE Mission for the Delegation of the European Union in Guatemala published the executive summary *“Guatemala. Map of the coffee, cocoa, palm oil, sugar and wood product value chains and their adaptation to the EU requirements in terms of environmental and social due diligence.”* The study points out that palm oil from Guatemala is the chain that is best prepared to comply with the new requirements of the Deforestation-Free Regulation, due to its implemented sustainability practices and for having a satellite georeferencing system for practically all palm oil production, in reference to the National Satellite Monitoring System for the Sustainable Development of Palm Oil in Guatemala.

[Document available here](#)

Agricultural Sector Shows Commitment to Sustainable Production

On November 28, 2022, **GREPALMA** together with the Chamber of Agriculture (CAMAGRO) and representatives of the Guatemalan Sugar Association, organized a visit to production facilities.

Evidencing labor practices, socioeconomic contributions, sustainable agro-industrial practices linked to the circular economy, actions in the field of environmental conservation and respect for human rights frame the issues addressed during the tour with the participation of representatives of the Economic and Commercial Section of the European Union for Central America and the Employment Bureau of the European Union.

“The reality of the palm and sugar sectors in Guatemala is rapidly changing as a result of its close relationship with the EU market, and the outstanding commitment and competence of local operators. Community involvement has become the norm and includes employee participation in policy development as well as monitoring and evaluation. Its carbon footprint is the lowest in the world and productivity

is the highest. Circular and organic solutions are pursued with determination. In a country riddled with conflict and illicit trade, these examples stand out as beacons of hope,” stated Mr. Massimo De Luca-Laissez after learning how both agricultural sectors operate in Guatemala.

Likewise, on March 6, 2023, these Guatemalan organizations visited production facilities again with the participation of representatives of the Trade Bureau of the European Union and the Economic Section of the European Union for Latin America.

“In recent years, the sustainability policy of the Palm Oil Growers’ Association of Guatemala has obtained many results to be proud of, allowing them to consolidate their export performance to the European Union. Traceability, working conditions, carbon and environmental footprint have continued to improve and now compare very favorably with palm oil products worldwide. The EU - Central American Association Agreement, as well as the UE cooperation have been essential to achieve such results,” asserted Mr. Massimo De Luca- Laissez.



GREPALMA Stands Out on the ILO List for Digital Progress

Among the notable experiences in digitalization of business organizations (BO) in Latin America that were identified by the Office of Activities with Employers of the International Labor Organization (ILO), emphasis was made on the establishment of a Satellite Monitoring System that guarantees zero deforestation in oil palm cultivation areas in Guatemala.

The 2022 regional report *Where are Business Organizations on the Journey to Digitalization? A glance to Latin America* highlighted the work carried out by the Oil Palm Growers' Association (**GREPALMA**) with the constant monitoring carried out throughout the palm-growing area.

The report's technical note emphasizes that these remarkable experiences are intended to inspire other business organizations in their transition to digitalization and knowledge sharing.

This system offers companies associated with **GREPALMA** access to a satellite monitoring platform in almost real time that includes areas of operations of the companies and 100 km around them. The platform allows users to use different filters to monitor that their operations and potential growth areas do not incur deforestation.

This monitoring also makes it possible to recognize the areas that are under environmental management and/or conservation by the companies and identifies whether, outside the companies, there have been incidents of deforestation or fires. On a quarterly basis, the external provider produces a report of findings for monitoring and compliance with the goal of 0 associated deforestation by **GREPALMA** members.

In 2020, **GREPALMA** hired a Dutch organization (<https://satelligence.com/>) after an exhaustive external contracting process that lasted about 6 to 8 months and received 3 proposals. The members finance the cost of this platform themselves, making this service self-sustaining.

To strengthen the platform and validate the data, a work group was created with various actors: associated companies, **GREPALMA** representatives, representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of the Environment, as well as universities, specialists in environmental issues, among others.

*“Thanks to this satellite monitoring, **GREPALMA** and its members can affirm with unmistakable evidence that there has been no deforestation due to oil palm cultivation on farms owned by its members from October 2020 to June 2022. This allows members to demonstrate their responsible business conduct and commitment to the sustainable development goals (SDG 13 and 15) to current and potential buyers, positively influencing their sales”, as noted in the report.*

The technical note also underlines that information similarly provides member companies one of the steps to be certified as sustainable production. In addition, at country level, it has been possible to change the narrative of the relationship between oil palm cultivation and deforestation. Using data has also strengthened the union’s reputation and its lobbying strategies against the government and other actors.

[Technical Note available here](#)

ILO-USDOL Report Highlights Actions Implemented by GREPALMA

On May 16, 2023, the International Labor Organization (ILO), together with USDOL, presented the Fair recruitment in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico Report: Assessing Progress and Addressing Gaps; emphasizing the good practices of Guatemala, the actions implemented by **GREPALMA** in terms of respect for human rights.

[Document available here](#)



Palm Oil Nutrition and health

Fats and oils are an essential part
of human food and nutrition

25%
DAILY
FAT DIETARY
RECOMMENDATION

**FROM PALM
OIL COME:**



- > **Palm Olein**
- > **Palm Stearin**

which are used in the food industry.

**THEIR
CONTRIBUTION
TO THE BODY**



- > Food Energy
- > Vitamins A and E
- > Minerals
- > Antioxidants
- > Essential Fats

**NATURALLY FREE
FROM TRANS FATS**



Its natural state tends to be solid; it does not go through chemical processes that create trans fats as is the case with other vegetable oils used in the production of vegetable margarine.

TO FOOD



- > Improves food texture
- > Makes food more pleasant to the palate
- > Preserves food's flavor
- > Contributes greater stability to edible duration



**SAFE
FOOD**

Scientific evidence shows that palm oil consumption contributes good cholesterol to the body, reducing the risk of coronary heart disease.



**DAILY
FAT DIETARY
RECOMMENDATION**

For the Guatemalan adult population, the recommendation is between 20 and 30% of total dietary energy. However, it is recommended that intake not exceed 25% of total dietary energy.



CURRENT NEWS



Sustainability Week in Guatemala

GREPALMA, together with the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) organized the Sustainable Week in Guatemala, held June 20-23, 2022, with the participation of Francisco Naranjo, RSPO director for Latin America and other RSPO representatives for the Latin American region.

The RSPO Training Program was developed during the week with a number of training sessions aimed at Guatemalan oil palm producers who are beginning or progressing in their certification process under the RSPO Principles and Criteria.

“In recent years, Guatemala has advanced very quickly in RSPO certification; it has become a regional and global benchmark for sustainability in the palm oil industry. Currently, the country has more than 570,000 tons of palm oil certified under RSPO standards. This volume comes from 13 certified producers and represents almost 60% of the total national production”, said Francisco Naranjo in different meetings during his visit to Guatemala.

Among the scheduled activities, RSPO and **GREPALMA** representatives held a high-level multisectoral meeting where they shared information on the impact of the RSPO worldwide and, specifically, in Latin America. In this approach, the efforts made by the Guatemalan palm oil agro-industry to maintain leadership in productivity and sustainability worldwide were evidenced. “The only way to achieve sustainability is with the public and private sectors working together”, Naranjo emphasized during the multi-sector meeting.

The RSPO and **GREPALMA** Sustainability Week concluded with the development of the “Focus on the Planet Environmental Forum: Guatemalan palm oil agroindustry contributing to the sustainable development of the country”, in which Karen Rosales, **GREPALMA**’s CEO, presented the economic, social, environmental, agro-industrial, labor practices and progress in addressing respect for human rights in Guatemalan palm oil, linked to 12 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Study Developed to Improve Capacities in the Palm Growing Sector

During the first six months of 2022, the Technical Training and Productivity Institute [of Guatemala] (INTECAP) developed the “**Competitiveness study and detection of training and technical assistance needs in the oil palm agroindustry sector in Guatemala**”, promoted by **GREPALMA**. The results were presented on August 3, 2022.

The study was identified areas of opportunity to build capacity in the palm sector to contribute to developing a training program for human resources.

The study determined three key factors of competitiveness for the palm sector: 1) Efficiency and productivity; 2) Governance framework; 3) Research and development, detailing sub factors and technical assistance issues.



Part of the study’s conclusions indicate “the palm sector as a whole has a high level of productivity, in the Northeast, North and South regions; display significant differences that require attention from each company to increase efficiency and achieve a continuous improvement.”

This way, **GREPALMA** continues to strengthen capacities and pursues to ensure progress as an association, in efficiency and productivity, governance framework and research and development processes.



Carbon Fixation Study Development

In the first six months of 2022, **GREPALMA** defined the development of the study “Carbon Fixation Estimation and Assessment of the Role of the Oil Palm Plantation System in Guatemala” aimed at estimating the balance between carbon fixation and emissions of the productive system *Elaeis guineensis* and compare the results with the results of other systems and species in the region.

To this end, visits were made to oil palm plantations located in the North, Northeast and South of Guatemala. The results will be presented in the second half of 2023.

Participation in Relevant Meetings for the Sector

1. Karen Rosales, GREPALMA's CEO, participated in the II Regional Seminar for the Exchange of Knowledge and Dialogue on Companies and Decent Work, in Panama City, organized by the International Labor Organization (ILO), the International Training Center for CIF/ILO, in collaboration with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

During the meeting on Due Diligence and Labor Rights, Advances and Good Business Practices in Latin America and the Caribbean, Karen Rosales shared the practices the Guatemalan Palm Growers' Association has used for years and particularly on the Policy of Respect for Human Rights of GREPALMA and its members, as well as progress in due diligence.

She highlighted that due diligence processes must be conceived as something that contributes to maintaining the maximum efficiency, productivity and sustainability of the companies, to maintain the conditions that lead to the creation of employment and development in the areas of operation.

"We are a formal, legal, highly productive and relevant association for productive development of Guatemala, mainly in rural areas." "108 requirements address labor issues in the RSPO: complaint mechanisms, no child labor, freedom of association, no harassment, living wage", said Karen Rosales at the II Regional Seminar on knowledge exchange and dialogue on Companies and decent work.



2. Within the framework of the visit organized by the Chamber of Agriculture together with the Embassy of Guatemala in the Kingdom of Belgium, **GREPALMA** participated from October 10 to 14, 2022 in various meetings with relevant stakeholders, including European Parliament members, COPA -COGECA, DG INTPA, DG AGRI, DG ENVI, DG SAnTe, DG Employment and the visit to the Port of Antwerp to publicize the efforts in terms of sustainable and efficient production of palm oil in Guatemala.

During the week, the strategies, initiatives and regulations that arise within the framework of the European Green Deal were discussed, among which the initiatives to stop deforestation, the biodiversity strategy and the from farm-to-table strategy stand out, outlining the risks that these initiatives may have in trade, as well as the importance that decision makers and public policy makers take into account the differences in the context of the producing countries, in this case, palm oil.

This week we also participated in a forum with representatives of different countries interested in learning more about the sustainable and efficient agricultural supply from Guatemala to countries of the European Union.



In the meetings in the first week of the Guatemalan mission, we presented the efforts made by the Guatemalan agro-industrial sector for years in terms of efficient and sustainable production; outstanding among these efforts is the National Satellite Monitoring System for the Sustainable Development of Palm Oil in Guatemala that originated from the Public Declaration of Voluntary Commitment to Zero Deforestation promoted by **GREPALMA** and developed since 2019, which places Guatemala in an advantageous position by complying with the regulations established in the European Union.



3. In the week of October 17 to 21, 2022, **GREPALMA** was part of the Guatemalan delegation that participated in the World Food Forum of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO in English) in Rome, Italy. The delegation was led by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) with the support of the Embassy of Guatemala in Italy.

During the week, COMPETERE, a policy institute that conducts analysis and advocacy to foster global trade, innovation and resilient and sustainable supply chains, to promote sustainable nutrition and empower people as they strive to thrive in freedom, in prosperity and in harmony with the ecosystem held the event “Food security and sustainable nutrition: the role of vegetable oils and their resilient cluster”, where Karen Rosales participated to share the sustainable production model of palm oil from Guatemala.

For his part, José Santiago Molina, president of **GREPALMA**, participated in a meeting at the Malaysian Embassy to address the importance of edible vegetable oils. The session also raised issues that affect palm oil in the European Union and vegetable oils from an economic and geopolitical perspective.

Subsequently, a meeting was held with the Italian Association of the Oil Industry (ASSITOL in Italian), which represents and protects industrial companies that operate in the fat and by-products sector in the various national offices of the

Likewise, **GREPALMA** representatives participated in the International Dialogue organized by the European Association of Sustainable Palm Oil held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, one of the most important events on sustainable

palm oil in Europe, where actors from the supply chain of the palm oil agribusiness, representatives of academia and NGOs participated to discuss how to ensure sustainability in turbulent times.

At the same time, a meeting was held with Josehp D’cruz, CEO of the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) to publicize the progress and commitments to sustainable palm oil production in Guatemala.

4. Within the framework of the anniversary of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Central America, the EU held the event **“Investment in innovation for sustainable agriculture”, on March 7, 2023. In the event the panel “Investing in traceability in the supply chain”,** Karen Rosales, Executive Director of **GREPALMA**, participated to present the benefits and advances attained through traceability systems and good practices in the palm sector. Specifically, she delved into the results of the Satellite monitoring study for the sustainable development of palm oil in Guatemala and permanent satellite monitoring in 100% of the oil palm plantations of the country, by Satelligence, an organization with international support that specializes globally in processing scalable optimal radar and satellite imaging.



5. In May 2023, Karen Rosales, Executive Director of **GREPALMA**, participated in several activities within the framework of the Program **“Promoting the Green Transition in Petén”** financed by the European Union, organized by the Delegation of the European Union in Guatemala.

Different workshops addressed risk identification and mitigation, dialogue and capabilities to advance actions towards the green transition in Petén.

The contributions of the Guatemalan palm oil agro-industry in social, environmental and development matters for Petén as well as the opportunities for this sector were presented. This program, recently launched by the European Union through the Government of Guatemala, seeks to link the socioeconomic development of Petén with environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Promoting wellbeing in communities



Promoting social well-being in the areas of influence where the Guatemalan palm oil agro-industry operates is a priority for this Association. Access to health is one of the key considerations in the three palm-growing regions of the country.

GREPALMA and its partners are convinced that articulating efforts with multiple actors can improve opportunities to access and benefit the workers of the sector and the general population that comes from neighboring communities to oil palm operations.

A highly relevant effort is the Health and Social Security Conference organized by the Guatemalan Social Security Institute (IGSS). The Guatemalan oil palm Association, represented in **GREPALMA**, joined this initiative to promote the health and well-being of Guatemalan boys, girls, women and men in rural areas.

For more than 10 months, efforts were coordinated with IGSS to organize “health days” in the Polochic Valley, Guatemala, from March 15 to 22, 2023. In these activities, more than **4,800 inhabitants** of Panzós, Alta Verapaz were examined; more than **3,000 medical prescriptions** were issued and more than **23,000 medicines** were dispatched for the inhabitants of the area.

The matter will be the object of follow-up work to extend these activities to other regions where palm cultivation takes place.

[More information here](#)

Award For a Productive and Sustainable Earth

GREPALMA received, in March 2023, the Award “**For a Productive and Sustainable Land**”, a distinction granted by AGREQUIMA (Association of the Agricultural Chemist Guild) that recognizes leadership in innovation and technology transfer in the palm oil agro-industry around the world that positions Guatemala with the highest indicators in productivity per hectare worldwide.

“Oil palm production in Guatemala has shown that the balance between sustainability and productivity is possible and its contribution to national development has been of great importance to improve the quality of life of Guatemalans” AGREQUIMA representatives said during the event.

The Award “**For a Productive and Sustainable Land**” is the highest recognition that AGREQUIMA grants to those who, through their outstanding merits and activities in the industry, during a long career, have excelled in actions to protect and nourish crops in the country.



Regional Program: Sustainable management of the oil palm crop



The Training Institute (INTECAP), the Chamber of Agriculture, the Agricultural Chemists' Association (AGREQUIMA) and the Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala (**GREPALMA**) organize the “Regional Program: Sustainable Management of Oil Palm Cultivation”, to be held from April 11 to August 23, 2023 to promote knowledge-building by strengthening individual and collective capabilities, to include basic knowledge and skills for better job performance, thereby contributing to the sustainable management of oil palm cultivation.

The program involves nine modules that will address good agricultural practices in the cultivation of oil palm; national and international legal compliance in labor; environmental and market considerations; identification and management of biodiversity within oil palm cultivation and identification of High Conservation Value Areas; RSPO regulations applicable to oil palm cultivation; and occupational health and safety. It is taught by more than 20 national and international speakers who are experts in the topics to be discussed in each module.



Community Relationships and Conflict Management Program

Within the framework of the Social Excellence Project in the Palm Sector of Guatemala, the Earthworm Foundation, in collaboration with **GREPALMA**, carried out in June 2023 the “Training Program on Community Relations and Conflict Management” with the objective of strengthening the capabilities of relationship managers of companies interested in strategic community relations and methodologies for the prevention and management of socio-environmental conflicts related to operations.

The program was developed in the northern and northeastern region of Guatemala, to address the following topics:

- Introduction to the theory of socio-environmental conflict
- The analysis of a socio-environmental conflict
- Collaborative processes to prevent and manage socio-environmental conflicts
- Community relations

IV Palm Congress CPAL 2023

From October 11 to 13, 2023, the Oil Palm Growers' Association of Guatemala (**GREPALMA**) will host the **IV Palm Congress CPAL 2023** under the slogan **"Transforming the Environment"**. This meeting platform will address a number of very important issues for the palm community, and will combine the meeting agenda with plenary sessions, agricultural, industry and sustainability discussions, as well as the CPAL Expo and a field day within the framework of the Congress.

The picturesque and traditional city of La Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala, backdrop to the splendid colonial Hispanic culture of the region, declared a **"World Heritage Site"** by UNESCO in 1979, once again takes center stage as the venue for this important event, which has been opening space in the international palm community.

[More information here](#)



IV PALM CONGRESS CPAL 2023

TRANSFORMING THE ENVIRONMENT

OCTOBER 11 TO 13, 2023 | SANTO DOMINGO DEL CERRO | LA ANTIGUA GUATEMALA | GUATEMALA

CPAL IV is the international meeting of the palm growers' community that will present viable and practical solutions within the reach of producers and processors, as well as trends, news and future scenarios on matters of agricultural production, markets and sustainability. It will also promote the creation of contact networks to enrich the sector's environment and accomplish business transformation.

For more information contact info@grepalma.org



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