

MADE WITH HEART FROM HONDURAS



Looking back Luis Urbina, the president of Coatlahl, remembers the beginning of Coatlahl and how there have been considerable improvements in the community:

“The FSC certification has brought benefits to the communities. The forest now provides more jobs and the income has increased as they sell to international customers.”

Coatlahl - a cooperative with a story

Coatlahl is an FSC certified cooperative in Honduras that is dedicated to the protection and management of tropical forests. Coatlahl mainly produce beautiful quality furniture as scrapers, garden tables, chairs, stools, hangers, shelves and kitchen utensils. The wood from Coatlahl is exotic and beautiful - reflecting the biodiversity and strength of the forests these communi-

ties live in and depend on. Mostly, the wood species are lesser known, and thereby Coatlahl helps lower the pressure on the forests and improves the biodiversity.

Coatlahl is a pioneer in forest certification, having been awarded one of the first ever FSC community forestry certifications in 1996. Coatlahl is made up of 20 community producers who manage 22,000 ha of lush tropical jungle. Coatlahl provides the marketing and sales support and creates furniture from these well-managed forests. Through Coatlahl, the communities can sell timber and furniture to international customers.

The beginning

The first years after being FSC certified, Coatlahl found that FSC was a good way to distinguish the organization in the market and to improve Coatlahl's image as an organization committed to sustainable management of forests. The certification also helped Coatlahl achieve complementary aid to manage the forest and develop the furniture workshop.

It also provided added value to their wood and helped fulfil the dream of producing and exporting FSC certified products. With help from Forests of the World, a Danish NGO, Coatlahl managed to obtain the first contract to export FSC certified products to a Danish retail store in 2004.

Socially beneficial

After Coatlahl obtained their first export contract, the demand for wood increased, and this had a positive impact in the communities as more jobs were created due to forestry activities. The wood prices also increased which brought in additional income for community producers and therefore energized the economy



of their communities. In collaboration with the Danish client and NGO, Coatlahl also arranged support to the development of social projects in all of the communities with certified forests. They support small community projects to improve education, create medical access and better the local infrastructure.

Protection of the environment

The certification also helps visualize the role that Coatlahl and the communities play in the protection and management of tropical forests in Honduras.

The forests are conserved, which is extremely important in a context where land use change is prevalent, and virtually has been out of control. Also, the rivers and streams located in these forests are used to generate power and are a good source of drinking water.

