

THE CLIMATE FOOTPRINT PROJECT

TRACKING EMISSIONS / RAISING AMBITION



BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO



PROJECT START DATE:

January 2019

STATE/REGION & COUNTRY:

Baja California, Mexico

INTERVIEWEES:

Saúl Guzman
of the Sub-secretariat of Sustainable Development

Iván Payan,
Energy Commission

José Carmelo Zavala,
Undersecretary of Sustainable Development

KEY SECTORS:

 Energy

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS: BUILDING AN INVENTORY WITH LIMITED RESOURCES IN BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

In July 2020, the Climate Group and partner Edge Effects hosted a peer forum as part of the Climate Footprint Project's Tracking to Action Series. This forum focused on Baja California's experience with the process of building its greenhouse gas emissions inventory under the project.

THE CLIMATE FOOTPRINT PROJECT

The Climate Footprint Project supports state and regional governments to improve their greenhouse gas emissions tracking and reduction efforts. In the first phase of the project, it worked with states and regions in developing and newly industrialising countries including Pernambuco (Brazil), Chhattisgarh and West Bengal (India), Baja California, Jalisco and Yucatán (Mexico), and KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa).

Project partners: Climate Group, Ricardo Energy & Environment, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, CDP, The Greenhouse Gas Management Institute.

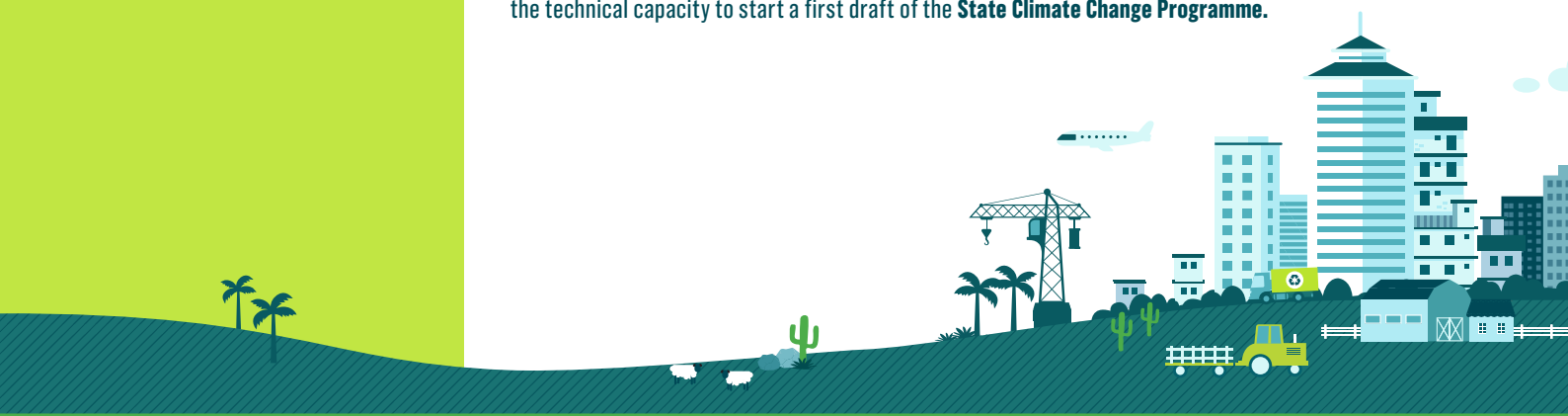
Local partner in Mexico: Carbon Trust

BACKGROUND

Here, we share a few highlights of the conversation with **Saúl Guzman** of the Sub-secretariat of Sustainable Development, **Iván Payan** of the Energy Commission, and **José Carmelo Zavala**, Undersecretary of Sustainable Development, as representatives of the Government of Baja California, with facilitation from **Rachel Phillips** of Edge Effects.

RACHEL: TELL US ABOUT BAJA CALIFORNIA'S BACKGROUND ON RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS, AND WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO COMMIT TO ANOTHER INVENTORY?

Saúl: Between 2007 and 2010, different institutions supported the development of three inventories for Baja California, and all of these organisations and institutions were supported with federal or international resources. In addition, they received assistance from local experts, who provided the technical capacity to start a first draft of the **State Climate Change Programme**.



However, from 2014 onwards, there was no longer a budget and the climate change programme was forgotten - it had been kept in a drawer, and now we have begun to dust it off.

Subsequently, in 2017 we set up the **Climate Change Council**, mandated by law, and since then we have made progress through the sessions of this Council. Unfortunately, due to lack of budget availability, the team that led this Council from the (then) Secretariat of Environmental Protection was very small.

Considering this challenge, the **Climate Footprint Project** helped us build capacities and form an effective cross-sectoral working group to start integrated climate action planning. While we do not yet have guaranteed financial resources, this working group can help us update our inventory, which has become key for state planning as we recognise the importance of having robust monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) processes.



Saúl Guzmán

COLLABORATION WITH THE ENERGY SECTOR TO ADDRESS RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS

RACHEL: HOW DID YOU IDENTIFY THE ENERGY COMMISSION AS A GOOD PARTNER AND WHAT DID YOU EXPECT FROM THAT COLLABORATION?

Saúl: In the search for further capacities and key actors, we identified that the energy sector contributes most to the generation of greenhouse gas emissions in the state. In that sense, we saw the State Energy Commission as an ally to obtain data and information from the sector. The Climate Footprint Project then provided the umbrella to form a working group between the State Energy Commission and the Sub-secretariat of Sustainable Development.

RACHEL: WHAT MADE THE STATE ENERGY COMMISSION PARTNER WITH THE SUB-SECRETARIAT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ON EMISSIONS TRACKING, AND WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO GET OUT OF THIS PARTNERSHIP?

Iván: The Commission had already worked with the (then) Secretariat of Environmental Protection on a project known as "Camellones Verdes" (Green Corridors) to assess the construction of a solar photovoltaic plant. However, the Commission focused more on the creation of the energy project and less on the environmental aspect.

When the Climate Committee was created, we realised that, in addition to generating energy projects, we were closely linked to the environmental aspect and the mitigation of climate change. So, we joined the **Climate Footprint Project**. The Commission already has access to valuable data but **being part of this project also enabled us to obtain certain data more quickly and easily**. This allowed us to support updating indicators that the Secretariat of Environmental Protection was working on.



José Carmelo Zavala



Iván Payán

PARTNERSHIPS AS A RESOURCE AND RESTRUCTURING AS AN OPPORTUNITY

RACHEL: HOW DID BAJA CALIFORNIA'S GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE AFFECT THE GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY COMPILATION PROCESS?

Undersecretary Carmelo: The State Government of Baja California has limited resources, and as such recently underwent a restructuring process. The prior Secretariats of Economy, Environmental Protection, Tourism and Fisheries were combined to create the Secretariat of Sustainable Economy and Tourism. So the Secretariat for Environmental Protection became a Sub-Secretariat.

Initially, this change was difficult for us as the environmental sector. **But now we see it as an opportunity, because being part of the Secretariat of Sustainable Economy and Tourism provides the possibility of alliances within and outside of the government.**

The government restructuring was motivated by budgetary issues, but it also allows access to the private sector that we did not have before. We have not abandoned environmental issues in any way - it still remains our key focus - however we will put more effort into cross-cutting work, not only within the structure of the State Government but with other important stakeholders and the rest of society.



Rachel Phillips



ACHIEVEMENTS AND ADVICE FOR OTHER STATES AND REGIONS



RACHEL: WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO ACHIEVE THROUGH COLLABORATION THAT YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO ON YOUR OWN?

Iván: First, working as a team has opened many doors for us. The Energy Commission has few staff and this collaboration has allowed us to create new and useful indicators. This project, and partnership, gives us more strength and allows us to access difficult to obtain data that is often essential for updating inventories.

Saúl: Not finding a secure source of financing initially led to frustration over whether all of our objectives could be achieved. **But, through this collaboration, we were able to remove any frustrations and realise the scope of opportunities available.** On the one hand, we have internal human resources with a lot of capacity. On the other, we were able to identify that, in academia and in other local institutions, there are more trained or specialised capacities. This gives us the opportunity to visualise how to put together a team and look for alternatives going forward.

Undersecretary Carmelo: The concept of resources to develop plans to combat climate change is illusory. **Not only in Mexico, or in Baja California, but in the world, there is the belief that resources are only fiscal and budgetary - but of course that is not the case.** For the fight against climate change to be effective, it is necessary to create alliances of many sectors that go beyond the government and therefore beyond public budgets.

RACHEL: BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER STATES AND REGIONS FACING SIMILAR RESOURCE CHALLENGES?

Saúl: First of all, make alliances. Look for the right type of actors to help you do the work with the resources that you have, even if they are limited. This will allow you to move forward. Second, identify, the source of information you need, e.g. the required tool or product, in order to clearly illustrate the process of building the inventory. And third, be part of initiatives, such as the [Under2 Coalition](#), and dialogues and events that are held nationally and internationally to learn about other experiences. **Often, we become occupied with what is urgent and not with what is important.**

Iván: My recommendation is that even though you have limited resources, economic or staffing, you should not be discouraged. Once you have identified key actors, you have to look for synergies so that these same actors work together.

Governments can often be quite territorial – for example, the energy sector will focus on energy, and not interact with climate change. But, in this case, climate change and energy must go hand in hand. So, look for these alliances within the public sector, private sector, academia, NGOs, etc. **Do not be discouraged, work as a team, and leave egos aside in order to do something good for the planet.**



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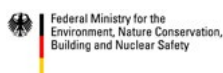
FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE TO BE EFFECTIVE, IT IS NECESSARY TO CREATE ALLIANCES OF MANY SECTORS THAT GO BEYOND THE GOVERNMENT AND THEREFORE BEYOND PUBLIC BUDGETS.



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THE CLIMATE FOOTPRINT PROJECT

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