



For Immediate Release
November 5, 2009

Mexico President Calderon announces groundbreaking multi-national cooperation with Canada and U.S. on wilderness conservation

**MOU signed at WILD9 -- the 9th World Wilderness Congress
Merida, Mexico Nov. 6 – 13, 2009**

Merida, Mexico -- In a historic moment for wilderness globally, President Calderon announced a *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Cooperation for Wilderness Conservation* between Mexico, United States and Canada launching a continental vision of wilderness (*tierras silvestres* in Spanish) protection across the three countries of North America. The president made the announcement last night at the opening ceremony of the 9th World Wilderness Congress to an audience of 1200 delegates. The MOU was signed today by representatives of all these countries.

This marks the first time that countries have agreed formally to cooperate on wilderness conservation measures across a continent.

“Today it gives me great pleasure to announce that, within the framework of this 9th World Wilderness Congress, Mexico, Canada and the United States will be formalizing an important Cooperation Plan for Wilderness Conservation,” said President Calderon. “This Agreement will make it easier to exchange successful experiences, and facilitate monitoring and the training of human resources, as well as financing projects that will protect and recover wilderness areas.”

The MOU provisions address ecosystems, migratory wildlife, and natural resources that do not start and end with geographical boundaries. This MOU also encourages cooperative efforts to conduct and share scientific research.

The character of this agreement, signed in the three national languages of English, Spanish and French, is cross-cultural, and respects native approaches to conserving wild nature, accommodation for indigenous customs, priorities for species survival, and national environmental policy.

This timely agreement recognizes the growing evidence of the importance of wilderness conservation in climate change adaptation and mitigation and monitoring for climate change effects.

The seven agencies responsible for wilderness management signing the MOU today are: the Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources through the National Commission on Protected Areas (CONANP) of the United Mexican States; the Parks Canada Agency of the Government of Canada; the National Park Service, Fish & Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management of the U.S. Department of Interior, and the Forest Service and Office of Ecosystem Services and Markets of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The MOU process was facilitated by the WILD9 Executive Committee and is the result of 18 months of work by the North American Governmental Advisory Committee chaired by Ernesto Enkerlin-Hoeflich, National Commissioner, CONANP, in Mexico.

“Mexican legislation currently allows for incorporating the concept of wilderness in our protected area operations and private lands certification,” said Enkerlin-Hoeflich. “We are close to having it formally incorporated into environmental law. This MOU builds on our tradition of trilateral cooperation. It will greatly benefit Mexico as it shares and learns from the Canadian and U.S. experiences such that wilderness conservation, while respecting each country’s institutions and regulations, works seamlessly in North America.”

Please send **requests for images** to media contacts below.

For a copy of **MOU** and to learn more about WILD9 go to <http://www.wild9.org>.

WILD9 is a partnership between The WILD Foundation and Unidos para la Conservación and relies on the support and participation of many partner organizations.

Begun in 1977, **The World Wilderness Congress** (www.wild9.org) is the longest-running global public forum and is held approximately every four years. WILD9 runs from Nov. 6 -13, 2009 in Merida Mexico, and incorporates a diverse range of views from academia, government, private sector, science, native peoples, the arts, media and social sciences on the importance and benefits of protecting wild nature and related strategies and success stories.

The WILD Foundation (www.wild.org) Founded in 1974, WILD is the only international organization dedicated entirely and explicitly to wilderness protection around the world. WILD works to protect the planet's last wild places and the wildlife and people who depend upon them, because wilderness areas provide essential social, spiritual, biological and economic benefits. We believe that intact wilderness areas are an essential core element of a healthy modern society.

Unidos para la Conservación (www.undiosparalaconservacion.org) Founded in 1992, Unidos is a nonprofit Mexican conservation organization that has actively promoted the concept of wilderness conservation in Mexico. Its working strategy combines the establishment of alliances with government, nonprofit and corporate partners with the promotion of a conservation culture through publications and films in a search of conservation solutions through specific action.

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