



Ethical Research: Narco-Deforestation in Central America's Protected Areas



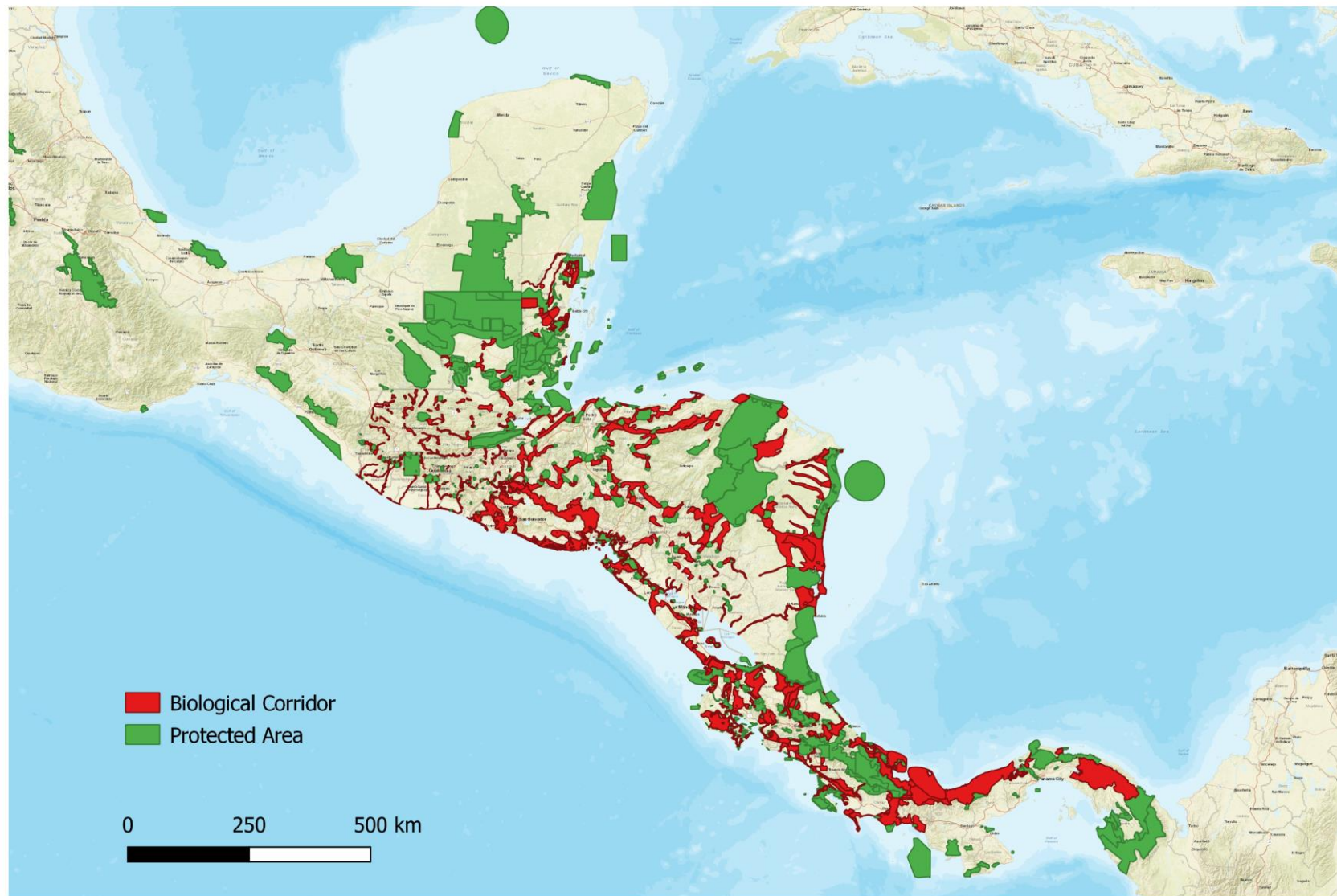
TEXAS
STATE
GEOGRAPHY

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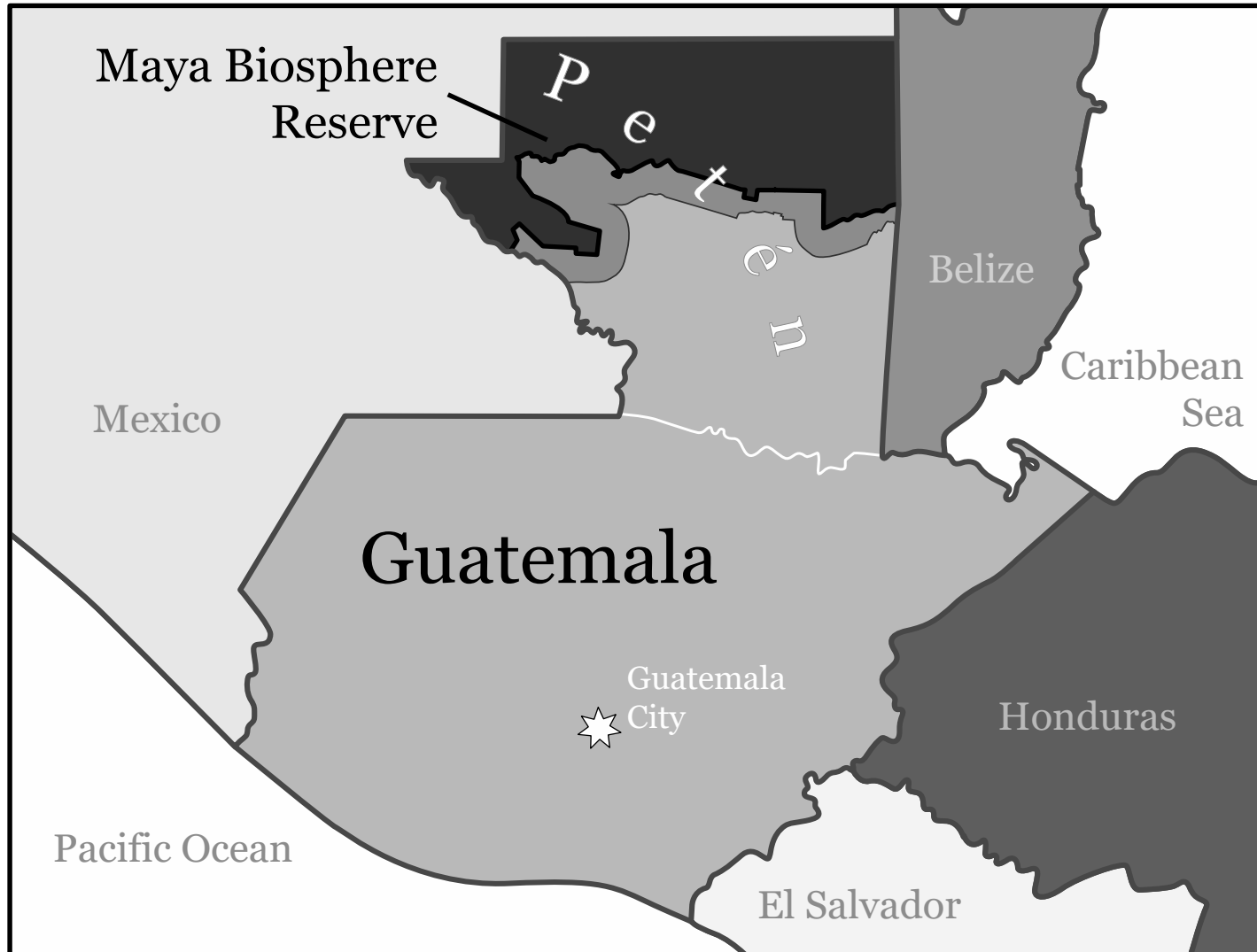
National Academies' Geographical Sciences Committee Webinar Series:
Ethics and Biases in the Geographical Sciences



Illicit Global Environmental Change:

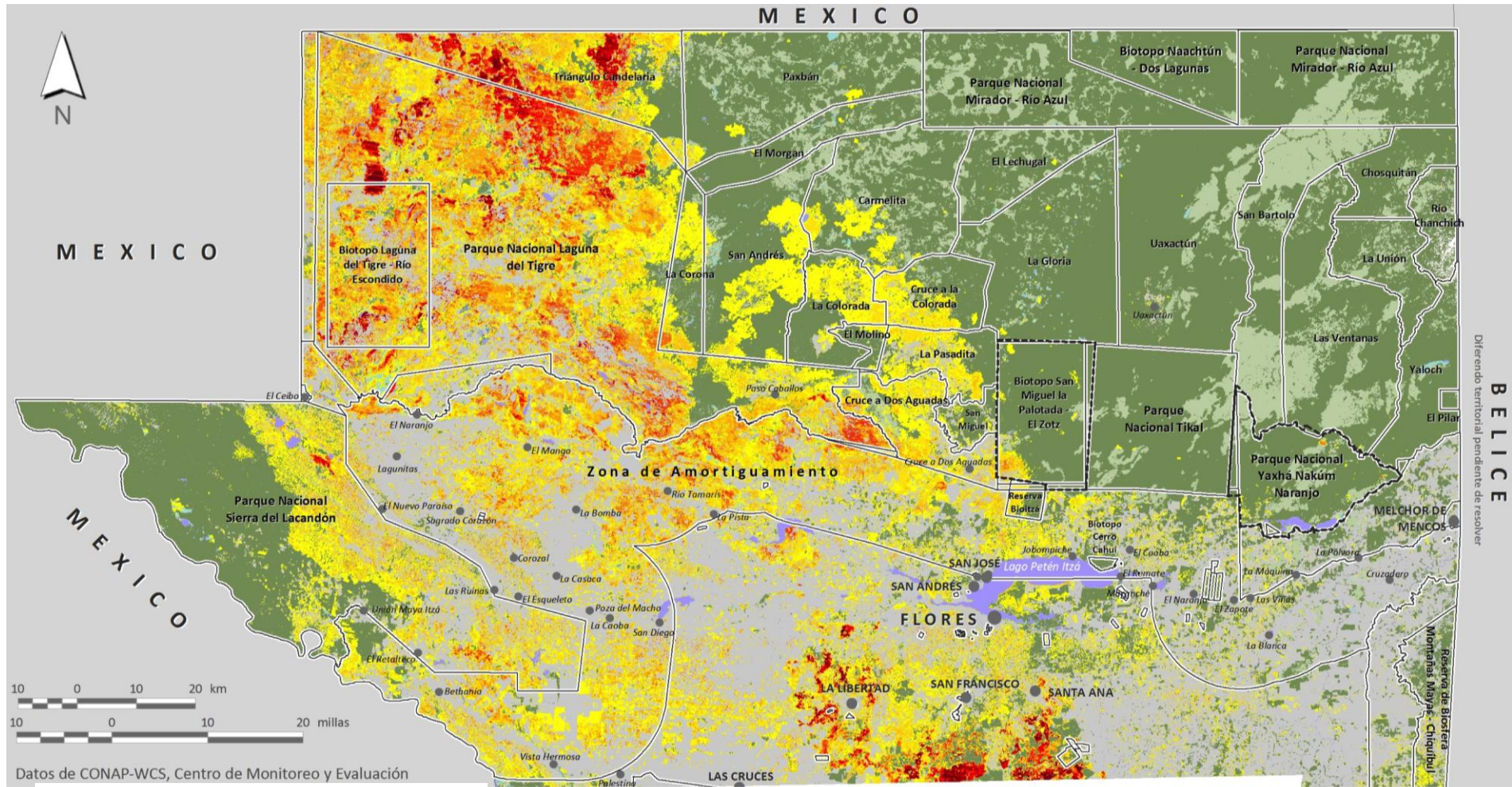
- Land use/land cover change
- Biodiversity
- Protected area governance
- Forest lives and livelihoods

Maya Biosphere Reserve, Guatemala



- World's largest communally managed forest
- Grassroots environmental and social justice movement and model
- Narco-deforestation threatens forest and movement in the west

Manmade Fires: 1998 - 2016



Reoccurrence of fire
(number of times burned)



Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas

Preparado para el Plan Maestro de la Reserva de Biosfera Maya en el Centro de Monitoreo y Evaluación de CONAP. El proceso de actualización del Plan Maestro de la RBM es conducido por Wildlife Conservation Society -WCS- en coordinación con el CONAP y partes interesadas. El financiamiento de la actualización ha sido provisto por el Programa de Desarrollo de Petén para la Conservación de la Reserva de la Biosfera Maya -PPDCRBM-, ejecutado por el Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales -MARN- con fondos provenientes del Convenio de Financiamiento No Reembolsable de Inversiones del Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial (FMAM) No. GRT/FM-11375-GU.



Narco-Cattle Ranching in the Maya Biosphere



Narco-Cattle Ranching in the Maya Biosphere

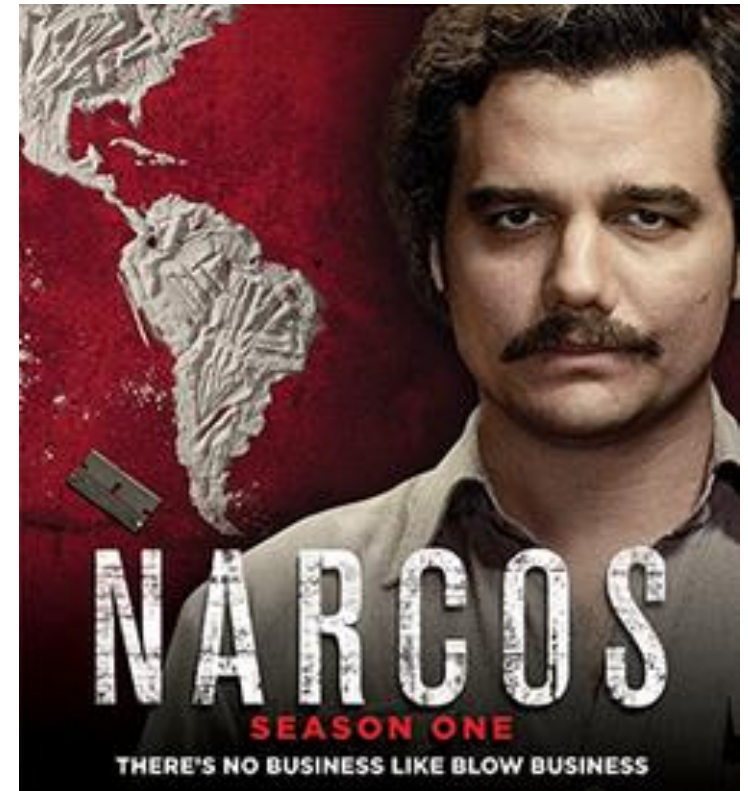


Source: <http://www.plazapublica.com.gt/content/desplazar-para-no-ser-desplazados>

Ethics and Biases: Researching Narco-deforestation

How can we as researchers ethically study phenomena that is hidden, dangerous, and sensationalized?

1. Safety
2. Biases in Quantifying Narco-Deforestation
3. Ethics of Relational Thinking
4. Geo-spatial technologies and the Production of Territory



Source: Netflix

1. Safety

- Safety for Research Participants
- Safety for Researchers
- Making connections that our collaborators cannot



Asesinan a Líder Comunitario por Conservar la Reserva de la Biosfera Maya

La Asociación de Comunidades Forestales de Peten (ACOFOP) se encuentra consternada por el Asesinato de líder comunitario David Salguero de la comunidad Cruce a la Colorada, San Andrés, Peten.



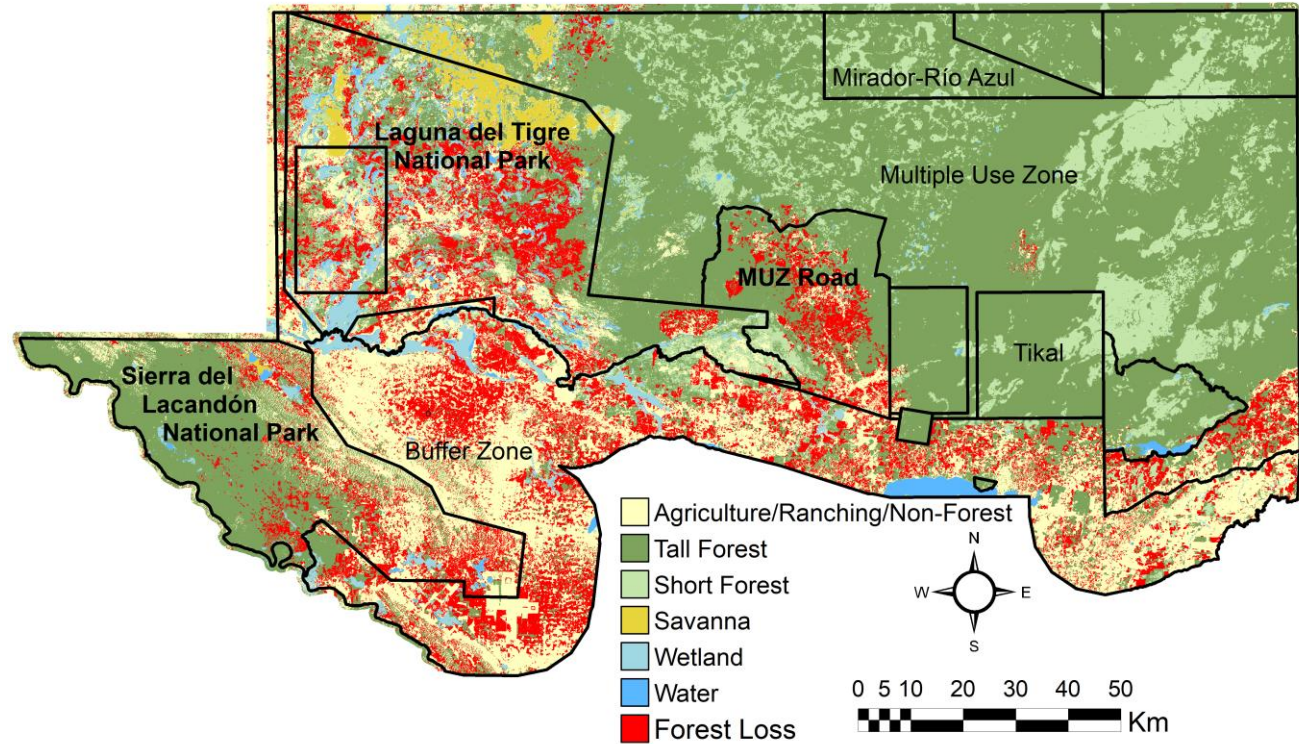
2. Quantifying Narco-Deforestation: Biases

Impulse to Quantify:

- What percentage of deforestation is narco-deforestation?
- Narco/non-narco – where to draw the binary line?

Problems with Quantification:

- Impossible to do, but urge persists
- Rooted in positivism and western epistemologies – binary thinking
- Criminalize people and places



Devine, J., N. Currit, Y. Reygadas, L. Liller, G. Allen. 2020. "Drug Trafficking, Cattle Ranching and Land Use Change in Guatemala's Maya Biosphere," *Land Use Policy*, available: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2020.104578>.

3. Ethics of Relational Thinking



- Relations and connections between licit – illicit
- DTOs shape socio-environmental systems, governance, and *licit* economies
- Illuminate dynamics occurring outside reserve driving narco-deforestation
- From narco-fetish to critique of US led War on Drugs
- Narco-deforestation is product of War on Drugs and failed conservation policy

Drug War Conservation

- Narco-deforestation is concentrated in national parks and core zones of strict conservation
- Conservation and tourism land grabs funded to increase security



Source: "Guardians of the Forest," Jessica Long

S. 3131 “Maya Security and Conservation Partnership program”

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3131

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a Maya Security and Conservation Partnership program, to authorize appropriations for that program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 19, 2019

Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. RISCH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a Maya Security and Conservation Partnership program, to authorize appropriations for that program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

2

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

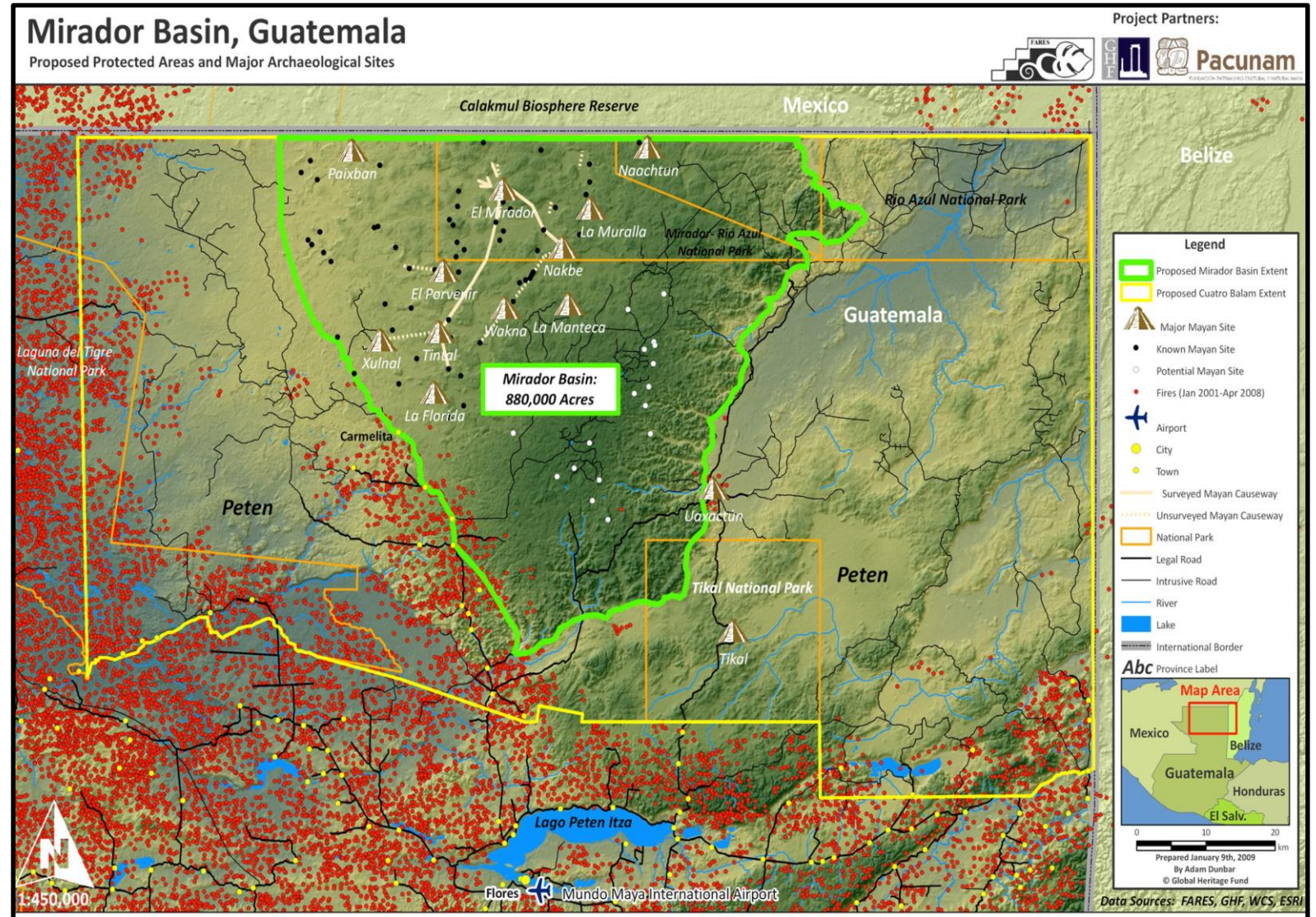
4 This Act may be cited as the “Mirador-Calakmul

5 Basin Maya Security and Conservation Partnership Act

6 of 2019”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds that—

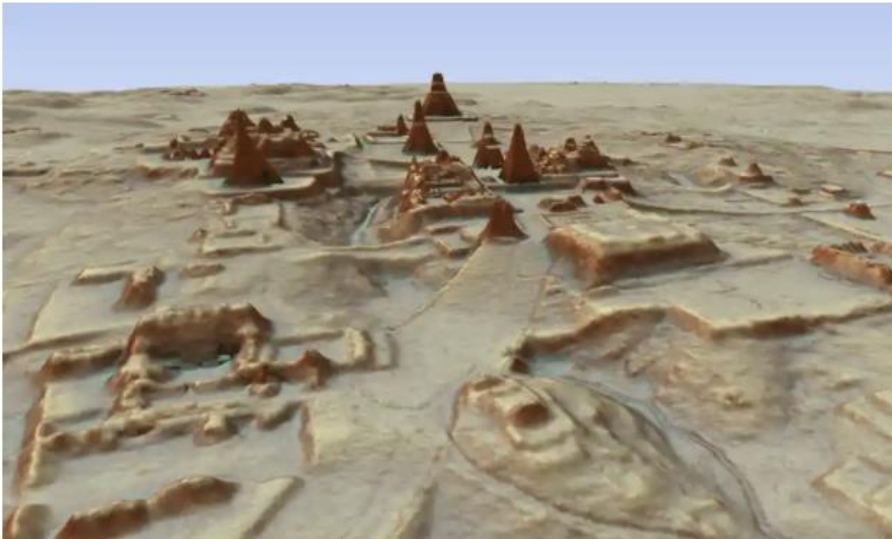


4. Geo-Spatial Technologies and the Production of Territory

Archaeology

Scientists discover ancient Mayan city hidden under Guatemalan jungle

Aerial laser mapping detects thousands of hidden structures in Peten region, suggesting its population was millions more than previously thought



▲ A high-tech aerial mapping technique uncovered previously undetected Mayan buildings in the jungle of Guatemala. Photograph: Canuto and Auld-Thomas/AP

Associated Press

Sat 3 Feb 2018 00:54 EST



4,585

- Large scale tourism development of MBR threatens community forestry
- Tourism developers use geo-spatial technologies to land grab their “discoveries”



Source: The Guardian, Comedy Central's "The Daily Show"

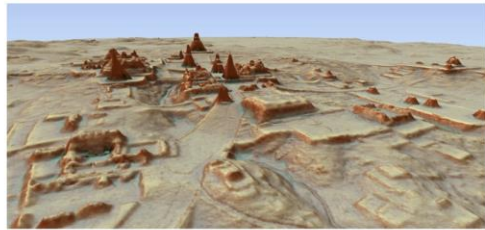


Pacunam

FUNDACIÓN PATRIMONIO CULTURAL Y NATURAL MAYA

Pacunam LiDAR Initiative

● PACUNAM LIDAR INITIATIVE · SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2018 ·

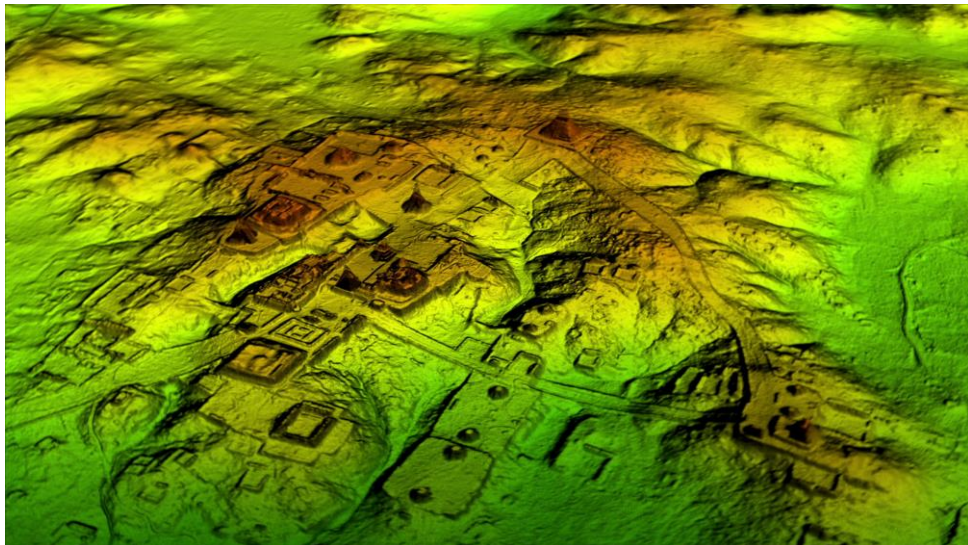


Tikal

Iniciativa LiDAR Pacunam en la biosfera maya

Ethics and Biases in LiDAR research:

- “Pristine nature, ancient civilization” representation erases communities and concessions
- Ignores local knowledge of Maya archeology through narrative of “discovery”
- “Discovery” narrative and financial investment paves the way for territorial claims
- Collaboration with scientists legitimizes these narratives
- Maps used to advocate for private concessions and wilderness preserves



Grassroots Organizing and Geospatial Technologies

Stop bill S.3131 - Mirador-Calakmul Basin Maya Security and Conservation Partnership Act



Beatriz Arango started this petition to US Senate and 6 others

Please help us stop bill S.3131 - Mirador-Calakmul Basin Maya Security and Conservation Partnership Act of 2019 from passing.

67,208 have signed. Let's get to 75,000!

- Lori Wright signed this petition
- Chris De La Fuente signed 42 seconds ago
- Pablo Rodriguez signed 49 seconds ago

San Marcos, 78666
United States

☒ Display my name and comment on this petition





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