
[A destructive megaproject for Tehuantepec Isthmus in Mexico](#)

The Tehuantepec Isthmus is home to the most important humid tropical forests in a country considered one of the five most megabiodiverse countries in the world. The area is also the only natural bridge between tropical subhumid and humid forests of the Pacific and the Gulf of Mexico coasts. It is also the region with the greatest availability of accessible water.

The Isthmus has already been the victim of "development": nearly half a million hectares of medium and high-altitude rainforests in the Tuxtla-Acayucan-los-Choapos zone have been totally stripped and transformed into pastures for large cattle ranches, including the Uxpanapa forest, where --with funding from the World Bank-- in less than four years (1974-1978), 200,000 hectares of high altitude forest was cut. The result has been the marginalization of large indigenous and campesino populations.

Now the region is facing a much larger and destructive megaproject. Among many other activities, this megaproject includes the construction of a four-lane highway and two-way railroad system for a bullet train that will transport merchandise in containers; a proposed strip of "maquiladoras"; extraction of raw materials (precious woods and mineral resources), substitution of forests and traditional agriculture by monospecific plantations characteristic of agro-industry and agro-exporting, such as eucalyptus and sorghum, etc.

The expected consequences of the Megaproject are: high concentration of benefits favouring transnational capital, grave risks related to national sovereignty, an increase in social degradation in the municipalities and communities affected by the environmental destruction resulting from the megaproject.

Note: the above is a short summary of the detailed article written by Miguel Angel Garcia, General Coordinator of the NGO Maderas Pueblo del Sureste "The Megaproject of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec: globalization and social and environmental deterioration". Those interested in the complete text, please visit our web site or request an electronic copy from the WRM International Secretariat.