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Punta Gorda

Toledo, Belize



Agroecology: linking climate smart farming with the protection of nature

Ya'axché continues to facilitate training in climate smart farming practices which help support the protection of nature to farmers and agriculture extension personnel in southern Belize. Ya'axché has partnered with Professor Jose Ruben Sanchez, a renowned plant genetic resources specialist from Cuba. He is providing valuable insights into agroecology.

Agroecology looks at understanding and linking climate smart farming practices with the protection of nature. A series of trainings were developed after visiting farmers across Ya'axché's focus area, the Maya Golden Landscape, to meet the needs of the farmers. The practical and theoretical training sessions focused on pest identification and management, seed production and storage, composting and biodigester technology. Thirty-five farmers and fifteen agriculture extension officers participated in the weeklong training.

At the end of last year, Ya'axché took eleven participants to Cuba on an exchange visit to learn the science and technology used to grow food from farmers and researchers at the University of Pinar del Rio. As a follow up, Professor Sanchez's visit was facilitated with support from the GEF Small Grants Programme. The farmers, agriculture extension officers and Ya'axché are very grateful for the knowledge shared by Professor Sanchez and the partnership developed.

Since 1998, Ya'axché Conservation Trust has been conserving wildlife and empowering communities in southern Belize. Much of the organization's efforts have focused on improving farming practices which help protect nature, improve food security and increase income of farming families. In the transition to climate smart farming practices, Ya'axché provides material, training, technical and field support to 80 farmers within the Maya Golden Landscape. The climate smart farming practices promoted include cacao and coffee agroforestry, beekeeping, Inga alley cropping and gardening.

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