



## **WEC Achieves Cost Savings and Environmental Improvements in a Private Sector Environmental Project in Guatemala & El Salvador**

The World Environment Center (WEC) has successfully completed a State Department (DoS)-funded project “Cleaner Production Private Sector Partnerships.” Thirty five Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) from Guatemala and El Salvador participated in the project to improve their environmental performance and have achieved a combined total savings of over \$621,400, with investments of \$293,500.

As part of the Central America Free Trade Agreement, the Department of State’s Oceans, Environment and Science Bureau (OES) initiated the Cleaner Production Partnership with the World Environment Center (WEC) in October, 2008. The project provided on-the-ground support to assist small local companies in both countries to improve the private sector’s environmental performance, reduce costs, and improve efficiency and competitiveness through the adoption of Cleaner Production and Energy Efficiency practices and technologies.

Through WEC’s training and the partnership with local stakeholders such as Wal-Mart Centroamerica, the Guatemala Association of Small Hotels, and the El Salvador Association of Dairy Processors, the project provided technical assistance to the participating companies to improve their performance and upgrade their facilities. These approaches allowed firms to further their profitability and competitiveness while simultaneously strengthening environmental performance and fostering a better work environment.

Some highlighted results include a collective savings of 4.47 millions of drinking water, 185,890 gallons of fuel oil, reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> by 1,162 tons, and 77,291 liters saved of liquid raw material.

“We found this project to be a direct extension of our efforts with our suppliers, focusing on sustainable growth and driven by economic incentives,” said Claudia de Ibañez, manager of Corporate Affairs for Wal-Mart Centroamerica in El Salvador.

“This program achieved important benefits for the participants, all of which can be considered a starting point as well as an example for other businesses interested in improving their production processes,” said Ernesto Samayoa, Director of Operations for WEC Latin America.

The project not only focused on strengthening the processes of the businesses that participated, but also effectively demonstrated that business, economic growth, sustainability and environmental improvements aren’t mutually exclusive. Although the term of the project activities has been completed, the participants have established a path of continuous improvement that will continue to achieve future successes.



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### **About the World Environment Center**

The World Environment Center, headquartered in Washington, D.C. with offices and operations in many emerging and developed markets, is unique in its direct application of sustainable development strategies and practices to the business operations of its members. WEC creates sustainable business solutions through individual projects in emerging markets; convenes leadership roundtables to shape strategic thinking across a range of sustainability topics; and honors industry excellence through its annual awarding of the Gold Medal for International Corporate Achievement in Sustainable Development. WEC conducts no advocacy activities. For more information, please go to [www.wec.org](http://www.wec.org).