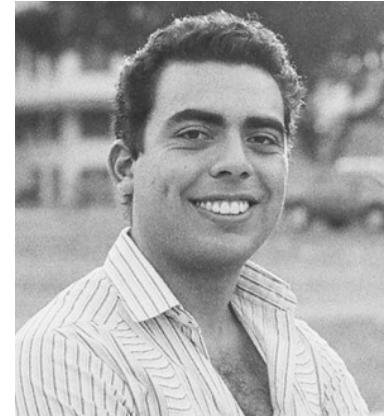


Fernando Lopez R.

Director and Co-Founder of Fundación ECOFARMS Panama

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- From 2007 to 2010 Bachelor of Sciences in Business Administration at Towson University
- From 2014 to 2015 Operations Coordinator of the Azuero Earth Project
 - Socioeconomic analysis and development of the Azuero Ecotourism Concept
 - Supervision and stakeholder management for the participants of the Azuero Biodiversity Corridor Project
- Since 2011 Co-Founder of Fundación ECOFARMS Panama
 - Co-Development of the Mamoni river reforestation project, a public-private reforestation alliance
 - Management of a 50 hectares multipurpose farm in the region of East Panama
 - Development of concepts and strategic partnerships that promote the conservation of rainforests and sustainable land use strategies in Panama
- Since 2015 Master's Student of Life Science Economics and Policy at the Technical University of Munich

ECOFARMS Panama

ECOFARMS Panama (EF Panama) is a Panamanian non-profit organization that promotes the conservation and restoration of the tropical rainforests of the Mamoni river in Panama, through the development and application of sustainable land use systems.

The organization receives valuable support from the German forestry sector in the form of technical assistance, transfer of knowledge and capacity building. In more detail, land is managed using German forestry practices as well as students from different German universities conduct their research and internship semesters at ECOFARMS Panama's fields.

Support mechanisms for smallholder forest-owners in Panama

Private and public support in the development of forest ownership schemes is essential to reduce deforestation in the tropics. The current legislation promotes large-scale forest plantations; however, it neglects the role of small-scale forest owners.

In this sense, partnerships with the private sector provide small-scale forest owners with the opportunity to profit from maintaining and creating forest. For example, strategic alliances between EF Panama, German experts and the Panamanian energy sector have resulted in the establishment of the Mamoni River Reforestation Project. The aim is to restore areas currently under cattle farming pastures into productive ecosystems that balance food production and biodiversity protection.