



SUSTAINABILITY OF CANDELILLA WAX PRODUCTION

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There are different approaches related to the sustainability of the production of Candelilla Wax at the north-eastern territory of Mexico. In order to obtain a deep perspective about this topic, the Candelilla Institute in collaboration with national and international researchers has developed a socio-economic analysis addressing three main aspects: Social, Economic and Environmental. This article presents some of the main outcomes from the research.

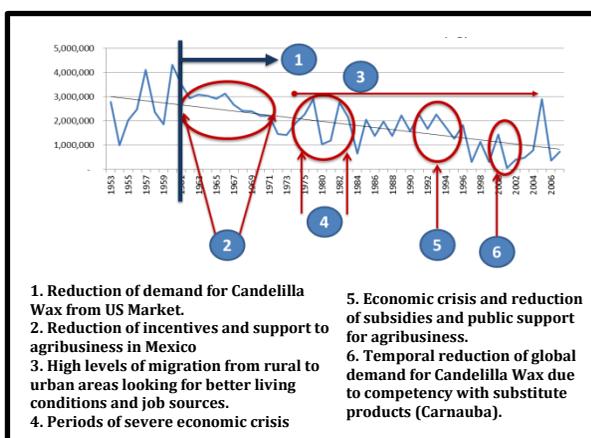
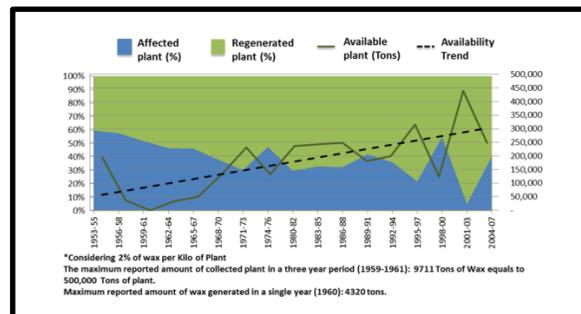
1. Due to the localization and the environment, the process of Candelilla Wax represents the main source of income for the rural communities from the Chihuahuan Desert.

2. This activity provides to the Candelillero a source of self-employment with a flexible income that increases according to their time and capabilities. Having also the possibility to combine it with complementary activities

3. According to the official studies of wellbeing and living conditions developed for the Mexican rural communities, the average families of the Candelilleros generate incomes above the poverty line. Even though there are other needs that could be satisfied through integrated social projects including the participation of all actors of the value chain, governmental institutions and NGOs.

4. In the last sixty years the production of Candelilla Wax has decreased, not because of resource availability, but for the lack of rural labor to process it, therefore its production has been concentrated in few areas of the Chihuahuan Desert.

5. The natural regeneration, additional to the reduction of the production volume and the reforestation campaigns has generated an increment of the available Candelilla plant volume, principally at the inactive communities where the process is not preformed. This resource with a sustainable management could represent a good opportunity for rural development



1. Reduction of demand for Candelilla Wax from US Market.
2. Reduction of incentives and support to agribusiness in Mexico
3. High levels of migration from rural to urban areas looking for better living conditions and job sources.
4. Periods of severe economic crisis
5. Economic crisis and reduction of subsidies and public support for agribusiness.
6. Temporal reduction of global demand for Candelilla Wax due to competency with substitute products (Carnauba).

Currently there are different governmental agencies and NGOs working committedly on the development of the production of Candelilla Wax, encouraging the sustainable use of the resource. Different private firms have joined on this efforts, such is the case of Multiceras, which through the commercial relationship with its customers, has been contributing on the value chain and the development of the rural communities.

Reference:

Instituto de la Candelilla (2013) “Análisis socio-económico de las comunidades Candelilleras en el Desierto de Chihuahua en México”. The full report is available under request, please contact: editor@candelilla.org