

American Society of Mammalogists

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Dear Mr. President:

I am respectfully addressing you in my capacity as President of the American Society of Mammalogists, the world's oldest and largest organization devoted to the study of wild mammals, with nearly 2,400 members from over 60 countries worldwide, including many from Mexico. Indeed, the histories of mammalogy in Mexico and the United States—like that of most sciences—are closely intertwined and we are deeply proud of our close association with our Mexican colleagues and with the science that they produce.

I write to you today out of concern for the proposed termination of “trust funds” (fideicomisos) that are used by many Mexican government agencies to allow for long-term planning of some tax funds as well as funds donated by private individuals and international sources. The existence of these funds allows for predictable, long-term support for many important funding programs and, as such, comprise a critical of support for Mexican science, museums, and public education. Eliminating these sources of long-term support without providing alternative means of funding the outstanding science conducted by an ever-growing cadre of Mexican scientists will have significant negative impacts on scientific progress and may result in scientists seeking opportunities outside of Mexico.

We recognize the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and understand that this global emergency requires response, including reallocation of resources. However, effectively defunding science risks losing opportunities to better understand the nature of this pandemic from ecological, sociological, molecular, and epidemiological perspectives. We are concerned that funding for science in Mexico has recently decreased to the lowest levels (as a proportion of GDP) in two decades. Termination of fideicomisos trust funds threatens to further erode the intellectual capacity of Mexican science and education.

The American Society of Mammalogists would not be what it is without the numerous contributions of our Mexican colleagues. We have tremendous respect for these individuals and the excellent science that they pursue. We encourage you to make every possible effort to maintain support for their research. We sincerely believe that this is in the best interests of Mexico, her citizens, and the larger international community.

Very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Douglas Kelt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Douglas A. Kelt, Ph.D., President

American Society of Mammalogists (www.mammalsociety.org)