



*END OF THE YEAR LETTER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

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Desert and Oceans  
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Dear allies and collaborators,

It is surprising how fast 2024 went by—that is why we baptized it the “Lightning Year” at its start. How will it end? We do not know, but I assure you that we worked tirelessly throughout the tri-national Sonoran Desert and Gulf of California. We did not do it alone; we did it with each one of you. That is why we are reaching out to you with this end-of-the-year letter to share the accomplishments made possible by your support.

CEDO’s work reflects our setting: we are deeply rooted in the surrounding desert while looking toward the sea. Our core programs this year spanned both ecosystems, focusing on sea turtles, whales, native fish of the Sonoyta River, least terns, ospreys, and the Sonoran pronghorn. We opened the gates of the Jñar-Nawaa Turtle Camp, meaning “turtle house” in the Cucapah language. We trained tourism service providers, real estate developers, and citizens to engage more eyes and hands in conservation efforts.

We view education as the main transformative agent. In Puerto Peñasco and the region, we provide hands-on environmental education and promote culture/nature tourism. This year, our fieldwork directly involved more than 3,241 people. CEDOXperiences hosted 15 educational institutions and 573 students, offered 20 ecotourism activities, and welcomed 307 visitors to our campus. These actions lay the groundwork for a better future in our communities.

Our ongoing research focuses on fisheries and marine ecosystems. CEDO is part of an interdisciplinary working group conducting cutting-edge research using artificial intelligence models to predict artisanal fishery catches in the Gulf of California under changing temperature conditions.

We also removed more than 17 tons of debris from beaches in the Upper Gulf of California, thanks to the participation of 800 volunteers in Sonora and Baja California.

Our greatest impact, however, can be measured in hours and miles of travel, as well as time spent preparing meetings and materials to make CEDO’s participation meaningful. This dedication has earned us recognition as a “community maker.”





For all of this, we extend our gratitude to:

- **The Tohono O'odham Nation**, for the opportunity to learn and honor the traditional knowledge you have shared with us in your ancestral territories.
- **Our community partners**. Together, we have proven that collaboration strengthens and amplifies our work to improve marine resource management. TOGETHER, we demonstrated that sustainable fishing can enhance local economies, that capacity building through education fosters self-employment, and that addressing tough challenges—like access to potable water—improves lives in our communities.
- **The dedicated women and men of the sea** who harvest, market, and promote sustainable products. Working alongside you has extended our impact beyond the Gulf of California.
- **The schools that opened their doors to us**, enabling education to remain a transformative force. Through initiatives like Caravana CEDO, COBACH, and CETMAR, we positively impacted thousands of students.
- **The foundations that funded our efforts in 2024**: French Development Agency, Boilard Memorial Fund, Commission for Environmental Cooperation, Community Foundation of Southern Arizona, David and Lucille Packard Foundation, Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, FONNOR, Fundación Gonzálo Río Arronte, Global Green Grant, Innovaciones Alumbra, Leuthold Family Foundation, Marisla, Nacional Monte de Piedad, Nodo México, National Park Service, Ocean Conservancy, Resources Legacy Fund, Smartfish Recuperación del Valor, Sonoran Resorts, and World Wildlife Fund Mexico.

And **THANK YOU** for your donations to CEDO. Your contributions enable us to serve as a lighthouse in the northern Gulf of California and a beacon across the Sonoran Desert. Your support and trust in us truly matter, allowing our founding vision to thrive. Next year, we will proudly celebrate all that we have achieved, inspired by the dream Peggy Turk-Boyer envisioned 45 years ago!

These are challenging and complicated times, but I encourage all of you to remain hopeful about the future. There is **HOPE**—just look at all we have accomplished together! **Feel proud. We are community. We are CEDO. We hope you will join us again in 2025.** The future awaits.

Your support has been essential to our work.

*Sincerely,*  
**Dra. Nélica Barajas Acosta**  
Executive Director  
[www.cedo.org](http://www.cedo.org)



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