

The wall would cause extinction of many species of mammals: José Sarukhán

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Receiving the Tyler Prize, he criticized Trump's policy of building the wall between Mexico and the US, because it means "genetic isolation of mammals, such as the jaguar," transiting between both countries



Jose Sarukhan's speech was delivered at The City Club of Washington, three blocks from the White House.

The Mexican Jose Sarukhan broke with the tradition of 44 years, but his disruption was welcomed. On May 4, in Washington, DC, the Tyler Prize, considered the most important award given by United States scientists to researchers in the field of Ecology, the former rector of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) gave a speech with political and Not only scientific, was the tradition in the delivery of this award, which is delivered since 1973.

In one of the larger rooms of the building of the City of Washington business center, just three blocks from the White House, Jose Sarukhan criticized government plans that destroy ecosystems as well as making political decisions that deny The scientific evidence, as is currently the case With the promise to build a border wall between Mexico and the United States, offered by US President Donald Trump. Or their refusal to recognize the influence of human

activity on Climate Change.

"None of us has the power to rewrite the laws of nature," said the Mexican scientist who was awarded in Washington for being a pioneer worldwide in creating an institution that had all the scientific information available and updated on the ecosystems of a country. And that, moreover, it could quickly deliver that information to the authorities to make wise decisions. This institution is the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (Conabio) that has served as a model for other countries to create similar institutions.

76-year-old Mexican Jose Aristeo Sarukhán Kermez said loudly:

"If this wall is built, many mammal species, such as jaguars, will not be able to move freely in their original territories." This will not only result in genetic isolation ... in some populations, that could mean extinction," said the Conabio national coordinator and first Mexican who obtained the degree of Doctor of Ecology, granted by the University of Wales, United Kingdom, in 1972.

"A society that begins to be afraid of independent science can not advance to the pace that its growth and needs demand." The solid and enlightened government must support excellence and independent scientific activity for the global good," said the Tyler Award winner of 2017. Among other arguments to invite the US government to return to evidence-based thinking that founded the most advanced democracies in the world.

"Scientific integrity must support the formulation of public policies and must be adequately funded." This is precisely what has made the United States the great nation it is at the moment: world-class public scientific research in all spheres along with the strongest system of research-based universities in the world," I added.

ACADEMIC JUSTIFICATION. Since its inception in 1973, the Tyler Award for Environmental Achievement has been awarded by a group of organizations and scientists under the auspices of the Tyler Foundation and the University of Southern California (USC). In awarding the 2017 award to Mexican Jose Sarukhan, they argued in their opinion:

"As a world-class scientist, Sarukhan has published in all the most recognized scientific journals and has received the highest awards to which every scientist aspires. But he knew that 'seeking knowledge by mere knowledge' is no longer sufficient, and that saving biodiversity in Mexico's ecosystems would require much more than excellent science. "

Previously, the prize was awarded by Jane Goodall and the pheromone ants expert biologist, Edward Osborne Wilson, among others.