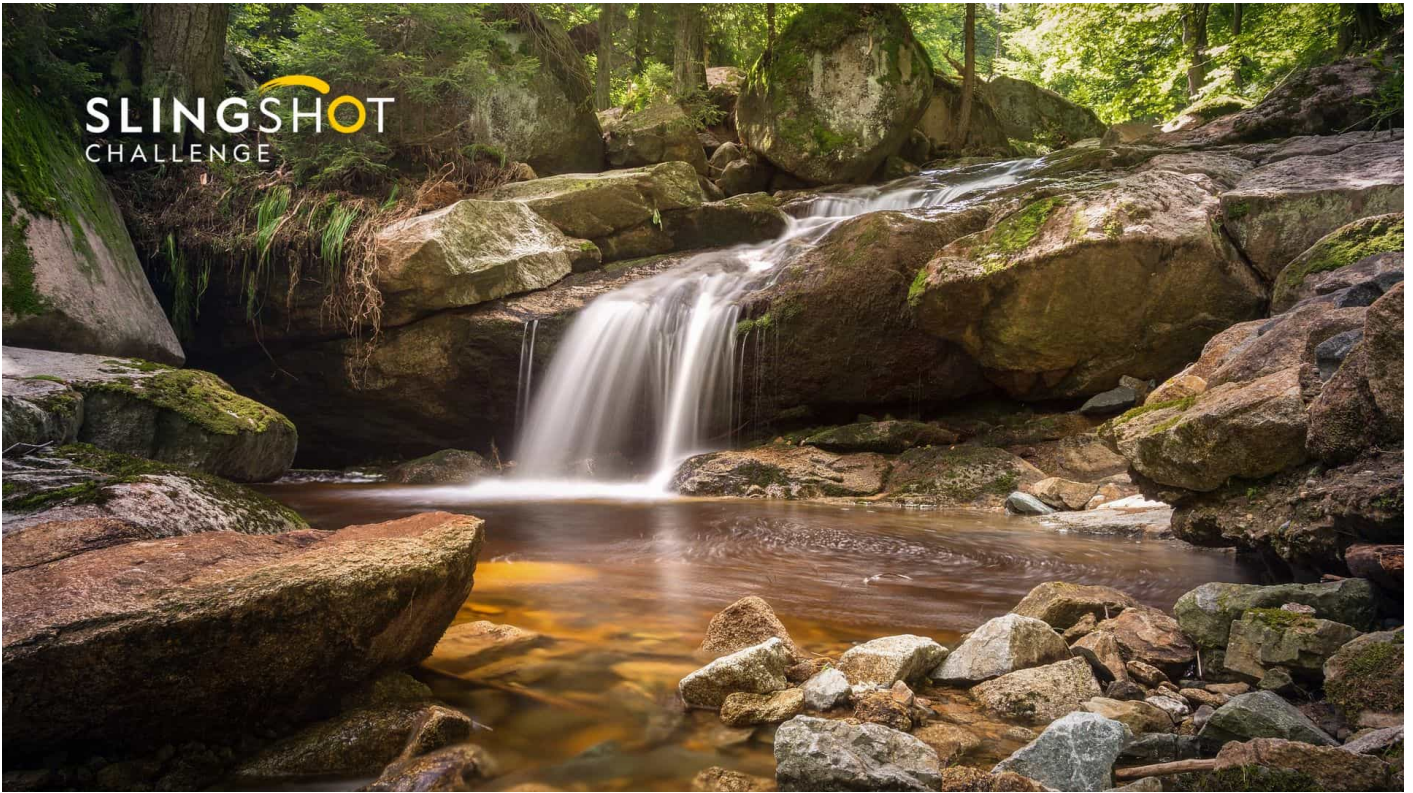


Mexican students made it to the final of global environmental contest



Ana Paula Villalvazo and Víctor Arvizu, students from [PrepaTec North Sonora](#), are runners-up in the **National Geographic [Slingshot Challenge](#)** contest.

The **Slingshot Challenge** is a **National Geographic** contest for young people between the ages of 13 and 18 who have an interest in caring for the **environment**.

Ana Paula and Víctor reached the final of the contest with their [Clean Rivers Mexico](#) project, which consists of a technological system to **monitor river water quality**.



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What is Clean Rivers Mexico?

It's a system **in the form of a pole** with sensors at the top, which is positioned on one side of a river.

The information collected allows users to assess **water quality** in real time.

The PrepaTec students want to use this system **to detect the presence of heavy metals** or compounds that are harmful to health, such as **lead, arsenic, and cadmium**.

This idea was inspired by an ecological disaster in which toxic waste was dumped into the **Bacanuchi and Sonora** rivers in 2014, affecting the **health of thousands of people in Sonora**.

Leaving their mark on Sonora

Only **15 projects** were chosen from the 15,000 students who registered for the competition; [Clean Rivers Mexico](#) was one of these.

Ana Paula and Víctor were **runners-up** in Slingshot Challenge 2023. Other participants in the contest came from countries like Nigeria, the United States, Pakistan, and Mexico.

The next step for the two students is setting up **Leaders for Sonora**, an environmental organization which more people from the state can join.

Ana Paula invites all young people to **leave a mark** on their community.

*“It’s **very gratifying** for young people like us to have been recognized for undertaking ecological initiatives here in our country,”* adds Ana Paula Villalvazo.

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Slingshot Challenge

The Slingshot Challenge is a [National Geographic contest](#) which was launched in October 2022 with the aim of **empowering young people** around the world **to take action for the planet**.

There are five different categories for initiatives: clean the air, restore the ocean, protect nature, reduce waste, and **address climate change**.

The **winning** teams receive a cash prize of **10,000 dollars** and **runner-up** teams receive **1,000 dollars**.

This year, 1,800 teams from more than 80 different countries participated.

“Together, we can build a better world,” concludes Víctor.

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