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-FINAL REPORT-

MIDTERM REVIEW

GEF PROJECT 10085

"Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina"

GEF ID	10085
UNDP ID	6198
Evaluation period	July 2021 – December 2023
Date of evaluation	November 2023
Country	Argentina
Strategic program / GEF Operational Focal Area	BD-1-1 BD-1-2a
Operational Program	Biodiversity
Executing agency and other project partners	Ex- Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS), currently Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports (STAD).
Other partners involved	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic Provinces of Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Chubut, Mendoza, Misiones, and Santa Cruz.
Evaluator	Ing. Diego Quishpe MSc.
Acknowledgments	To the Project Management Unit, UNDP and key stakeholders of the provinces of Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Chubut, Mendoza, Misiones, and Santa Cruz.

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Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary 1
   1.1. Project Information Table 1
   1.2. Project Description 1
   1.3. Project Progress Summary 3
   1.4. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table 4
   1.5. Summary of conclusions 4
   1.6. Recommendations Summary Table 5
   1.7. Scope and methodology 7
      1.7.1. Principles of design and execution of the MTR 8
      1.7.2. MTR approach 9
      1.7.3. Data collection methods 9
      1.7.4. Limitations to the MTR 10
2. Introduction 10
   2.1. Purpose of the MTR and objectives 10
   2.2. Structure of the MTR report 11
3. Project Description and Background Context 11
   3.1. Development context 11
   3.2. Problems that the project sought to address 12
   3.3. Project Description and Strategy: Objectives, outputs, outcomes sought, milestones to be met and timeframe for completion 12
   3.4. Description of field pilot sites 14
   3.5. Project Implementation Arrangements 14
      3.5.1. Project Board 15
      3.5.2. Agreements with the main implementation partners 15
      3.5.3. Theory of change 15
      3.5.4. Total resources 17
   3.6. Main stakeholders 17
4. Findings 19
   4.1. Project Strategy 19
      4.1.1. Project Design 19
      4.1.2. Results Framework / Logframe 19
   4.2. Progress Toward Results 20
      4.2.1. Progress towards outcomes analysis 20
      4.2.2. Remaining barriers and risks to achieving the project objectives 23
   4.3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management 26

DocuSign Envelope ID: 609C3F6D-6EE5-4843-A703-D0AFA15E05D0

4.3.1. Management Arrangements 26
4.3.2. Work planning 28
4.3.3. Finance and co-finance 28
4.3.4. Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems 30
4.3.5. Stakeholder Engagement 31
4.3.6. Reporting 32
4.3.7. Communications 33
4.4. Sustainability 33
4.4.1. Financial risks to sustainability 34
4.4.2. Socio-economic risks to sustainability 34
4.4.3. Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability 35
4.4.4. Environmental risks to sustainability 35
4.5. Summary of MTR ratings 36
5. Conclusions & Recommendations 40
5.1. Conclusions 40
5.2. Recommendations 42
6. Annexes 45
6.1. MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes) 45
6.2. MTR scoring matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology) 52
6.3. Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection 55
6.4. Rating scales 56
6.5. MTR mission itinerary 58
6.6. List of people interviewed 60
6.7. List of documents reviewed 60
6.8. UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Consultants 62
6.9. Signed MTR Final Report Approval Form 63
6.10. Audit trail obtained from comments received on draft MTR report 63
6.11. Relevant Midterm Tracking Tools 63
6.12. Matrix of Assessing Progress Toward Results 64
6.13. Theory of Change 72

DocuSign Envelope ID: 609C3F6D-6EE5-4843-A703-D0AFA15E05D0

List of figures

Figure 1. Phases of the MTR 8
Figure 2. Delphi Method 10
Figure 4. Project management arrangement 27
Figure 4. Financial execution by outcome and by year 29
Figure 5. Project co-financing 29

List of tables

Table 1. Data collection methods 9
Table 2. Project pilot case sites by province 14
Table 3. Total project resources according to Prodoc 17
Table 4. Evaluation of remaining Barriers 23
Table 5. Evaluation of remaining Risks 24
Table 6. Financial execution by outcome 28
Table 7. Co-financing 30
Table 8. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for IB Project 36
Table 9. Sustainability rating 39

DocuSign Envelope ID: 609C3F6D-6EE5-4843-A703-D0AFA15E05D0

Acronyms and Abbreviations

APN	Administración de Parques Nacionales (National Parks Administration)
BD	Biodiversity
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
COFEMA	Consejo Federal de Medio Ambiente (Federal Council of Environment Ministries)
CONADIBIO	Comisión Nacional Asesora para la Conservación y Utilización Sostenible de la Diversidad Biológica (National Advisory Committee for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EBA	Endemic Bird Area
ECIF	Ente Coordinador Interjurisdiccional para la Fauna (Interjurisdictional Coordinating Body for Fauna)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ENBPA	Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad y Plan de Acción (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan)
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FSP	Full-Size Project
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GoA	Government of Argentina
IB	Intersectoral Biodiversity Approach
IBA	Important Bird Area
INAI	Instituto Nacional de Asuntos Indígenas (National Institute for Indigenous Affairs)
INTA	Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (National Agricultural Technology Institute)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAB	Man and the Biosphere
MAyDS	Ministerio Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible / Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (now defunct)
MEGA	Manual de Evaluación y Gestión Ambiental (DNV) / Environmental Assessment and Management Manual (DNV)
MTR	Midterm Review
NBI	National Biodiversity Inventory
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation Modality
PA	Protected Areas
PB	Project Board
PE	Parque Eolico (Wind Energy Park)
PIF	Project Identification Form
PIR	GEF Project Implementation Report
PMU	Project Management Unit
POPP	Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures
PPG	Project Preparation Grant
RN	Ruta Nacional (National Route)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	Strageic Environmental Assessment
SESP	Social and Environmental Screening Procedure
SGCC	Sistema de Prevención y Gestión de Consultas y Conflictos (System for the Prevention and Management of Consultations and Conflicts)
SIB	Sistema de Información Biológica (Biological Information System)
STAD	Secretaría de Turismo, Ambiente y Deportes (Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports), formerly Ministerio Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible (MAyDS) / Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (now defunct)
TE	Terminal Evaluation
UNDP	United Nations Developement Program

DocuSign Envelope ID: 609C3F6D-6EE5-4843-A703-D0AFA15E05D0

UNDP-GEF	United Nations Development Program – Global Environmental Finance Unit
USD	United States Dollars
VGA	Valuable Grassland Areas

DocuSign Envelope ID: 609C3F6D-6EE5-4843-A703-D0AFA15E05D0

1. Executive Summary

1.1. Project Information Table

Project Title:	Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina		
UNDP Project ID (PMIS#):	6198	**PIF Approval Date:**	20 December 2018
GEF Project ID (PMIS#):	10085	**CEO Endorsement Date:**	26 April 2021
ATLAS Business Unit, Award #, Project ID	106206	**Project Document (Prodoc) Signature Date (project start date):**	29 July 2021
Country or countries:	Argentina	**Date project manager hired:**	First Project Manager: September 2021 Second Project Manager: Current Project Manager: March 2024
Region:	Latin America	**Inception Workshop Date:**	04 April 2022
Focal area:	Biodiversity	**Midterm Review completin date:**	02 February 2024
GEF Focal Area Strategic Objective:	BD-1-1 BD-1-2a	**Planned closing date:**	19 July 2025
Trust Fund:	GEF TF	**If revised, proposed op. Closing date:**	
Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner:	Former Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS), currently Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports.		
Other implementing partners:	- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic - Buenos Aires Provincial Agency for Sustainable Development - Ministry of Agroindustry, Buenos Aires Province, Department of Livestock and Fauna - Ministry of Production, Corrientes Province, Livestock Plan - Ministry of Tourism, Corrientes Province, Directorate of Fauna, Directorate of Parks and Reserves - Ministry of Environment and Control of Sustainable Development, Chubut Province, General Directorate of Environmental Assessment - Ministry of Production, Chubut Province, Directorate of Fauna - Secretariat for Environment and Land Use Planning, Mendoza Province - Ministry of Ecology, Misiones Province; Provincial Directorate of Roadways, Misiones Province - Santa Cruz Provincial Agrarian Council - Santa Cruz Province Ministry of Health and Environment, Directorate of Environmental Impact Assessment		

Project Financing	*At CEO endorsement (US$)*	*at Midterm Review (US$)* [1]
[1] GEF financing:	2,703,196.00	813,419.66[2]
[2] UNDP contribution:	50,000.00	0.00
[3] Government:	16,757,412.00	2,757,139.00[3]
[4] Other partners:	0.00	0.00
[5] Total co-financing [2+3+4]:	16,807,412.00	2,757,139.00
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS [1+5]	19,510,608.00	3,570,558.66

1.2. Project Description

1.The main objective of the project "Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina" is to protect the

[1] Latest PIR

[2] Value calculated based on CDRs for 2021, 2022 and 2023

[3] Value calculated based on the co-financing report provided to the evaluator.

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country's endangered wildlife by implementing sectoral and intersectoral policies and programs related to wind energy, road infrastructure development, hunting and wildlife trafficking, and livestock management in the provinces of Chubut, Santa Cruz, Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Misiones and Corrientes, for which it seeks to establish criteria, tools and governance mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of these policies.

2.In addition, the project proposes to develop the necessary instruments for its implementation through evidence of good practices; this will ensure that future government development plans consider the value of biodiversity and comply with guidelines for wildlife conservation and sustainable use of critical habitats. To this end, the project strategy is based on a "top-down" approach with the generation of national proposals and their intersectoral discussion/consensus (Environment-Energy-Roads) based on good provincial experiences resulting in regulations to be replicated at the country level. The strategy is complemented with "bottom up" actions called pilot cases (four) that generate evidence of the benefits of intersectoral work for biodiversity conservation, "evidence - replication - scaling up" effect.

3.The structure of the project is based on three levels of implementation, the first with implementation of the general objective of the project, which implicitly seeks the consolidation of an inter-sectoral operational framework that protects priority species and ecoregions from sectoral and anthropogenic pressures, through the fulfillment of four Impact Indicators (I.I.) described below:

4. Indicator 1 (I.I.1): Number of direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individuals).

5. Indicator 2 (I.I.2): Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (hectares).

6. Indicator 3 (I.I.3): Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (millions of hectares), and area of landscapes under improved management for biodiversity (qualitative assessment, not certified).

7. Indicator 4 (I.I.4): Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (millions of metric tons of CO2e).

8. At a second level, three key outcomes are defined with their respective Outcome Indicators (O.I.), verified by the fulfillment of the ten deliverables described below:

- **Outcome 1**: Cross-sectoral governance of threatened BD strengthened. Verified through the performance of four outcome indicators (O.I. 5-6-9-10-11).
- **Outcome 2**: Sector policies harmonized with BD conservation policies, resulting in reduced threats on selected ecoregions, ecosystems, habitats and species. Verified through the performance of two outcome indicators (O.I. 7-8).
- **Outcome 3**: Knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation carried out, facilitating the integration of BD conservation in sectoral and intersectoral public policies in other areas of the country and internationally Verified through the performance of an outcome indicator (O.I. 9-10-11).

9. Finally, the progress of these performance levels generates an impact of national/global benefits (GEF core indicator) that improve the conditions for biodiversity conservation and management of threatened wildlife in Argentina, as detailed below:

a. 4,576,782 hectares of total area under improved management for mainstreaming BD in the sectoral policies and programs of the four pilot cases.
b. 45,357 hectares of terrestrial PAs with improved management for conservation and sustainable use with improved road infrastructure to promote habitat connectivity and reduce wildlife roadkill.
c. 4,531,425 hectares of landscapes under improved practices (excluding PAs).
d. 5,276,774.4 metric tons of CO2e of greenhouse gases mitigated.
e. 6,974 (3,626 women + 3,348 men) direct beneficiaries through capacity building and improved sectoral practices.

10. Based on the described architecture, the project planned to achieve its goals within 4 years. The project is implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as an agency accredited by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The executing entity is the former Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Nation (MAyDS), now the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports (STAD), with

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the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic and the provinces of Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Chubut, Mendoza, Misiones, and Santa Cruz.

1.3. Project Progress Summary

11. At Mid-Term Review, the project is implementing actions in all of its three outcome areas with most progress related to the generation of enabling conditions such as governance, knowledge management and adaptive management, mainly at the administrative level. These actions lay the foundations for counteracting the threats identified for biodiversity and wildlife conservation, specific to the Argentine territory, such as: (i) habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation due to agricultural expansion and the consequent increase in human-wildlife conflict; (ii) inappropriate location of large infrastructure works, such as transportation and energy; and (iii) overexploitation of wildlife due to sport hunting and poaching for illegal wildlife trade.
12. Progress at the MTR is asymmetrical. Although six provinces were defined for implementating the IB intersectoral approach, at the time of this evaluation there is physical evidence of the work carried out in the province of Misiones, a territory that stands out for its effective governance, articulated work and actions that reflect the effectiveness of the implementation of intersectorality. Here cases such as the Yaguareté Territory, signage in key areas for wildlife crossings, ecoducts, wildlife/water crossings, and capacity building stand out.
13. The post 2023 Presidential Election situation has affected the project with the reorganization of the role of the ex-MAyDS under the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports. This evaluation strongly recommends prioritization of mechanisms that enable the execution of GEF initiatives, under the binding country agreements with the Global Environment Facility and UNDP, defined in the Basic Assistance Agreement, signed on February 26, 1985 and approved by Law No. 23,396 on October 10, 1986 and the PRODOC of the project, defining the roles and responsibilities of the governance mechanism for effective technical and financial implementation in order to achieve benefits for vulnerable communities and ecosystems of the Republic of Argentina.
14. Currently, the post MTR challenge is to define strategies to institutionalize the environmental agenda and to mainstream the Intersectoral Biodiversity Approach (IB), to establish tangible evidence that will allow ownership and replicability in the five remaining provinces, to generate inputs that go beyond the pilot sites, and mainly to close the implementation gap, which measures project technical progress at 31% and financial progress at 30.09% (USD 444,329.51). In general terms, the results are as follows:

15. Outcome 1) Cross-sectoral governance of threatened BD strengthened. The project is moving forward, especially in pilot case 2, by drafting a proposal to amend the traffic law to lower the speed limit in national parks in order to reduce roadkill. The endorsement of the Federal Council of Environment Ministries (COFEMA) through the approval of the first resolution on wildlife roadkill highlights this threat to biodiversity in Argentina. Work in this outcome urges provinces to integrate biodiversity considerations into programs and policies, harmonizing road construction with wildlife conservation. In this outcome the project is supporting the national parks information platform in order to strengthen environmental decision making. Also, in pilot case 3, a regional workshop on wildlife trafficking was supported, promoting collaboration among MERCOSUR countries. This set of actions has strengthened the governance and knowledge framework for the conservation of endangered species such as the pampas deer, yellow cardinal and jaguar.
16. Outcome 2) Sector policies harmonized with BD conservation policies, resulting in reduced threats on selected ecoregions, ecosystems, habitats and species. The project focuses on the application of coordinated tools and procedures to mainstream biodiversity in different sectors, such as wind energy, road infrastructure, illegal hunting and cattle ranching. For each sector, specific measures have been implemented, such as the creation of working groups, installation of radars, development of monitoring plans, and awareness-raising activities. In addition, computerized systems are being designed for monitoring and control of the biodiversity transit. The project has supported training in wildlife management and sustainable livestock practices and has also supported monitoring of several species, with monitoring data showing that the project's target species are generally stable for the Ruddy-headed Goose -

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Chloephaga rubidiceps (case 1), the Hooded Grebe - *Podiceps gallardoi* (case 1), the jaguar - yaguareté (case 2), the Yellow Cardinal - *Gubernatrix cristata* (case 3) and the Pampas Deer - *Ozotoceros bezoarticus* (case 4).

17. Outcome 3) Knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation carried out, facilitating the integration of BD conservation in sectoral and intersectoral public policies in other areas of the country and internationally. The set of actions has focused on the "Learning and Knowledge Management Framework for Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation into Public Policies and Programs". A baseline survey was conducted with sector agency staff to assess their level of awareness of threats and mitigation measures in key sectors such as wind energy, road infrastructure development, hunting and illegal wildlife trafficking, and livestock management.

18. Various awareness-raising activities were implemented, including the Ruta Viva campaign to educate drivers in protected areas, the production of audiovisual material on wildlife roadkill and the installation of radars in the province of Misiones. In addition, content was generated on the Ministry of the Environment's social networks, addressing commemorative days and topics such as the rescue and release of wildlife.

19. In the educational area, classes were given on the topics of the four pilot sites for the second session of the virtual course "ABC is Biodiversity", with 1706 registered participants. Currently, another session is underway with 815 participants. "The ABC's of Biodiversity" is noteworthy in that it is designed to support the development of interdisciplinary and intercultural plans and actions that mainstream biodiversity considerations.

1.4. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table

Measure	MTR Rating
Project Strategy	N/A
Progress Towards Results	Objective: Moderately Satisfactory (MS)
	Outcome1: **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
	Outcome 2: **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**
	Outcome 3: **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**
Sustainability	**Likely (L)**

The achievement description is in section 4.5 the results shown are the post-field-mission findings.

1.5. Summary of conclusions

20. The project design is considered robust and aligned with the country's reality. According to 95% of those interviewed, the initiative has a clear architecture with a general objective and indicators that facilitate interaction with various stakeholders. The Theory of Change (ToC) is logical and incremental, requiring strong territorial involvement.

21. The project document identifies barriers, strategies, assumptions, relevant stakeholders and presents Top Down characteristics, based on intersectoral work to establish national guidelines and promote local replication based on best practices. Two key management phases stand out: the first with a strong commitment and consensus using corporate tools, supported by political-technical commitment. The second phase, marked by the turnover of authorities, affects execution, such as the lack of personnel in the PMU.

22. In the context of monetary uncertainty and change of government, the need for a solid mechanism of communication and positioning of environmental issues on the agenda is highlighted. This period is crucial

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for technical and financial execution to take a positive leap forward, ensuring continuity and institutionalization of environmental issues.

23. At the Mid-Term Review (MTR), 72% of stakeholders were aware of the goals, products and indicators defined in the Results Framework (Prodoc). However, it is necessary to move from knowledge to application, complemented with a communication strategy to highlight the value of the subject in the face of changes in government.

24. During the MTR (field mission and documents analysis), a comprehensive vision of the activities proposed for implementation of Intersectoral Biodiversity Approach (IB) was evident. However, the project, which began during the COVID-19 health emergency, experienced delays in key actions, such as the National Biodiversity Inventory, Intersectoral Biodiversity Plans, the Biodiversity Management, Control and Verification System (SACVEBIO), the complaints line and physical progress in pilot cases. With the current governmental structure, institutionalization of the environmental issues that the project promotes is being strongly promoted, as well as exploration of processes of decentralization of actions through letters of agreement or investment letters.

25. Regarding levels of participation, there is evidence of stakeholder involvement through the National Steering Committee having held 3 management meetings. However, at the territorial or provincial level, governance mechanisms have not been established. The importance of activating and formalizing provincial technical groups through working groups as a strategy to strengthen provincial action and face political transitions is highlighted.

26. At midterm, the project´s financial execution shows 30.09% progress in budget execution, representing the least advanced aspect of the project. Influencing this slow progress are financial uncertainty in the country, inflation and the concentration of execution through the Directorate of Cooperation Projects. Although the adaptive management and learning executed by the former MAyDS is noteworthy, the need to translate those efforts into implementation strategies that increase execution and align with the goals and the rapid empowerment of the initiative by the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports (STAD) is emphasized. It is strongly recommended that the minimum conformation of the project team be completed considering that the corresponding budget already exists for personnel as well as their activities detailed in and obliged by the Prodoc. It is also suggested that this conformation of the PMU teams be strengthened with professionals that balance technical and operational qualities fostering decentralization and deconcentration of actions through "win-win" agreements with the provinces. In general, the project has a clear conceptual intervention strategy, well assimilated in the province of Misiones and which urgently needs to be extrapolated to the rest of the provinces.

27. During the Mid-Term Review (MTR), three key elements were identified for implementation of IB in Argentina: 1) regulatory support, at the date of preparation of the report, results of the legislative review of the Omnibus Law left intact the regulations of the Forestry Law and minimum budgets, the pillar of the project's environmental actions; 2) the turnover of authorities in 2024 at the national, local and institutional levels represents a high risk for project implementation, mainly in relation to the roles of the executing institution (Ex-MAyDS); and 3) the need to identify management and resilience strategies, with an emphasis on the crucial role of the provinces, UNDP and key stakeholders being recommended.

1.6. Recommendations Summary Table

Corrective actions for design, implementation	Strengthen the teams linked to the project (PMU) by hiring additional personnel to complete the minimum team required (14 staff members) which are directly linked to project activities. It is suggested that a balance between technical and operational performance be promoted, applying Labor Law No. 24,557,

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monitoring and evaluation	known as the "Alta por Baja"[4] Law, to hire the needed personnel according to deadlines and available resources. Given that projects financed by the GEF portfolio are binding agreements between the parties, it is recommended that the appropriate personnel be hired since the budget (non-reimbursable) already exists, coming from the GEF and administered by UNDP.
	Given the current political conditions in the Republic of Argentina, this evaluation suggests creating a comprehensive strategy (communication - institutional) for effective project execution. It is recommended that critical stages be defined, and, in line with the new monetary context of the country, comparative scenarios be generated using previous and current conditions in order to establish a solid strategy to mitigate possible impacts on the execution of the project, including, letters of agreement, deconcentration of project execution, etc.
	Due to the current reforms in the Republic of Argentina, it is recommended that the management mechanisms in the Secretariat of Sports, Tourism and Environment be strengthened, highlighting the basic cooperation agreement and the binding Prodoc agreement to carry out the IB initiative, as well as to discuss the responsibilities of the stakeholders and the consequences of non-execution with the subsequent return of the donated resources to the GEF. It is suggested that greater autonomy be sought for the projects, especially from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, considering the need to avoid filters not directly related to the subject matter. Setting up spaces for consensus is also recommended, such as monthly meetings to agree on short-term measures to counteract economic changes and ensure the efficient continuity of the project aligned with the planned deadlines.
	It is suggested that governance processes be formalized and systematized, since the project aims to compile and disseminate best practices developed in various provinces, seeking their scalability to the national level. Initiation of a structured systematization process comes as an essential recommendation during the mid-term review. Likewise, two management aspects should be exploited, 1) widening communication of the project's actions, utilizing the logos of cooperating partners and stakeholders; 2) consolidating the monitoring and evaluation system with a focus on information for decision making.
	This evaluation proposes conducting a post-evaluation workshop to analyze the Mid-Term Review (MTR), with the objective of confirming commitments, defining co-financing and elaborating a collaborative National – Provincial work strategy. This approach seeks to capitalize on the participation of various stakeholders and strengthen the institutional framework and importance of the IB environmental issue in public management.
Proposed future directions underscoring key objectives	Formalize the institutional framework for project execution, based on the commitments and responsibilities generated in the Basic Cooperation Agreement, highlighting the importance of executing this and other initiatives in the GEF portfolio. This would be prior to consensus work with provincial and national stakeholders to establish the work´s roadmap.
	Given the situation and institutional structure of the former Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, it is recommended that a mechanism for deconcentration and decentralization of activities be

[4] Law N° 24.557, determines that the entry of new civil servants in the Argentinean Integrated Pension System will take place when a previous release of an existing labor item is generated, not when a new salary stream is generated.

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	established. Exploration of the possibility of using letters of agreement, investment letters or other modalities to facilitate the execution of planned project activities is suggested.
	Collaboration with academic institutions or technological research centers is suggested in order to enhance the use of technology proposed in the Intersectoral Biodiversity project. This includes radars, technological applications and complaint platforms, considered as the initiative´s added value. While highlighting the usefulness of radars in protected areas and the possibility of incorporating alerts in applications and navigators that activate warnings in reduced speed zones in order to prevent wildlife collisions, the recommendation extends to the other components of the project, highlighting the importance of the use of technology in general.
	It is suggested that an entrepreneurial or returns-based approach be adopted, involving the private sector and other stakeholders to promote economic sustainability in the medium term, and exploration of the mechanisms established in the Prodoc, such as incentives, financing and cooperativism is recommended. These actions are key within the horizontal work strategy, seeking to strengthen the project after the Mid-Term Review (MTR) to meet its objectives and goals within the established timeframe.
	Regarding future actions, it is suggested that a specialist in project monitoring and follow-up be incorporated. This will enable the creation of an information repository, the systematization of the activities carried out, as well as the development of replicable strategies for other pilot sites.
	This evaluation suggests that the project´s economic flow be expedited through structural interventions and substantial expenditures, highlighting the importance of road infrastructure maintenance and wind energy incentives for sustainable production and the acquisition of technological equipment, such as trap and infrared cameras, drones, and bio-aquatic recorders. In addition, during the field mission, the vulnerability of the provinces to forest fires became evident. It is suggested that the purchase of protective equipment for brigadistas be evaluated, since the park rangers support fire management as a second line of response. The recommendation emphasizes the need to balance technical results with the financial progress of the project, always respecting implementation agreements such as substantial revisions and reform ceilings (10% between component budget lines and no more than 5% in new items), all approved in the corresponding bodies.
	Due to the findings of the MTR mainly on financial execution [30.09%] and the recent institutional reform of the former MAyDS, it is considered appropriate to define a formal no-cost extension that includes an execution acceleration strategy.

1.7. Scope and methodology

31. The Mid-Term Review covers the period from July 2021 to December 2023, focused on national actions, articulation and derived actions in the provinces in the Argentine territory. To this end, the relevance, feasibility, implementation and performance of the impact (objective) and outcome (component) indicators were reviewed. In addition, the progress of the indicators was evaluated under a SMART criteria approach and the progress of the set of actions and identification of which actions should be strengthened by the end of the project was carried out using a modified Pareto methodology.

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1.7.1. Principles of design and execution of the MTR

32. A mixed methodology was applied in the project´s MTR, i.e. a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, where impact indicators (objective) and outcome indicators (components) were analyzed in a sequential and logical order, through document reviews and accessing information from key stakeholders (interviews). This methodology sought active interaction between the evaluator, the project team, the UNDP Office and other stakeholders, in order to enrich the evaluation process and allow timely feedback on the findings (Figure 1).

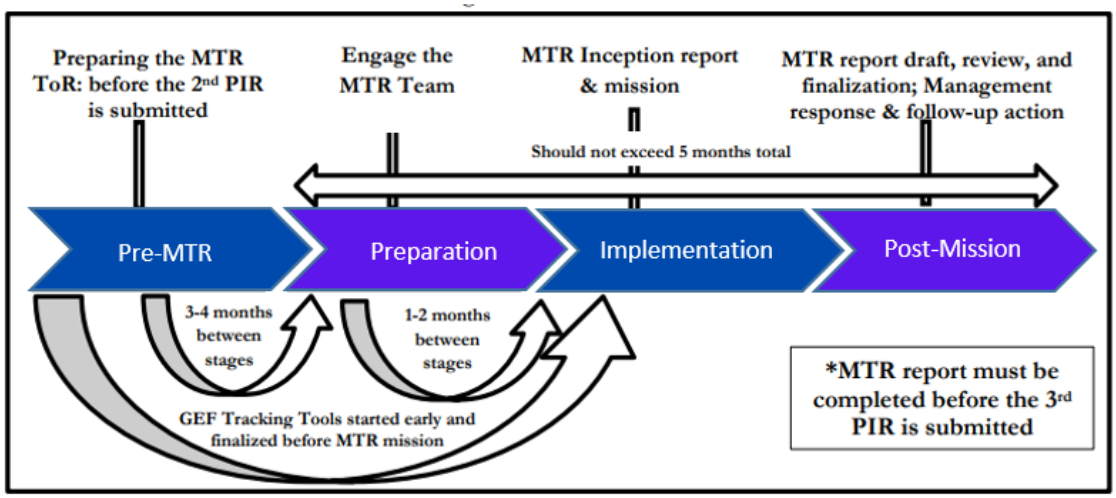


Figure 1. Phases of the MTR. Source: UNDP-GEF, 2014

33. The MTR was carried out in four phases:

- **34. Phase I.** Definition of a work agenda: A work agenda was defined jointly with the project's technical team and staff of UNDP Argentina, which took into consideration the key actors and institutions identified in the Terms of Reference. Based on the key actors defined, a work plan was structured for the interviews (virtual and face-to-face) and the schedule of the field mission to the Republic of Argentina.
- **35. Phase II.** Information gathering and document review: Based on the available information and in collaboration with the project team, comparison and analysis of the data and information gathered was carried out. This allowed for refining key elements, such as the stakeholders involved, the activities carried out and the reports generated, among other relevant aspects.

  36. In conducting this phase of the review, a number of important documents and information were taken into consideration. These included the Project Document (PRODOC), Project Identification Form (PIF), UNDP Initiation Plan, Annual Reports/PIRs, Budget Revisions, GEF Monitoring Tools, Audit Reports, as well as any other material deemed useful for the Mid-Term Review. These documents and the information gathered were used as the basis for a detailed and comprehensive analysis of project progress. The review of these materials provided a solid understanding of the achievements, challenges and lessons learned so far, allowing for a comprehensive and accurate assessment for the Mid-Term Review (Annex 6.7. List of documents reviewed).

  37. In addition, during all phases of the MTR, openness will be maintained for the collection of additional information considered relevant, feedback and key aspects.

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Table 1. Data collection methods

Method	Description
Collection of documents	Existing documentation, e.g., quantitative and descriptive information about the initiative, its outputs and outcomes, such as documentation of capacity building activities, reports to donors and other evidence.
Virtual and face-to-face interviews	Personal responses were requested to predetermined questions aimed at obtaining detailed information about people's impressions or experiences.
Field visits	On-site validation of key interventions and tangible products.

- **38. Phase III.** Execution of interviews: A semi-structured interview model was used, with specific questions aligned with project stakeholder role and relationship to the areas of evaluation to be carried out. This process was conducted through individualized interviews and focus groups (six) based on their importance for the Mid-Term Review.
  39. In this phase, primary information was collected on evaluation criteria, barriers, lessons learned, reflections and finally important findings for the evaluation and dimensioning of ratings. The interview results were used to answer the specific questions of the project evaluation.
  40. It should be noted that during the field mission, close to the 2023 presidential elections, certain aspects were not addressed or the stakeholders excused themselves from giving their opinion due to the uncertainty of remaining linked to the project or the guidelines of the new government, therefore post-election virtual interviews were conducted.
- **41. Phase IV.** Discussion of results, systematization of conclusions and recommendations. In this phase, key working meetings were held, an initial one to discuss methodological issues, timeline, work agenda, and inputs required for the evaluation (virtual). A second meeting was held at the formal start of the mission with the participation of MTR stakeholders (virtual and face-to-face). Finally a third meeting was held for presentation of the main preliminary findings to project stakeholders prior to the final report (virtual).

1.7.2. MTR approach

42. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) adopted a proactive and participatory approach highlighted by establishing a strong commitment to multi-stakeholder participation. This involved close collaboration between the Project Management Unit (PMU), the UNDP Country Office, government counterparts and the MTR team. This interactive dynamic not only ensured a comprehensive understanding of the project's challenges and achievements, but also promoted a continuous and constructive dialogue among stakeholders.

1.7.3. Data collection methods

43. For data collection, procedures focused on gathering information on project impacts and results were followed. The Delphi methodology was used (Figure 2), which employs structured techniques that require an interviewer (evaluator), a questionnaire (evaluation matrix) and a group of experts (key stakeholders).
44. The methodology was implemented mainly regarding the selection of stakeholders and the interview phase, in which the participants responded anonymously, confidentially and without interacting with each other about the questions of the Mid-Term Review. The interview results were used to draw conclusions on the project´s progress with respect to the objectives and results set out in the Logical Framework.

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Figure 2. Delphi Method. Source: Prepared by the evaluator

1.7.4. Limitations to the MTR

45. The start of the MTR was rescheduled due to environmental conditions (extreme cold) and political issues related to the electoral process in the Republic of Argentina. For these reasons, the field mission was carried out from November 6 to 17, 2023. However, only two of the six provinces were visited. In view of this situation, alternative actions were implemented, such as direct calls and e-mails to reschedule the interviews for virtual mode. In addition, another challenge arose during the MTR, namely, the postponement of delivery of the project information necessary for carrying out the evaluation. Finally, the post-election restructuring of the Argentine State administration made it difficult to obtain official information.

2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose of the MTR and objectives

28. This Mid-Term Review is conducted as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the GEF/UNDP portfolio of projects. Its objective is to assess the progress of the project, "Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina" in achieving the objectives and results set out in its Project Document. The MTR seeks to identify both progress and potential challenges, providing an early overview of achievements, relevant findings, lessons learned and obstacles experienced so far (January 2024).

29. The Mid-Term Review also aims to evaluate four key categories of project progress, as outlined below:

a) *Project strategy*
b) *Progress in achieving results*
c) *Project implementation and adaptive management*
d) *Sustainability*

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30. In addition, an exhaustive review was carried out on cross-cutting aspects that address fundamental issues, such as gender equity, recognition of and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples, and the strengthening of women's empowerment.

2.2. Structure of the MTR report

46. The Mid-Term Review will consistently follow the guidelines and structure set out in the 2014 Guidance for Conducting Mid-Term Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects.

47. This report consists of six sections, which are: (1) Executive Summary, (2) Introduction, (3) Project Description and Background Context, (4) Findings, (5) Conclusions and Recommendations, and (6) Annexes.

3. Project Description and Background Context

3.1. Development context

48. The project, “Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina”, corresponds to the Seventh (7th) GEF replenishment. Following PIF and PPG approval on 20 December 2018, the project formally began implementation on 29 July 2021, and has a planned duration of 48 months (4 years). The rationale behind the project is to overcome the social, technological and economic barriers involved in intersectoral biodiversity conservation.

49. **General:** Argentina is a federal nation made up of 23 provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires (CABA). It has a vast territory, which influences its categorization as one of the most megadiverse countries in the world, characterized by 15 continental zones, 3 oceanic zones and the Antarctic region. In addition to its great natural diversity, its cultural and economic features are also notable.

50. There are eight areas in the country that have been identified as high conservation priorities at both the national (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan-ENBPA for its acronym in Spanish) and regional levels. Five of these areas are exclusive or semi-exclusive to Argentina, harboring a significant number of endemic species. The Argentine Sea ecoregion stands out for its unique coastal environments, influenced by the cold Falkland Current along the southern coast of the province of Buenos Aires. Arid, semi-arid and dry ecosystems comprise 75% of the national territory, known as the arid zone, which includes dry forests, scrublands, grasslands, high altitude deserts and high Andean wetlands. The country is also home to endangered species, with a unique heritage that includes a considerable number of endemic species in various categories (18% of flora, 12% of mammals, 23% of reptiles, and 24% of amphibians). The territory is home to 281 species of migratory birds, representing 28% of the total number of birds recorded, with 223 "austral or partial migrants" and 58 "boreal migrants". Of the 1,794 terrestrial vertebrate species, 27% are at risk of extinction, while 60% are not considered threatened, and the conservation status of the remaining 13% is unknown.

51. Based on the above, a detailed understanding of biodiversity and the identification of critical areas form a robust foundation for developing conservation strategies and promoting sustainable biodiversity management. This approach is essential for mainstreaming effective actions in public policies and programs, thus contributing to the preservation of wildlife in Argentina.

52. **Institutional and policy overview:** The project is aligned with national and provincial priorities and objectives. Argentina has strong sectoral policies and programs that serve as a fundamental basis for this project. Specifically, it aligns with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (ENBPA) 2016-2020, a state policy on biodiversity that facilitates mainstreaming of biodiversity into other national policies (Resolution N° 0151/2017). In addition, the project aligns with Law No. 22,421 on Wildlife Conservation, which declares the protection, conservation, propagation, repopulation and rational use of wildlife as being of public interest. The project also links to the National Conservation Plan for the Yaguareté Natural Monument and the Native Forest Law No. 26,331 (2007 ratified 2024 in the Omnibus package of laws),

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which establishes minimum budgets for environmental protection of native forests. Other instruments to which the project aligns include the National Strategy on Invasive Exotic Species, Law No. 27,191 "Regimen on National Promotion of the use of Renewable Energy Sources for the Production of Electricity" and Decrees No. 531/16 and 882/16.

3.2. Problems that the project sought to address

53. In Argentina, biodiversity faces multiple threats linked to efforts to reactivate the economy and provide basic services to the population. The main problems are the following:

I) Habitat loss and degradation due to agricultural expansion and habitat fragmentation increasing human-wildlife conflicts: Agricultural expansion in Argentina, keeping in mind that the country is one of the world leaders in food exports already cultivating extensive areas under favorable natural conditions, has led to increased deforestation resulting from land use conversion for agricultural production as well as increased forest fires. This affects native flora and fauna due to habitat loss and degradation.
II) Inappropriate siting of large infrastructure projects, such as transportation and energy: The construction of large infrastructure projects, such as wind farms and highways, negatively impacts wildlife. Wind energy, despite being considered one of the safest and "cleanest" sources of energy, threatens birds and bats, with new wind farms posing a serious threat to migratory bird species. On the other hand, road development also increases the pressure on wildlife and, new roads increase the risk of roadkill; although there is no official figure, it is known that in Puerto Iguazú, in 2013 there were 553 road accidents (wildlife roadkill) on 22 km of roads, and 1,086 in 2015.
III) Overexploitation of wildlife through sport hunting and poaching for illegal trade: Insufficient regulation and control of sport hunting contribute to the pressure on wildlife and biodiversity, especially affecting endangered species such as the Ruddy-headed goose and Yellow cardinal.

54. These threats represent critical challenges for biodiversity conservation in Argentina, requiring actions aimed at consolidating an intersectoral operational framework that protects species and ecoregions from sectoral pressures. Within this context and in order to mainstream biodiversity conservation criteria into public policies and create new capacities and instruments to support their implementation, the project addresses three key barriers:

55. Barrier #1: Insufficient coherence and complementarity of regulatory and public policy frameworks to effectively consider wildlife conservation at the national and provincial levels.
56. Barrier #2: Insufficient tools and instruments to promote, implement and consolidate wildlife conservation.
57. Barrier #3: Dispersed knowledge and insufficient exchange of conservation tools and practices at the national and interprovincial levels.

3.3. Project Description and Strategy: Objectives, outputs, outcomes sought, milestones to be met and timeframe for completion

58.. In response to the aforementioned barriers, the project aims to reduce threats to biodiversity in Argentina by mainstreaming wildlife conservation into specific national and provincial public policies and sectoral programs. To achieve this, it will focus on defining criteria, tools and governance mechanisms. In addition, it will take advantage of lessons learned to harmonize policies in key sectors and develop the necessary instruments, thus ensuring the protection of threatened wildlife. This initiative will improve the effectiveness of sectoral policies and ensure that future government development plans consider the value of biodiversity.
59. The intervention strategy takes into account the federal structure of the country, the complementarity between national and provincial governments, and the need to work at various levels to address threats.
60. In addition, the lack of harmonization of public policies at the local level is addressed through various initiatives.

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61. In order to achieve the project's objective, the Prodoc establishes three outcomes to be achieved during the four-year execution period, from July 2021 to July 2025, which are:

Outcomes	Outputs	Outcome Indicators
Outcome 1: Cross-sectoral governance of threatened BD strengthened.	**Output 1.1:** National Biodiversity Inventory (NBI) is consolidated	* **Indicator 5:** UNDP's Capacity Development Scorecard adapted to measure effectiveness of cross-sectoral governance and/ or strengthened policy framework. * **Indicator 9:** Extent of the environmental planning and strategy development process. * **Indicator 10:** Existence of adequate environmental policy and regulatory frameworks. * **Indicator 11:** Adequacy of the environmental information available for decision-making. * **Indicator 6:** Strengthened national sectoral and provincial policies for wind energy, road infrastructure, livestock management, hunting and wildlife trafficking, and clear enforcement and monitoring mechanisms.
	Output 1.2: Intersectoral Biodiversity Plans to mainstream BD conservation within key sectoral policies and programs are developed	
	Output 1.3: Portfolio of instruments is developed for coordination and integration of BD conservation in selected sectoral and intersectoral public policies related to wind energy, road infrastructure, livestock management, hunting and wildlife trafficking.	
Outcome 2: Sector policies harmonized with BD conservation policies, resulting in reduced threats on selected ecoregions, ecosystems, habitats and species	**Output 2.1.** Set of validated / applied instruments is tested for the harmonization and coordination of public policies that affect BD conservation for the following 4 pilot cases: Case 1: Promotion of the conservation of birds in the development of wind energy. Case 2: Harmonization of road development with wildlife conservation policies to reduce road kill and habitat fragmentation. Case 3: Prevention of illegal hunting, degradation of associated habitats and trafficking of wildlife. Case 4: Implementation of incentives to reduce pressure and threats of livestock on endangered species.	* **Indicator 7:** Maintenance or increase in populations of target species in project sites by project end *. **Indicator 8:** Degree of implementation/application of models in priority sectors.
Outcome 3: Knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation carried out, facilitating the integration of BD conservation in sectoral and intersectoral public	**Output 3.1** Communication strategy and knowledge management system are established to promote mainstreaming of BD conservation criteria in public policies and disseminate best practices and lessons learned to a wider audience	* **Indicator 9:** % of awareness of key sectoral Ministries about threats and appropriate mitigation measures to increase wildlife conservation in the wind energy, road infrastructure development, livestock management,

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Outcomes	Outputs	Outcome Indicators
policies in other areas of the country and internationally	via websites, information networks, publications, etc.	hunting and illegal wildlife trafficking sectors * **Indicator 10:** % implementation of the communication strategy and knowledge management (best practices, lessons learned) * * **Indicator 11:** % implementation of community-based BD monitoring plans. **
	Output 3.2 Participatory monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy is implemented: i) M&E of the project facilitates adaptive management. ii) M&E System to monitor the adoption and effective mainstreaming of BD and its conservation in new public policies.	

62. The project is expected to generate results that will drive changes to mitigate some of the causes of biodiversity loss and promote sustainable development through more effective wildlife management, under an initial top-down approach complemented with the scaling up and replication of the "evidence" of this innovative way of working.

3.4. Description of field pilot sites

63. Implementation of project activities, in accordance with the Prodoc, is planned to be carried out in pilot sites located in the provinces of Misiones, Corrientes, Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Chubut and Santa Cruz. These pilot sites correspond to four pilot cases: road infrastructure, sustainable livestock management, hunting and illegal wildlife trafficking, and wind energy.

Table 2. Project pilot case sites by province

Pilot case	Province
Road infrastructure	Misiones - RN 101 - RN 12 - RN 19
Sustainable Livestock	Corrientes
	Buenos Aires
Illegal trafficking and poaching of wildlife	Mendoza
Wind energy	Buenos Aires - PE Corti - PE Wayra
	Chubut - PE Chubut Norte - PE Rawson
	Santa Cruz - PE Cañadón León - PE Vientos Aike

3.5. Project Implementation Arrangements

64. The project is executed under the National Implementation Modality (NIM). The Implementing Partner is the former Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS), currently the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports (STAD), which is responsible for project management, achievement of results and effective use of GEF resources, as well as working in coordination with provincial authorities and

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other strategic partners in the project. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the implementing agency for the project as an GEF accredited entity.

3.5.1. Project Board

65. The basic governance mechanism, in accordance with the Prodoc, is the Project's Board of Directors, made up of: a representative of the Secretariat of Foreign Coordination and Planning of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a representative of International Trade and Worship as the Government's Coordinating Agency, a representative of UNDP and a representative of the former Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, now the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports, designated as an implementing partner, and a representative of the Interjurisdictional Coordinating Body for Fauna (ECIF).
66. The Project Board (PB) must meet at least once per calendar year, and extraordinarily when required by any of its members. In addition, the PB is responsible for: a) Approving and signing the Multi-Year Work Plan, b) Monitoring the implementation of the Project, c) Approving budgetary and substantive revisions, d) Approving technical and financial reports.
67. The implementing partner shall serve as the National Director of the project and is responsible to the Board of Directors for: a) The management and results of the project, the achievement of its objectives, the use of its resources and the application of rules and procedures; b) The custody and proper use of project inputs, in accordance with the Prodoc's instructions and the necessary information on their use; c) Financial reporting and accountability for the custody and proper use of project funds; and, d) Supervision of the responsible parties (if applicable).

3.5.2. Agreements with the main implementation partners

68. In accordance with Prodoc, the Project's Implementing Partner will coordinate the field activities necessary to guarantee fulfillment of the project's objectives in each province. In this regard, other parties responsible for the project include the National Secretary of Energy, the National Roads Department of the National Ministry of Transport, the National Ministry of Security, the National Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, the National Parks Administration, the Impact Assessment Department of the Ministry of Environment - Santa Cruz, the Provincial Agrarian Council of Santa Cruz (Fauna), the Ministry of Agrarian Development of the Province of Buenos Aires - Livestock Department and the Fauna Department, the Directorate of Impact Assessment of the Ministry of Environment of Chubut, the Directorate of Fauna of the Ministry of Production of Chubut, the Provincial Directorate of Impact and Provincial Directorate of Natural Resources of OPDS - Buenos Aires, the Directorate of Natural Resources of the Secretary of Environment and Land Management of Mendoza, Livestock Plan of the Ministry of Production of Corrientes, the Directorate of Fauna, Directorate of Parks and Reserves and Iberá Committee of the Ministry of Tourism of Corrientes, Fauna and Protected Areas of the Ministry of Ecology of Misiones, and the Provincial Directorate of Roads of Misiones.
69. Likewise, and in accordance with the Prodoc, the ex-MAyDS can involve other specialized institutions such as the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET), the Darwin Botanical Institute, the Argentine Herpetological Association, the Argentine Ecology Association, and National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA) to ensure compliance with the project's objectives.
70. The agreements identify the activities through which the field work is implemented in each province, thus contributing to the project's Operational Plans and the overall objective of the project. Within the framework of the letters of agreement, the project may allocate resources during the term of the project, which will be subject to the fulfillment of the activities, and products indicated in each agreement, the amount of co-financing contributed by each province and will be under the rules of implementation defined by UNDP.

3.5.3. Theory of change

71. The MTR evaluates the Theory of Change (ToC) proposed in the Prodoc, based on the expectation that the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation in public policies and prioritized sectoral and intersectoral programs and the promotion of specific activities that demonstrate the viability of development models that

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integrate biodiversity conservation will allow the project to guarantee the long-term survival of threatened wildlife.

72. Based on the above, the methodology adopted by the project is of a mixed nature, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches, with a special focus on quantifying impacts according to the Theory of Change (Annex 6.13. Theory of Change). This evaluation has identified three critical barriers that include the resolution of 10 key outputs, the progress of one specific output, and the participation of six provinces. As of the date of the assessment, these barriers persist, with notable progress in only one output and the participation of one province, generating significantly high risk.

73. With the implementation of the Intersectoral Biodiversity Approach (IB), the intention is to promote the generation of benefits under an "evidence"-based approach through the achievement of key results such as:

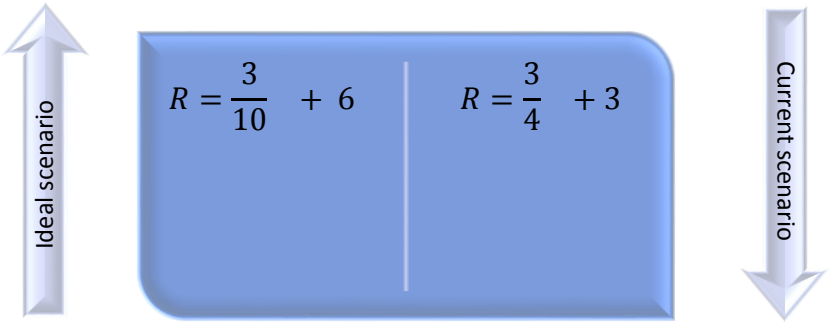
- 4,576,782 hectares of total area under improved management, corresponding to:
- 45,357 hectares of terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use;
- 4,531,425 hectares of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas);
- 5,276,774.4 metric tons CO2e of greenhouse gas emissions mitigated
- 6,974 (3,626 women + 3,348 men) direct beneficiaries as co-beneficiaries of GEF investment

74. Although the local impact of the project can be quantified in terms of the number of hectares, people benefited and CO2 avoided or conserved, at a global level the performance of benefits can be evaluated using the following formula:

$$Outcomes = R = \frac{Barriers}{Outputs} \quad + Provinces\ 6$$

Where:

Outcomes: Outputs achieved in the application of IB
Barriers: Interaction of threats, local conditions and constraints, which remain constant
Outputs: 10 key project deliverables
Provinces 6: Empowerment of provincial stakeholders to implement IB



75. Narratively, the formula describes the ToC in terms of the performance of results and the reduction of barriers. Since it bases its analysis on the achievement of the 10 key products of the project, the higher this number and the more solid the actions executed, the greater the effect in reducing the barriers and limitations

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for implementation of IB. However, for assumptions there are the empowerment of the provinces for the pilot case work, creation of regulations and sustainability. Annex 6.8.

76. Quantitatively, through this analysis, the MTR, shows an estimated result of 3.75 out of a possible 6.3, which reflects the involvement of the provinces of Misiones, Buenos Aires and Mendoza while pointing to the importance of strongly involving the other provinces through letters of agreement, deconcentration and decentralization to accelerate the implementation of actions.

3.5.4. Total resources

77. The Prodoc establishes that the total resources allocated to the project are US$ 19,510,608.00. This amount corresponds to US$ 2,703,196.00 from the GEF (grant) and US$ 16,807,412.00 from the counterparts, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Total project resources according to the Prodoc

Source	Type	Total (US$)
GEF	Grants	$2,703,196
Co-financing		$16,807,412.00
Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (ex - MAyDS)	Grants	$5,578,884
	In-kind	$1,279,366
National Ministry for Productive Development – Energy Secretariat	Grants	$3,000,000
National Ministry of Science and Technology	Grants	$25,806
National Parks Administration	Grants	$83,155
	In-kind	$35,293
Ministry of Ecology, Misiones Province	Grants	$103,361
	In-kind	$103,361
Directorate of Roadway Infrastructure, Misiones Province	Grants	$1,893,727
Secretariat for Environment and Land Use Planning, Mendoza Province	Grants	$906,192
	In-kind	$208,941
Santa Cruz Provincial Agrarian Council	In-kind	$453,346
Ministry of Environment and Control of Sustainable Development, Chubut Province	In-kind	$688,733
Chubut Province Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Industry and Commerce	Grants	$280,173
	In-kind	$54,280
Ministry of Production, Corrientes Province	Grants	$266,667
	In-kind	$282,618
Buenos Aires Provincial Agency for Sustainable Development	Grants	$611,661
	In-kind	$33,948
Buenos Aires Province Ministry of Agrarian Development	Grants	$867,900
UNDP	Grants	$50,000
TOTAL, US$		$19,510,608

3.6. Main stakeholders

78. According to the Prodoc, the following table shows the main stakeholders involved in the execution of the Project.

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Stakeholder
National level
Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (ex -MAyDS)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic
Ministry of Economy
Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MINCYT)
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of the Argentine Republic
Ministry of Transportation of the Argentine Republic
National Ministry of Security
National Ministry of Health
National Service of Agrifood Safety and Quality (SENASA)
National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET)
National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA)
National Advisory Committee for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (CONADIBIO)
Interjurisdictional Coordinating Body for Fauna (ECIF)
Birds Argentina
Argentine Society for the Study of Mammals (SAREM)
Argentine Herpetological Association (AHA)
Argentine Ecology Association (ASEA)
Wildlife Foundation (FVS)
Yaguareté (Jaguar) Network
Wetlands Foundation (FH)
Felix de Azara Natural History Foundation
Ministry of Justice and Human Rights
National Indigenous Peoples Institute (INAI)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education - Federal Courts, Gendarmería, Naval Prefecture, General Directorate of Customs, National Service of Agri-Food Safety and Quality, Prosecutor's Unit for the Investigation of Environmental Crimes
Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity
Provincial level
Organismo Provincial para el Desarrollo Sostenible de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, Ministerio de Agroindustria de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, Dirección de Ganadería y Fauna, Ministerio de Producción de Corrientes, Plan de Ganadería Ministerio de Turismo de Corrientes, Dirección de Fauna, Dirección de Parques y Reservas, Ministerio de Ambiente y Control del Desarrollo Sustentable de Chubut, Dirección General de Evaluación Ambiental, Ministerio de Producción del Chubut, Dirección de Fauna, Secretaría de Ambiente y Ordenamiento Territorial de Mendoza, Ministerio de Ecología de Misiones, Dirección Provincial de Vialidad de Misiones, Consejo Agrario Provincial de Santa Cruz, Ministerio de Salud y Ambiente de Santa Cruz, Dirección de Evaluación de Impacto Ambiental
Fuerzas de Seguridad Provinciales, Instituto de Sanidad y Calidad Agropecuaria de Mendoza, Instituto del Agua y del Ambiente de Corrientes, Consejo Agrario Provincial de Corrientes
CONICET-UNNE Instituto de Botánica del Nordeste
Universidad Nacional de Misiones / Conicet-Instituto de Biología Subtropical
Centro Nacional Patagónico – CONICET
Municipalidades de: Misiones (Andresito – Iguazú – Wanda), Mendoza (La Paz – General Alvear – Santa Rosa – San Rafael), Corrientes y Buenos Aires (Lavalle)
Private sector
Empresas privadas de energía: GENNEIA – Neoen – Luz del León – Pampa Energía, Parque Eólico YPF, Empresas privadas de turismo y transporte, Asociaciones de transporte, Productores agropecuarios, Asociación de Sociedades Rurales de Corrientes, Grupo de Productores Unidad de la Cuenca del Salado, Confederaciones Rurales Argentinas, CARBAP, Asociación de Mujeres Productoras de Energías Renovables
CeIBA Iguazú
Centro de Rescate Guiraoga
Comité Iberá
Civil Society
Fundación Churrinche, Fundación Patagonia Natural, Fundación Temaikèn, Ambiente Sur, Asociación Argentina de Consorcios Regionales de Experimentación Agrícola, Marandú, Comunicaciones Misiones, Fundación Caburei, Centro de Rehabilitación y Rescate de YPF
Other stakeholders
Red Nacional de Reservas Privadas

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Ecoregistros.org
Alianza del Pastizal del Cono Sur
Laboratorio de Ecología y Comportamiento Animal FCEN-UBA
Grupo de Investigación sobre Conservación y Manejo, Departamento de Biología, Bioquímica y Farmacia, Universidad Nacional del Sur
Laboratorio de Biodiversidad y Genética Ambiental – Universidad Nacional de Avellaneda (UNDAV)
Instituto de Botánica Darwinion. CONICET
Instituto Nacional de Limnología (Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas – Universidad Nacional del Litoral)
Academic institutions
Universidad Nacional de la Patagonia Austral, Universidad Nacional de la Patagonia San Juan Bosco, Universidad Nacional del Nordeste, Universidad Nacional del Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires (Azul), UBA, CONICET, Instituto de Ecología, Genética y Evolución de Buenos Aires (IEGEBA), Laboratorio de Ecología y Comportamiento Animal (FCEN-UBA), Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas – Universidad Nacional de La Pampa

4. Findings

4.1. Project Strategy

4.1.1. Project Design

79. The project design is well-scored overall by all stakeholders interviewed, who recognize its high importance, especially in the conservation of focal species considered as "umbrella species" for a landscape approach. Although the perception of importance varies in different regions, being lower in areas in the process of political definition such as Chubut, the project is widely considered ambitious and well structured. The integrated theory of change and structural approach to gender inclusion are aspects that highlight the soundness and completeness of the design.

80. The project architecture is logical, intuitive and based on a strong commitment of provincial stakeholders to achieve objectives. Having quantitative impact indicators allows for results-based management. The governance mechanisms are adequate at the CD level. However, the creation of local roundtables was left to the discretion of the local authorities, which should be taken up again after the MTR.

81. The importance of the gender approach in the project was not an afterthought, but was integrated at the design stage. Specific recommendations were established for consultation with indigenous peoples and women´s participation. Gender-related indicators were considered and discussed from the outset, demonstrating that the inclusion of the gender perspective is an integral part of the project structure.

82. In order to improve the current progress of the project at mid-term, this report highlights the importance of having a strong technical team. At the design phase of the PRODOC, the need to have a technician at the pilot site and another at the central office was recognized. This strategy was intended to achieve institutional mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity into other areas. The technicians were to collaborate closely with the ministries, advancing biodiversity mainstreaming, while the technician at the pilot site would focus on field work.

83. The project design highlights the detail of the structuring and construction of UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards and its Accountability Mechanism by including actions such as: (a) ongoing assessment of compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implementation of the management or mitigation plan prepared for the project to comply with these standards, and (c) constructive and timely participation to address any concerns or complaints raised through application of the Accountability Mechanism.

4.1.2. Results Framework / Logframe

84. The evaluation of the Logical Framework reveals that the concept of the Intersectoral Biodiversity Approach (IB) implemented in the project is attractive and innovative. The project structure maintains a total of 11 indicators, distributed among the three specific outcomes and the overall objective. This logic

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translates into the results base, which is achieved through the attainment of 6 specific outputs. When analyzing the set of indicators under the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Relevant, Achievable and Time-bound) approach, it proves itself to be formulated in a coherent and logical manner with the budget allocated to the project. In general terms, the proposed indicators meet the SMART criteria, which strengthens the feasibility to evaluate and measure the project's progress.

85. The project baseline assumes the existence of isolated initiatives and incentives, which are insufficient to achieve the transformational change needed to ensure wildlife conservation measures in all sectors. In addition, government programs with fiscal resources that have a direct and indirect impact on BD are not sufficient if they continue to operate on a stand-alone basis (business as usual).

86. Concerning project assumptions, as of the date of the MTR, the need for actions to reverse the weakening of the institutional framework and the relationship between ex-MAyDS and strategic partners is emphasized. Although the interest in the products continues - the How? - post institutional reform must be agreed and adapted to the provisions of the Government.

87. At the technical level, assumptions that would affect the proposal must be resolved: wind farms that incorporate biodiversity conservation measures (financial - technical); and livestock producers outside protected areas that incorporate production models with biodiversity conservation criteria, which has not yet been demonstrated due to economic (incentives) and technical factors.

88. In particular, in the evaluator's opinion, the indicators proposed are of high interest and participation of the stakeholders. However, it is noted that, at the Mid-Term Review (MTR), the indicators have not yet reached their mid-term goals, which is reflected in the results obtained, especially in the financial and co-financing areas. This aspect highlights the importance of effective management in the second half of the project to ensure the achievement of the proposed objectives.

4.2. Progress Toward Results

4.2.1. Progress towards outcomes analysis

89. The project is organized into three main outcomes: a) strengthened federal and provincial governance frameworks for the effective integration of biodiversity conservation into public policies; b) application of coordinated tools and procedures for integration; and c) learning and knowledge management framework for the integration of biodiversity conservation into public policies and programs. Annex 6.12 (Matrix of Progress in Achieving Results) includes the progress matrix, which is based on a traffic light system on the level of progress achieved to date, and includes the project cumulative outputs, actions and targets.

90. Regarding overall expected project results, the following progress can be evidenced:

91. Outcome 1. Cross-sectoral governance of threatened BD strengthened. There is a need to improve governance at the national and provincial levels for effective mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation into public policies.

92. Indicator 5: UNDP's Capacity Development Scorecard adapted to measure effectiveness of cross-sectoral governance and/ or strengthened policy framework.
Indicator 9: Extent of the environmental planning and strategy development process.
Indicator 10: Existence of adequate environmental policy and regulatory frameworks.
Indicator 11: Adequacy of the environmental information available for decision-making.

- According to the last PIR, a noteworthy result was the drafting of a bill to amend the traffic law to lower driving speeds in national parks and reduce roadkill. In addition, COFEMA approved the first resolution on wildlife roadkill.
- The project is strengthening endangered species conservation through partnerships with non-governmental organizations.

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- Coordination with the entities in charge of indigenous affairs to assess the impact of the proposed project activities on indigenous territories.

93. Indicator 6: Strengthened national sectoral and provincial policies for wind energy, road infrastructure, livestock management, hunting and wildlife trafficking, and clear enforcement and monitoring mechanisms.

- In accordance with the latest PIR, the project reports compliance with the indicator, resulting in 1 Intersectoral Biodiversity Plan developed through a participatory process, 1 instrument developed to integrate biodiversity considerations into specific sectoral policies, and 3 Threatened Species Conservation Plans developed.

94. Regarding progress on deliverables/outputs at the time of the MTR for output 1.1: the National Biodiversity Inventory (NBI), preparatory meetings were held with various key stakeholders, where the terms of reference (ToR) for the consultancy that would be responsible for carrying out the National Biodiversity Inventory were agreed upon and defined, and consequently the ToR for contracting an IT consultancy to integrate this information into the National Biological Data Portal were prepared.

95. In the case of output 1.2: "Intersectoral Biodiversity Plans to mainstream BD conservation withing key sectoral policies and programs are developed", progress was made in modifying traffic legislation to limit driving speeds in national parks and reduce wildlife roadkill, with the approval of the Federal Council of Environment Ministries (COFEMA). The resolution highlights wildlife roadkill as a threat to biodiversity in Argentina, urging the integration of biodiversity considerations into provincial policies and programs.

96. Finally, progress on output 1.3: "Portfolio of instruments is developed for coordination and integration of BD conservation in selected sectoral and intersectoral public policies related to wind energy, road infrastructure, livestock management, hunting and wildlife trafficking", the project supported a workshop on wildlife trafficking in MERCOSUR countries with the aim of increasing information on wildlife trafficking and supporting waterfowl monitoring in wetlands. In addition, the conservation of endangered species such as the pampas deer, the yellow cardinal and the yaguareté is being strengthened through partnerships with nongovernmental organizations.

97. Outcome 2. Sector policies harmonized with BD conservation policies, resulting in reduced threats on selected ecoregions, ecosystems, habitats and species.

98. Outcome 2 seeks application of coordinated tools and procedures for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria. The outcome is on track to be achieved according to the mid-term review and analysis of the following indicators:

99. Indicator 7: Maintenance or increase in populations of target species in project sites by project end

- Information from the latest PIR shows the following cumulative results from the monitoring of the target species: the Ruddy-headed Goose - *Chloephaga rubidiceps* with 464 individuals, the Macá tobiano or Hooded Grebe - *Podiceps gallardoi* between 650 and 800 individuals, the Jaguar - *Panthera onca* from 72 to 122 individuals, the Yellow Cardinal - *Gubernatrix cristata* between 650 and 1650 individuals, and the Pampas Deer - *Ozotoceros bezoarticus* 148 individuals for Samborombón Bay, Province of Buenos Aires.

100. Indicator 8: Degree of implementation/application of models in priority sectors, measured as follows:

- In accordance with the last PIR, the project does not yet have the cumulative results from the beginning of the project for this indicator. However, progress has been made in the design of an electronic system for biodiversity traffic and a proposal was presented to modify Traffic Law No. 24,449. Three radars were installed for speed control, covering 4,117 hectares in the Iguazú National Park and the Puerto Península Provincial Park. In addition, work is being done on signage and placement of speed bumps.
- Livestock producers have been identified who apply sustainable livestock production practices.

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101. Regarding the progress of output 2.1: the "Set of validated / applied instruments is tested for the harmonization and coordination of public policies that affect BD conservation for the following 4 pilot cases:"

- *Case 1: wind energy, the establishment of a working group in 2024 to design a monitoring plan for wind farms is proposed.*
- *Case 2: in terms of road infrastructure, radars have been installed, work is being done on signage and speed bumps, and a wildlife roadkill monitoring plan has been implemented, complemented by awareness-raising events.*
- *Case 3: illegal hunting and wildlife trafficking, a computerized system is being designed and diploma courses are offered to strengthen technical capacities.*
- *Case 4: in reference to reducing pressure and threats of livestock on endangered species, training is provided in sustainable livestock management.*

In addition, the project supports various workshops and monitoring activities, revealing the stability of the target species according to the data collected.

102. Outcome 3. Knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation carried out, facilitating the integration of BD conservation in sectoral and intersectoral public policies in other areas of the country and internationally.

103. Outcome 3 seeks to mainstream biodiversity conservation policies into public programs and policies. At the time of the MTR, this outcome is on track to be achieved based on 3 indicators and its performance at midterm:

104. Indicator 9: Percentage of awareness of key sectoral Ministries about threats and appropriate mitigation measures to increase wildlife conservation in the wind energy, road infrastructure development, livestock management, hunting and illegal wildlife trafficking sectors

- At the mid-term review, it was found that approximately 80% of the 27 respondents recognized the need for environmental training within their agencies. This establishes an initial benchmark in awareness, allowing the impact of the project to be measured at later stages.

105. Indicator 10: Percentage implementation of the communication strategy and knowledge management (best practices, lessons learned).

- The PIR shows that there is not yet a fully developed communication strategy, but various activities have been carried out to disseminate information such as promotion on official websites, local and provincial media, as well as campaigns on social networks of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. Also noteworthy are the participation in events, workshops and the contribution of the RUTA VIVA campaign to raise awareness among drivers in protected areas.

106. Indicator 11: Percentage implementation of community-based biodiversity monitoring plans.

- Annual monitoring of geese in the province of Chubut and winter monitoring of capybaras in Buenos Aires was carried out in 2022. In addition, a report on the status of jaguars in Misiones indicated a stable population of jaguars ranging from an estimated 72 to 122 individuals. The monitoring of the yellow cardinal involves community participation through censuses due to the difficulty of finding specimens of this species.

107. In reference to output 3.1: "Communication strategy and knowledge management system are established to promote mainstreaming of BD conservation criteria in public policies and disseminate best practices and lessons learned to a wider audience via websites, information networks, publications, etc.", progress has been made through carrying out a staff survey to assess awareness in key sectors. Awareness-raising activities were carried out, such as the RUTA VIVA campaign and the production of audiovisual material on wildlife roadkill. In addition, content was generated in social networks and classes were given for the second session of the virtual course "ABC is biodiversity: How to incorporate nature into decision-making".

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108. Lastly, regarding progress on output 3.2: "Participatory monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy is implemented", the installation of radars in the province of Misiones was carried out as part of the activities to reduce wildlife roadkill in the protected area. This focus on radar monitoring is a specific measure to assess and address the impact of traffic on wildlife in that region.

4.2.2. Remaining barriers and risks to achieving the project objectives

109. After evaluating technical barriers and risks established in the Prodoc, conducting the field mission and reviewing the 2023 PIR Report, an update of the status of the technical barriers (3) has been performed and 7 risks have been identified that hinder the achievement of the project objectives. According to the 2023 PIR, the project has obtained a low risk rating in the report, attributable to its low execution. In this context, the following tables 4 and 5 present the remaining barriers and risks for the project, respectively.

Table 4. Evaluation of remaining Barriers

Description Technical Barriers identified in the Prodoc	Current statusl
Barrier 1: Insufficient coherence and complementarity of public policy and regulatory frameworks to effectively consider wildlife conservation at federal and provincial levels.	Due to Argentina's federalism, each government ministry/unit at the national and provincial levels defines policies based on its specific objectives and mandates, and focuses on achieving the short and medium term objectives of its sector. Thus, many conservation policies and objectives are often limited to being managed by the former Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS) or with limited "transfers" to other areas of government. Therefore, during this period of management, the project has promoted the harmonization of development policies with conservation policies, capacity building and policy proposals. In addition, although COFEMA, CONADIBIO and ECIF have implemented important initiatives to solve this problem, the results are not evident at the MTR. In the case of the energy sector, it is suggested that Nationally Determined Contributions to mitigate climate change be linked as a plus, which will provide greater scope for action, support and possible generation of resources for sustainability.
Barrier 2: Insufficient tools and instruments to promote, implement and consolidate wildlife conservation.	To reduce the trend in the decline of important wildlife populations, the project is working on the generation of information and local experiences with ecological corridors in 3 protected areas along National Route 101 Misiones, the Arroyo Urugua-í corridor, and the Arauco company's forest, management of native forests, reintroduction of wildlife (Guira Oga rescue center protocol) and improvement of ecosystem services such as the declaration of a hunting ban in the province of Misiones, emergency care of fauna, signage, control of invasive species (axis deer), among others. However, implementation and replication has been limited, linked to the structural change of the former MAyDS, which requires that the project strengthen deconcentration and decentralization processes as a strategy for greater empowerment of the provinces and work to place environmental issues on the government agenda in general. Wind energy: the project generated information that recognizes the vulnerability of birds during their movement and the risks they face in the different stages of their biological cycle. However, policies to ensure and guide best practices to avoid and mitigate the potential impact of wind farms are still under construction. Road infrastructure: In Misiones there are clear examples of how to achieve the development of a road network compatible with BD conservation. This includes EIA procedures for new road projects, identification and control of high risk points for biodiversity (hotspots). The Ecoduct on National Route 101 shows very good results in terms of its operation according to evaluations carried out with camera traps. Wildlife Trafficking and Hunting: The former MAyDS, now STAD, is the enforcement authority for Law No. 22,421 on Wildlife Conservation. The purpose of this law is to harmonize the protection and conservation of wildlife with its uses, and to develop national wildlife management plans. The project must still promote governance, regulations and technological mechanisms (complaints) to improve the conditions for controlling trafficking and hunting.
Barrier 3: Dispersed knowledge and insufficient sharing of conservation tools and practices at the federal, provincial and interprovincial levels.	There is currently extensive and valuable experience that can serve to benefit BD in the framework of public policies. However, this knowledge is scattered in national and provincial institutions, academic and research institutions and NGOs. The project seeks to compile, systematize and make this knowledge available to external actors, highlighting lessons learned. In this regard, the possibility of sharing tools and experiences is key, especially concerning the management of species found in multiple provinces and countries. For example, the Biodiversity

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	Information System (SIB-APN) [5] has the mission to communicate, update, store and organize BD data obtained from technical, scientific and management activities in protected areas. Although it is a very valuable database dedicated to BD conservation (including documentation, cartography, researchers, etc.), it is limited and not always applicable for the development of public instruments and policies, which the project must necessarily strengthen and support post MTR. Similarly, the National Biological Data System and its portal, both managed by the Ministry of Science and Technology, require updated information on some taxonomic groups and that data be generated on other taxonomic groups and monitoring for the design and impact assessment of wind energy projects, roads and other activities. In this barrier, it was previously identified that the creation of adequate economic and financial incentives to promote livestock production models is necessary. As of the date of the MTR, this activity has not been developed and it is recommended that it be resumed and strengthened.

Table 5. Evaluation of remaining Risks

Description Risks identified in the Prodoc	Treatment/management measure according to Prodoc	Current status
The COVID-19 pandemic could affect project implementation.	The work plan adjusts to the new reality, incorporating virtual meetings instead of face-to-face events due to the pandemic. Although the pandemic presents challenges, it underscores the importance of the project in conserving biodiversity and addressing illegal wildlife trade, which could transmit zoonotic diseases. UNDP implements contingency plans to assess the potential impact of COVID-19 across the portfolio, with adaptations managed as needed.	The COVID-19 pandemic became a significant barrier to project implementation from 2021 to 2022, especially in Argentina, one of the most affected countries. This resulted in mobility restrictions at the international and provincial level due to the ASPO Law. Given that the project began formal activities during the pandemic, the implementation of actions on the ground was hampered. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the project´s adaptation to this new reality enabled implementation of activities in a virtual manner, such as consultancies, studies and trainings. As of the date of the Mid-Term Review, the mobility restrictions due to the pandemic have ended, which has facilitated the execution of activities in the territory.
The financial crisis in Argentina could affect the timely availability of cofinancing for project implementation or could reduce cofinancing due to budgetary constraints.	The project will prioritize key strategic interventions, with the UNDP Country Office monitoring co-financing. The Project Board, composed of UNDP, the former MAyDS and the provincial governments, will hold regular high-level dialogues on co-financing and explore alternative strategies, such as partnerships with the private sector. The stakeholder map will be updated annually to identify new potential partners and co-financiers. The Country Office will track contributions on a quarterly basis, addressing significant deviations, and devaluation and inflation will be monitored and reported to the Regional Center.	The financial crisis in Argentina represents a significant risk that is linked to the low level of financial execution and implementation delays of the pilot projects, which are related to administrative delays in the former MAyDS. Faced with this barrier, the project has implemented constant monitoring, applying adaptive management and holding regular meetings with various counterparts to address and mitigate this obstacle. Counterpart co-financing is sustained and reaches 16% at the MTR. However, due to the currency devaluation, the referenced amounts are underestimated and it has been recommended to the team to generate a monitoring system coupled to the value of money over time. A post MTR risk is foreseen since the National Government has decided to stop investments in infrastructure until fiscal balance is reached, which would mean less co-financing in road and energy actions with conservation criteria.

[5] https://www.sib.gov.ar/2017/#!/

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Lack of awareness, mistrust and low motivation among key stakeholders, and lack of capacity of the different stakeholders to manage project-related challenges.	The project will support communication and capacity building strategies to keep stakeholders informed, demonstrate the usefulness of project actions and the benefits they bring to the environment and stakeholders.	Territorial political will for project implementation is asymmetrical, with only one of the six provinces actively participating, which represents a high risk to the progress of the project's objectives.
SESP Risk 1 Gender The design and implementation of intersectoral biodiversity plans and instruments for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into prioritized policies might reinforce gender-based discrimination against women, as well as affect their access to any opportunities and benefits which might arise in pursuit of this objective. Failure to facilitate the possibility of equal participation of men and women during project implementation could limit their access to the benefits/opportunities offered by the project.	The Gender Analysis and Action Plan establishes specific evaluation and management measures for each project output, and the project budget ensures the allocation of resources for this purpose. Some of the main measures to reduce the risk of negative gender impacts include: consideration of gender in data collection and information gathering, a gender-sensitive approach in participatory activities and dialogue processes, and the involvement of the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity in inter-institutional coordination activities.	There is a moderate risk that the project may unintentionally maintain patterns of gender discrimination and limit the access of certain groups to project benefits. In response, the project is implementing the Gender Action Plan and adopting various measures, such as ensuring the effective participation of the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity, and integrating a gender perspective in a meaningful way in participatory and dialogue processes by conducting training workshops for the technical team and key stakeholders (6), making participation in gender training mandatory for government officials and staff under the Micaela Law (Law 27499), and sex-disaggregated information.
SESP Risk 2 Biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management Activities related to small-scale road infrastructure for wildlife passages could adversely impact endangered species, critical habitats, and/or environmentally sensitive areas, including legally protected areas (e.g., Iguazú National Park and Uruguaí Provincial Park).	The risk to endangered species and habitats is considered to be low because the project proposes small road infrastructure works aimed at constructing wildlife crossings/ecoducts and speed limits (not the construction of roads per se), specifically designed to help wildlife move safely and reduce wildlife roadkill. The project will also comply with the General Environmental Law to avoid potential impacts on the conservation of critical habitats.	This is a low impact risk as the construction of ecoducts and wildlife crossings could generate potential habitat impacts. The action being taken by the project for this risk is to implement rigorous monitoring of the project to ensure strict compliance with environmental legislation in relation to construction activities.
SESP Risk 3 Biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management Activities related to sustainable livestock production models could adversely impact endangered species, critical habitats or environmentally sensitive areas, including legally protected areas (e.g. Iberá Provincial Reserve).	The risk to endangered species and habitats is low because the project will help existing livestock producers implement more sustainable production models and natural grassland management, which would benefit endangered species by providing richer habitat.	According to the 2023 PIR, this is a moderate risk because it is related to the possibility that the livestock models promoted by the project could have negative environmental impacts. Thus, the project is specifically focused on promoting improvements in pasture management, which will contribute positively to the creation of a more enriched habitat, benefiting endangered species.
SESP Risk 5 Community health and safety and working conditions: Participation in project activities could pose a potential risk of exposure to COVID-19.	Low risk due to strong national policies to protect worker health and safety. In recognition of the health constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project will use videoconferencing equipment for virtual meetings and workshops when necessary. The work plan will be adjusted so that some field or consultation activities will take place at a later date or personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided to prevent exposure among stakeholders and project	As of the date of the Mid-Term Review, this represents a low risk, however, it should continue to be closely monitored by project staff.

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	participants. The budget includes computer support and PPE.	

Risks not identified in the Prodoc	Current status
National elections and change of federal government	Although not contemplated as a risk in the Prodoc, the federal elections at the end of 2023 emerge as a significant constraint for the project. This scenario could result in delays during the election period, affecting implementation progress. In addition, the government transition brought a substantial change in the vision and institutional structure related to environmental issues. To address this risk, the project, according to the 2023 PIR, proposes to follow up and socialize the project with new stakeholders. However, several elements of support are required from both the province, UNDP and the new STAD, understanding the binding commitments defined in the Prodoc and the risks of closure or return of grants that the initiative has.
Inflation of the Argentine currency	The execution of planned activities is negatively affected by both high inflation and the constant variation of the exchange rate, which hinders procurement processes.
Changes in institutional priorities	The institutional framework has undergone changes in the national and provincial agencies involved in the project, which has hindered the coordination and articulation necessary for successful project implementation. Spaces for empowerment of the initiative and adaptive management should be promoted in order to comply with the deadlines and products established in the project.

4.3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

4.3.1. Management Arrangements

110. The governance structure of the project consists of a Project Board composed of national and local government representatives, UNDP and ECIF. This coordination space aims to provide guidance and direction, address issues and risks, coordinate with various stakeholders and donors, monitor progress and evaluate project performance.

111. Responsibilities also include providing technical input for the fulfillment of project deliverables, approval of Mid-Term Review and final evaluation reports, addressing grievances and participating in the final project review to discuss lessons learned and possible opportunities for expansion.

112. The Government coordinating agencies and the UNDP Resident Representative as project development partners ensure the compatibility of the project with national priorities and overall supervision of the delivery of project outputs. UNDP provides oversight at three levels: Country Office, regional level and UNDP Headquarters; ensuring the quality of the project to be supervised in an objective and independent manner to the Project Board and the Project Management Unit.

113. The Prodoc has also established two working groups associated with the implementation and support of the project. The National Project Director (ex-MAyDS) is responsible for planning and managing project activities. It is accountable to the Project Board for management and results, use of resources and application of rules and procedures. In addition, the National Project Director oversees the custody and proper use of project inputs and funds (NIM), as well as financial reporting. Some non-delegable responsibilities include signing key documents and opening and managing the project bank account. Nevertheless, the designation of a Project Management Coordinator, who will report to the Country Director, is permitted.

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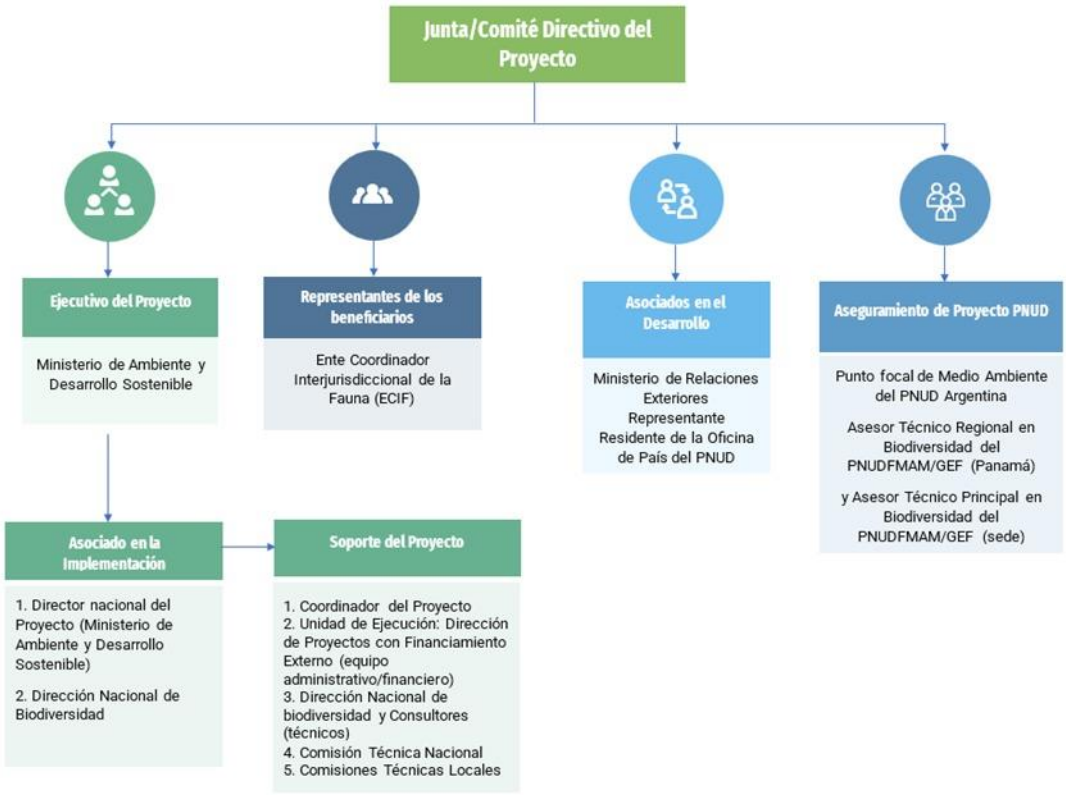


Figure 3. Project management arrangement. Source: Prodoc

114. During the mid-term review (MTR), administrative procedures and deadlines have been highlighted as a significant challenge, exacerbated by limitations in hiring personnel, which has led to delays in actions, thus evidencing the difficulties inherent to the initiative. In addition, factors such as the political situation, changes in authorities and economic fluctuations, characterized by inflation and devaluations, complicate planning and budget estimates. With the current administration, it is essential to promote greater understanding and commitment to the project. In this sense, this report proposes that a post-evaluation workshop be held to analyze the project components in detail, update relevant information and coordinate future actions in an effective manner. It is also suggested that a summary be prepared to show the country's continued commitment to the financing and budget allocated to the project, stressing the importance of complying with the minimum actions established in the Prodoc, ratified by the Nation and UNDP within the 1985 Basic Assistance framework.

115. UNDP, as the implementing agency, plays a fundamental role in the execution of the project, providing technical support, administrative and financial supervision, risk assessment, etc. UNDP's management, according to the Prodoc, ensures the effectiveness, transparency and sustainability of the project, elements that have been evidenced throughout the MTR. Although the financial execution of the project has been a challenge, gradually solved by the generation of capacities among the stakeholders, a greater challenge is foreseen due to the change of government institutions and the management of the GEF project portfolio, which requires the direct participation of UNDP to provide continuity to the project's actions, through high level assertive communication, and support networks with the provinces.

116. As for the executing agency, at the time of the MTR, the former Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development has played a satisfactory role in terms of ownership, quality, technical support and institutional framework. The delays are of an operational and financial nature. During the MTR, a new institutional framework was created in the Republic of Argentina; the evaluator was unable to assess the implications of the change from “Ministry” to “National Secretariat”, but the team should generate a roadmap to overcome this challenge.

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4.3.2. Work planning

117. The Project uses Annual Work Plans (AWP) that include a detail of activities according to expected results, with budget specification for each group of activities, which is approved by the CD. There is evidence of agreements and consensus on planning. However, given the complex operational management through FACE and then NIM, which is centered in the Project Directorate of the former MAyDS, a gap is generated between what is planned and what is executed. During the MTR, it was identified that there are no variance analyses regarding progress reports to reveal the difference between planned vs. executed, but doing so would allow for better strategic monitoring. Finally, the substantial revision B has not been completed, which demonstrates the aforementioned operational complexity, lack of team members and uncertainty.

118. COVID-19 and the restrictions on movement and concentration of people made it difficult to start the project. However, this factor has not been a limiting factor for the technical team to carry out the activities, since they have adopted a modality including specialists in the territory (Province of Misiones), remote work and planned field trips, facilitating institutional articulation. Currently, the key stakeholders of the project have a critical path bringing together the political and financial situation that leads to the institutional framework.

4.3.3. Finance and co-finance

119. The initial budget allocated to the project amounts to USD $19,510,608.00, as specified in the Prodoc. This funding is composed of a grant of USD $2,703,196.00 from the GEF Trust Fund and other co-financing sources totaling USD $16,807,412.00. At the Mid-Term Review, the total amount of funds executed, according to the Prodoc, should reach USD $16,508,611.00 (as of the third year). Of this amount, USD$2,335,333.00 corresponds to the GEF grant, and USD $14,173,278.00 comes from counterparts. However, as of the date of the MTR evaluation, financial execution has progressed at a considerably slow pace. According to the Delivery Reports (CDR) for the periods January to December for 2021, 2022 and 2023 provided to the evaluator, execution to date is USD $813,419.66, or 30.09% of the available GEF-financed budget, as detailed in the table below:

Table 6. Financial execution by outcome

Item	Year 2021	Year 2022	Year 2023	TOTAL
Outcome 1	$ 9,003.31	$ 59,463.33	$ 53,030.66	$ 121,497.30
Outcome 2	$ 5,323.07	$ 260,719.35	$ 312,194.26	$ 578,236.68
Outcome 3	$ 2,837.64	$ 17,036.66	$ 30,013.01	$ 49,887.31
Project management	$ 12,731.62	$ 35,806.22	$ 30,073.62	$ 78,611.46
Activity ()	$ -	$ 41,408.31	$ - 56,221.40	$ - 14,813.09
TOTAL	$ 29,895.64	$ 414,433.87	$ 369,090.15	$ 813,419.66

120. In relation to the aforementioned, an outstanding balance of USD $2,258,866.49 (equivalent to 83.56%) has been identified for execution by the closing date of the project, as shown in Figure 4.

121. In addition, in accordance with the Prodoc, audits are carried out according to the annual program established by UNDP. Follow-up and monitoring are carried out in accordance with UNDP standards of transparency and accountability. Thus, as of the date of the evaluation, an audit has been completed (January to June 2022) by the firm Bértora, evidencing that the project has demonstrated adequate resource management through due diligence.

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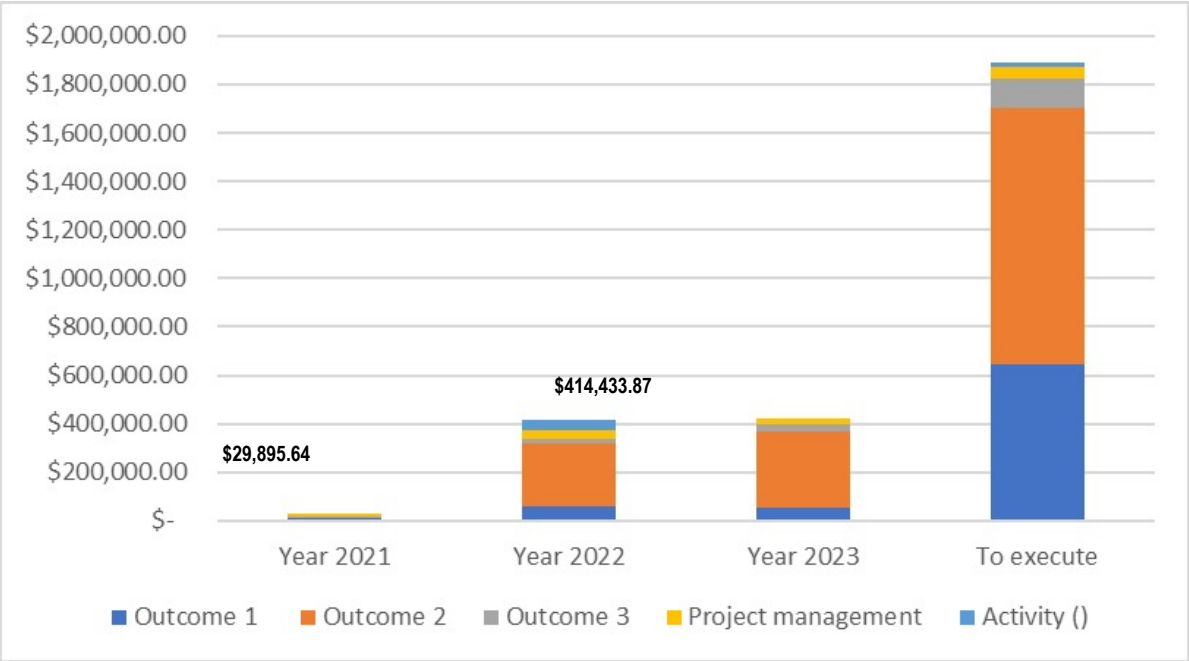
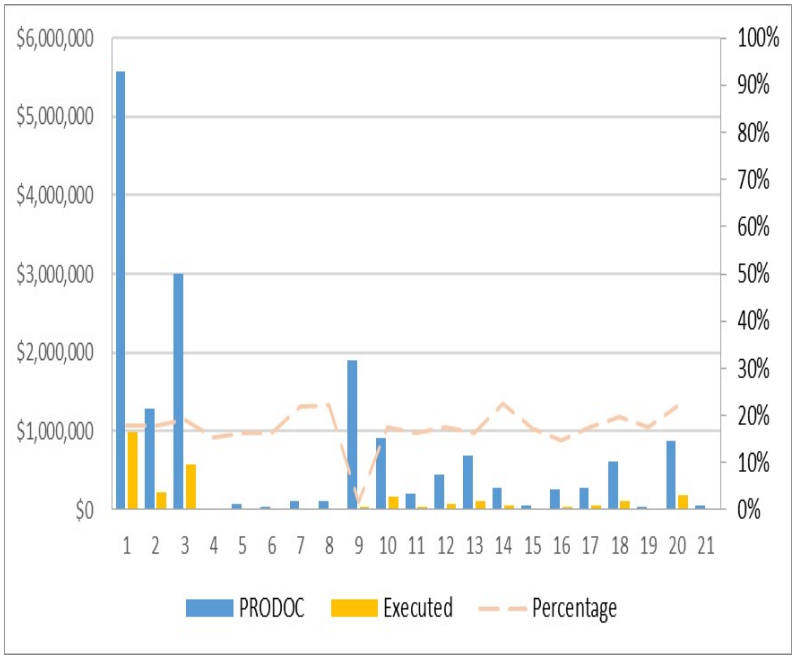


Figure 4. Financial execution by outcome and by year

122. As for co-financing, as of the date of submission of this MTR report, the actual contribution of the counterparts, both in kind and in cash, is 16% or $2,757,139.00 of the total value committed by the partners, these values are detailed in Table 5 and Figure 5.



1	MAyDS
2	MAyDS
3	Min. Desarrollo Productivo
4	Min. Ciencia y Tecnología
5	Adm. Parques Nacionales
6	Adm. Parques Nacionales
7	Min. Ecología de Misiones
8	Min. Ecología de Misiones
9	Dir. Infraestructura Vial de Misiones
10	Sec. Ambiente y Ordenamiento Territorial de Mendoza
11	Sec. Ambiente y Ordenamiento Territorial de Mendoza
12	Cons. Agrario Provincial de Santa Cruz
13	Min. Ambiente y Control del Desarrollo Sustentable de Chubut
14	Min. Agricultura, Ganadería, Industria y Comercio de Chubut
15	Min. Agricultura, Ganadería, Industria y Comercio de Chubut
16	Min. de Producción de Corrientes
17	Min. Producción de Corrientes
18	Min. Ambiente de Buenos Aires
19	Min. Ambiente de Buenos Aires
20	Min. Desarrollo Agrario de Buenos Aires
21	PNUD

Figure 5. Project co-financing

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123. Based on the above and as indicated in the 2023 PIR, it is noted that budget execution has not progressed according to the established planning. Thus, the PIR proposes to carry out a budget review with the objective of reallocating unused funds from the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 as a corrective measure.

Table 7. Co-financing

Co-financing Sources	Name of co-financing entity	Type of co-financing	Amount co-financed at CEO approval date (USD$)	Real amount contributed as of the date of the Midterm Review (USD$)	Real percentage (%) of planned amount
Host Government	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (ex - MAyDS)	Grants	$5,578,884	$989,883.00	18%
		In-kind	$1,279,366	$227,100.00	18%
Host Government	National Ministry for Productive Development – Energy Secretariat	Grants	$3,000,000	$575,000.00	19%
Host Government	National Ministry of Science and Technology	Grants	$25,806	$4,000.00	16%
Host Government	National Parks Administration	Grants	$83,155	$13,512.00	16%
		In-kind	$35,293	$5,734.00	16%
Host Government	Ministry of Ecology, Misiones Province	Grants	$103,361	$22,500.00	22%
		In-kind	$103,361	$23,000.00	22%
Host Government	Directorate of Roadway Infrastructure, Misiones Province	Grants	$1,893,727	$33,894.00	2%
Host Government	Secretariat for Environment and Land Use Planning, Mendoza Province	Grants	$906,192	$160,250.00	18%
		In-kind	$208,941	$33,800.00	16%
Host Government	Santa Cruz Provincial Agrarian Council	In-kind	$453,346	$79,200.00	17%
Host Government	Ministry of Environment and Control of Sustainable Development, Chubut Province	In-kind	$688,733	$111,800.00	16%
Host Government	Chubut Province Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Industry and Commerce	Grants	$280,173	$62,875.00	22%
		In-kind	$54,280	$9,390.00	17%
Host Government	Ministry of Production, Corrientes Province	Grants	$266,667	$39,000.00	15%
		In-kind	$282,618	$49,456.00	17%
Host Government	Buenos Aires Provincial Agency for Sustainable Development	Grants	$611,661	$120,245.00	20%
		In-kind	$33,948	$6,000.00	18%
Host Government	Buenos Aires Province Ministry of Agrarian Development	Grants	$867,900	$190,500.0	22%
Host Government	UNDP	Grants	$50,000	0.00	0.00
	TOTAL, US$		$16,807,412.00	$2,757,139.00	16%

4.3.4. Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

124. The project's Prodoc sets out the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan to be carried out in accordance with UNDP requirements, in addition to specific mandatory GEF requirements. The M&E Plan addresses the type of M&E requirement according to the project cycle, responsible parties, costs and timing of implementation.

125. For monitoring and follow-up, the Prodoc proposes the use of tools such as the Inception Workshop, Inception Report, the Monitoring of Indicators from the Results Framework, Project Implementation Report (PIR), Monitoring of all risks, Supervision Missions, Audit Missions, GEF Mid-Term Core Indicators, Independent Mid-Term Review (MTR), Final GEF Core Indicators, Independent Terminal Evaluation (TE). Audits and Spot Checks are also contemplated. The plan establishes the timeframe in which these M&E procedures will be carried out, and should be performed on an ongoing, annual or as needed basis.

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126. However, based on the information reviewed and interviews conducted, this MTR has found that the M&E Plan is not being implemented as planned. This is mainly due to the lack of a full PMU dedicated exclusively to the project. In accordance with GEF guidelines there is a project PIR submitted in 2023 which includes activities from the project start date. In addition, an audit has been carried out (November 2022), there are Project Board Meeting Minutes, quarterly reports on project activities and an annual progress report 2022 and a draft report for 2023, which has not been formalized due to the structural change in the Government and the ex-MAyDS.

4.3.5. Stakeholder Engagement

127. The Stakeholder Participation Plan established in the Prodoc highlights the active participation of stakeholders to ensure the implementation of the IB through a multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary and multi-level approach. Thus, within this plan, stakeholders are identified from the preparation of the PPG; in the planning, design and development of the project, through focus group meetings, participatory forums (workshop at the beginning of the PPG phase and multiple consultation meetings). The Start-up Workshop was attended by the Ministries of Environment and Sustainable Development Control (ex-MAyDS) and Agriculture, Livestock, Industry and Commerce, the Secretariat of Environmental Policy on Natural Resources, the National Biodiversity Directorate, and environmental secretariats and agencies of the provinces of Santa Cruz, Mendoza, Corrientes, Misiones and Buenos Aires. They also discussed the budget and possible financing to provide each province with the materials needed to meet the project's objectives.

128. With regard to the implementation phase of the project, in general terms, stakeholder participation has been carried out as follows:

- Development of training programs to strengthen the mainstreaming of conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and contribute to their effective implementation to safeguard endangered wildlife. Participation in this process involved approximately 387 people, including authorities, technicians and civil society. Noteworthy in this process are: University Course on Management of Wildlife Specimens, training in illegal hunting control, workshop on Population Management of the Brown Howler Monkey, *Allouata guariba*, workshop on regenerative cattle ranching, training on wildlife roadkill, progress in drafting terms for a consultancy to develop a computer system for biodiversity transit, signing of a letter of commitment for sustainable livestock production, preparatory meetings for the National Biodiversity Inventory, training and installation of three radars for speed control in protected areas, implementation of the gender action plan.
- Preparatory meetings were held with various key stakeholders to agree on and define the terms of reference for the consultancy that will carry out the National Biodiversity Inventory. A collaboration is currently being established with the Biological Information System (SIB) to expand an existing data visualization platform and capitalize on previous efforts.
- The participation of local stakeholders stands out in pilot case 2, a notable achievement includes the drafting of a bill to modify traffic legislation, lowering driving speeds in national parks to reduce wildlife roadkill, which although not formally regulated, has in fact been implemented[6]. In addition, the Federal Council of Environment Ministries (COFEMA) approved the first resolution on wildlife roadkill, recognizing this threat to biodiversity and calling on the provinces to integrate biodiversity considerations into sectoral and cross-sectoral policies and programs through harmonization. COFEMA plays an important role in the implementation of the project, for example the enactment of regulations for biological fire barriers and wetland protection laws, the latter of which directly supports the implementation of the project.
- The province of Buenos Aires has been a strategic stakeholder in capacity building, for example, a workshop was held to exchange experiences in wildlife trafficking in MERCOSUR countries, in

[6] https://misionesonline.net/2022/07/11/areas-naturales-protegidas-2/

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addition to supporting the strengthening of the conservation of endangered species, such as the Pampas Deer, the Yellow Cardinal and the jaguar, through collaborations with non-governmental organizations and during the MTR mission, a national workshop on the management of wildlife specimens under human care was held at the Temaiken Zoo, with the participation of 80 delegates from all over the country

- In coordination with the National Institute of Indigenous Affairs (INAI), the precise location of indigenous communities and territories, both communal and disputed, that could be affected by the activities in the project's pilot sites are identified. The importance of the participation of provincial indigenous institutes as additional actors in the implementation of local management roundtables is recognized.
- A letter of commitment has been signed with a producer in Corrientes for sustainable cattle production on approximately 10,000 ha.
- Meetings were held with universities and NGOs capable of taking greenhouse gas emission measurements in the provinces of Corrientes and Buenos Aires.
- Workshop and monitoring campaigns of populations such as: Anatidae in wetlands of NE and Central Argentina, together with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change of the province of Santa Fe, with the participation of representatives of the Ex-MAyDS and the provinces of Chaco, Corrientes, Entre Rios, La Pampa, Santa Fe and Santiago del Estero; winter monitoring of *Barnacla rubicunda* in the provinces of Buenos Aires, La Pampa and Chubut; monitoring of Aves Argentinas-BirdLife International monitoring with different institutions such as MAyDS, Aves Argentinas and the Secretariat of Environment and Land Management of the Province of Mendoza.
- The project has implemented a specific monitoring plan for wildlife roadkill in the province of Misiones. Jaguar population monitoring is carried out every two years in collaboration between the scientific team of the Yaguareté Project of Argentina (CeIBA-UNAM-CONICET) and the team of the Onças do Iguaçu Project of Brazil (ICMBio-PNI), with the support of Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina, WWF-Brazil and other institutions. In addition, support is provided for monitoring species such as caimans, jaguars and pampas deer, among others.

129. Based on the information provided by the PMU and interviews with key stakeholders, most of the partners defined in the Prodoc have participated, in this order: Misiones, Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Santa Cruz, Corrientes and Chubut. However, the private sector has not been involved as of the evaluation date and an important niche of the approach has been identified, mainly with hydroelectric plants, lakes with landscape richness (Urugua-i), tourism, veterinary clinics, technology companies (radars, apps).

130. Finally, the joint work of the National Government, provincial governments and institutions in progressing toward fulfillment of the project's objectives is evident, with the political and financial challenges described throughout the document, highlighting the significant progress made by the province of Misiones.

4.3.6. Reporting

131. The Project Team has implemented various mechanisms to report and communicate changes in adaptive management to the Project Board. This has been done through the submission of Quarterly Activity Reports, Monitoring Reports, Quarterly Expenditure Reports (FACE), Audit Reports (2022) and the 2023 "Project Implementation Review" Report (PIR); all of these mechanisms provide a detailed view of progress in the activities and budget execution.

132. There are also the minutes of the Project Board meetings held in December 2022 and March 2023, both meetings taking place at crucial moments for informing stakeholders on the progress of activities, obstacles encountered and the overall status of the project. The minutes from both meetings underline the importance of equipping the Project Management Unit with its full complement of personnel, which, as of the MTR evaluation date, has not yet been fully set up.

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133. In terms of information management, the project has established participatory spaces such as sessions, working groups and workshops to inform stakeholders about the progress of the project and its adaptive adjustments. It is crucial post MTR to promote proper management of the project's information repository, allowing stakeholders to stay informed about the activities of all the provinces in relation to the IB. Accurate documentation in the form of a policy brief should be shared with partners, facilitating a space for learning and collaboration to address solutions to obstacles in the implementation of the project.

4.3.7. Communications

134. The project, as set forth in the Prodoc, highlights the importance of developing a communication strategy and a knowledge management system in Component 3. This strategy seeks to support project implementation, systematize best practices and lessons learned, all with the objective of increasing awareness of the threats to biodiversity and the barriers to its conservation in public policies. The communication strategy, according to the Prodoc, should address three key aspects: a) dissemination of the project through specific policies, b) management of technical data related to biodiversity, and c) systematization of the information collected for knowledge management.

135. Various instruments and activities are proposed through the strategy, such as hearings, a website, brochures, media presentations, among others. Important criteria are established for these actions, such as timely dissemination, accessibility and adequacy of information.

136. Based on the above and the communication process carried out by the project, it is evident that despite not having a formal communication strategy due to the dispersion of actions in each province, the centralized approval of communication content (ex-MAyDS) and the current institutional change, the project has carried out various internal and external communication activities. In the current situation, it is imperative to implement an empowering communication strategy, so that IB and environmental issues in general are placed on the government's political agenda.

137. Although several communication activities have been carried out, where internal communication challenges have been identified, the need for a more efficient organization is highlighted, clearly establishing the roles of each member of the project team.

138. In terms of external communication, various activities have been carried out, such as the "Ruta Viva, Fauna Presente" campaign and social media campaigns of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. Although adequate communication channels have been established, it is recognized that a formal strategy would have improved the status of the project. The complexity of effectively conveying project content is compounded by the lack of more efficient organization and the limited time availability of the various stakeholders to fully understand the project. Ongoing evaluation and adaptability are key elements to ensure the success of the communication component, considering the complexities of the project and the diversity of target audiences.

4.4. Sustainability

139. This section details the risks that could compromise the sustainability of the project and classifies them into the four categories described below. In addition, other risks that could impact sustainability, such as economic instability, changes in authorities and the absence of a Project Management Unit, are addressed.

Findings from the interviews

1. Stakeholders have a broad knowledge of the objectives, goals and outcomes defined in the Prodoc, which reflects a positive assimilation of the work of the initiative.
2. Concentration of processes in Project Management and high dependence on support from this department for the execution of activities.
3. Need to find an alternative mechanism to the “Alta por Baja” Law. The project has the financial resources and requires the minimum technical and operational personnel.

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4. Beneficiaries lose interest, as they do not see concrete actions being executed while waiting for disbursements to implementing partners.

The Argentine national context

5. High monetary inflation and monthly and interannual inflation (8% and 122%, respectively) in 2023, combined with several kinds of exchange whose variation and powerful impact stop and delay operation of the project. For example, at the time of the MTR the value of the official dollar was 350 pesos per dollar, and the value of the blue dollar was 900 pesos per dollar, while the project was designed with an official exchange rate of 35 pesos per dollar.
6. Uncertainty coming from the elections and the new authorities taking office, change in roles and turnover of key officials. Also, the merger of the former MAyDS to the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports reflects a minimization of the environmental issue, which could become a potential risk of cancellation or return of the project funds. Therefore, institutionalism, upholding cooperation commitments, and regulatory flexibility are strongly recommended in order to support the project.

4.4.1. Financial risks to sustainability

140. The current economic context in Argentina is a critical factor that impacts the sustainability of the project, characterized by inflation and devaluations that complicate planning and budget projections, generating uncertainty and constituting a significant risk for the long-term viability of the initiative.

141. The financial execution of the project is also a risk, since as of the evaluation date, it has only reached 30.09% (USD $813,419.66) of the USD $2,703,196.00 allocated by the GEF, and should have reached 45-50% of the budget by mid-term. As for the counterparts, their actual contribution is equivalent to 16% of the USD $16,807,412.00 committed. During the interviews and documentary review, there were challenges in obtaining accurate information on provincial co-financing, highlighting the urgency of improving the participation of all stakeholders, especially the counterparts in order to accelerate implementation and effectively support the planned actions towards the achievement of the objectives (deconcentration and decentralization). In this context, the importance of implementing horizontal strategy mechanisms and diversifying stakeholders is emphasized as post-mid-term intervention. Therefore, this evaluation proposes the exploration of options such as additional financing, competitive funds, and letters of agreement, integrating them as fundamental elements in the strategy suggested by the evaluator.

4.4.2. Socio-economic risks to sustainability

142. According to the Prodoc, the project is classified as moderate risk in relation to social and environmental impacts. According to UNDP's Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP), a total of eleven risks are identified, of which four are in the moderate category and are related to gender, indigenous peoples, and pollution.

143. In reference to the risk associated with indigenous peoples, the project, under Component 1, aims to promote the development of tools for national implementation and capacity building to integrate biodiversity conservation into public policies. The main potential risks here include the lack of adequate consultation with indigenous peoples during the preparation of biodiversity plans and the possible exclusion of these communities in decisions that could affect them.

144. According to the Prodoc, although there is an indigenous community in the vicinity of the project's area of influence, the project will not carry out actions on land subject to claims. In Misiones, where pilot actions are being developed to integrate conservation criteria in a section of National Route 12, the presence of an indigenous community has been identified in the project's area of influence. It is assured that the interventions, such as speed reduction or the construction of small-scale infrastructure, do not anticipate negative impacts for the community or other vulnerable groups, guaranteeing that the project will not affect rights, lands, territories or natural resources subject to claims.

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145. Although the socioeconomic risk is assessed as low, the project carried out noteworthy efforts with the National Institute of Indigenous Affairs (INAI) to verify the presence or absence of indigenous communities in the project's pilot sites, through a formal consultation, confirmed the existence of indigenous communities in all provinces except Bahía de Samborondón.

146. The main socioeconomic risk that could affect the sustainability of the project's results is the presence of indigenous communities in the pilot sites, which could affect their land rights and interests. Based on the background information presented in the mid-term review, a low risk rating (L) is assigned for socioeconomic sustainability. This is because the project's core strategy focuses on promoting the integration of conservation criteria into policies, with the objective of preserving wildlife.

147. Political risk has now been integrated into project management. The government administration for the 2023-2027 period has made a substantial change in the institutional framework of environmental management, reducing the expense of wages (counterpart), and sending the package of laws “Bases and Starting Points for the Freedom of Argentines”, better known as 'omnibus law' (includes forests, wetlands, glaciers). In addition, the government has paralyzed investments in infrastructure works such as roads and energy. The institutional reform of merging ministries such as the environmental directly affects the Intersectoral project and the response strategy must be agreed upon and adapted according to the results of the legislative discussion on April 29, which could mean a major change in the management of the country's environmental policy.

4.4.3. Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability

148. The recent change in the Government of Argentina, resulting from the October 2023 elections, poses a potential risk to the sustainability of governance in the implementation and budgetary execution of actions. This transition has generated adjustments in government structures, including the transfer of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Ex -MAyDS) to the Secretariat of Sports, Tourism and Environment during the execution of the Mid-Term Review (MTR). In addition, there have been changes in key officials and institutions associated with the project, which could result in the dilution of the actions planned by the project. Interviews highlight the concern that this change may slow down and affect the climate and environmental agenda.

149. In terms of the sustainability of project governance, two Project Board meetings have been held with strong participation, including representatives from the former MAyDS, UNDP, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and key partners. In addition to these meetings, technical meetings have been held. As a measure to strengthen the sustainability of governance, periodic meetings have been held with the counterparts to reach a consensus on actions, making it possible to agree on the lines of work to be implemented in each pilot site.

150. The implementation of the national biodiversity strategy highlights the possibility of achieving a sustainable balance between conservation and development, and for the successful management of the project, the importance of technical support and political governance is emphasized, highlighting the need for specialists working directly with the provinces.

4.4.4. Environmental risks to sustainability

151. In relation to the project's risk classification, which indicates a moderate risk (according to the SESP) in terms of social and environmental impacts, it has been identified that the main risk is found in the pilot sites, especially in case 2, where the construction of eco-pipelines for wildlife passage and the use of machinery could generate non-hazardous waste, such as construction debris.

152. In general, the project seeks to generate benefits for biodiversity conservation, which is why it has established measures to ensure environmental sustainability by promoting the integration of biodiversity conservation criteria into sectoral policies and programs, and making this concrete through the development

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of Intersectoral Biodiversity Plans, which include specific conservation plans for each of the prioritized species.

153. In this context, low risks are identified related to possible impacts on habitat, species or waste generation during the construction of ecoducts and wildlife crossings. In addition, there is a risk linked to the potential environmental impacts of the livestock models promoted by the project. However, it is important to note that the project is specifically aimed at promoting better practices for biodiversity, which will benefit endangered species by creating a more enriched habitat.

154. The evaluation of the activities carried out up to the date of the MTR and the field visit show that the environmental risk is low. The project has implemented precautionary actions and mitigation measures to address potential environmental impacts, such as workshops and training, in addition to various campaigns such as Wildfire Precaution, Respect the Signage and Lights On, which indicate the commitment to sustainability and biodiversity conservation. Mitigation measures regarding the ecoducts include administrative monitoring and adaptive management, promotion of sustainable practices in pasture management, strict compliance with environmental regulations in construction, supervision of worker health and safety, and actions to reduce the impact of roadkill on target species.

4.5. Summary of MTR ratings

Table 8. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for IB Project

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	The problem addressed by the project relates to threats to Argentina's unique and globally significant biodiversity, such as: (i) habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation due to agricultural expansion and the resulting increase in human-wildlife conflict; (ii) the inappropriate location of large infrastructure works, such as transportation and energy; and (iii) the overexploitation of wildlife by sport hunting and poaching for the illegal wildlife trade. The project´s IB approach aims to mainstream wildlife conservation into selected national and provincial public policies and sectoral programs. The project promotes the definition of criteria, tools and governance mechanisms, rescue of lessons learned "evidence" to harmonize selected public policies in key sectors and develop the necessary instruments for their implementation in order to safeguard wildlife. This will allow sectoral policies to be more effective and ensure that future government development plans consider the value of BD.
Progress Towards Results	Objective: **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**	Progress on the project's development objective can be seen in the implementation of various training and activities related to biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management. This included courses on wildlife management, illegal hunting control and species population management. Also workshops were held on regenerative cattle ranching and wildlife roadkill, as well as

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		measures to develop a computerized system for biodiversity transit. Letters of commitment were signed with producers to promote sustainable livestock production and radars were installed to control speed in protected areas. In addition, environmental impact measurements were planned and a workshop on carbon markets was held.
	Outcome 1: **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**	The project works with existing policies and regulations on wind energy, road infrastructure, livestock management, hunting and wildlife trafficking to close legal and institutional gaps with respect to biodiversity mainstreaming and provide the necessary synergies to make them operational and effective. The project has made significant progress, especially in pilot case 2, by drafting a proposal to amend the traffic law to lower the speed limit in national parks and reduce wildlife roadkill. The endorsement of the Federal Council of Environment Ministries (COFEMA) through the approval of the first resolution on wildlife roadkill highlights this threat to biodiversity in Argentina. Provinces are urged to integrate biodiversity considerations into programs and policies, harmonizing road construction with wildlife conservation. The project reinforces the National Parks portal to strengthen environmental decision-making. In addition, in pilot case 3, a regional workshop on wildlife trafficking was supported, promoting collaboration among MERCOSUR countries. Finally, the project has strengthened the conservation of endangered species, such as the pampas deer, yellow cardinal and jaguar, through partnerships with non-governmental organizations.
	Outcome 2: **Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)**	The project fosters and collects increased field data for the aforementioned synergies through models/case studies in the priority sectors and areas. The project focused on the application of coordinated tools and procedures to incorporate biodiversity in different sectors, such as wind energy, road infrastructure, illegal hunting and cattle ranching. For each sector, specific measures have been implemented, such as the creation of working groups, installation of radars, development of monitoring plans, and awareness-raising activities. In addition, computerized systems are being designed to control the transit of biodiversity. The project has supported training in wildlife management and sustainable livestock

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		practices. The project also supported monitoring of various species, and monitoring data show that the project's target species are generally stable for Ruddy-headed goose (case 1), Hooded grebe (case 1), Jaguar (case 2), Yellow Cardinal (case 3), and Pampas Deer (case 4). Evidence of work in the provinces is as follows: Misiones, Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Santa Cruz, Corrientes and Chubut, i.e. one province with significant progress, two with sustained progress and three in progress, which is why the progress of the component is considered MU.
	Outcome 3: **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**	The project supports the systematization and replication of the experiences acquired through components 1 and 2. At the MTR, it was shown that the project has focused its management on the "Learning and knowledge management framework for incorporating biodiversity conservation into public policies and programs", for example, a baseline survey was conducted with the staff of sectoral agencies to assess their level of awareness of threats and mitigation measures in key sectors such as wind energy, road infrastructure development, hunting and illegal wildlife trafficking, and livestock management; from this, intervention strategies have been defined. Various awareness-raising activities were also implemented, including the RUTA VIVA campaign to educate drivers in protected areas. In the educational area, classes were given on the topics of the four pilot sites for the second session of the virtual course "ABC is Biodiversity", with 1706 registered participants. The "ABC is Biodiversity" course is designed to support the development of interdisciplinary and intercultural plans and actions that incorporate biodiversity considerations. Another session is currently underway with 815 participants.
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management	**Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**	Although the application of planned adaptive management is constant in the project, this has not translated into tangible results for the achievement of outcomes, and the participation of provinces was not evident at the MTR. Several factors encompass this assessment: High territorial political dependence for project execution, plus a complex execution from the national level through the former MAyDS result in low general and technical budget execution, with the exception of Misiones, where significant progress has been made.

DocuSign Envelope ID: 609C3F6D-6EE5-4843-A703-D0AFA15E05D0

		There are quarterly execution reports and the first PIR was prepared in 2023. However, the overall progress on the paradigm shift is estimated at 3/6 (ToC) and implies a reinforcement of actions post-MTR and even a formal extension without cost to the project. Financial execution is below plan; of the USD 2.7 million project, only 30.09% of the budget has been executed. Currently, the dilution of environmental issues is a potential risk, which requires a look at the basic cooperation agreements in order to give priority to this and other initiatives that contribute to the country with non-reimbursable funds. In general terms, with regard to adaptive management: the project maintains a centralized operation scheme, which has not permeated to the provinces. This is reflected in the results and progress of the project to date.
Sustainability	**Likely (L)**	This rating is a result of the integration of the evaluation of environmental, socio-political, institutional and financial sustainability, which needs to be strengthened to a greater than 95% level of acceptance of the subject matter and its importance by the stakeholders, and from considering the possibility of supporting action by deconcentrating and decentralizing management according to the Prodoc (paragraph 107). The four criteria are detailed in the following table:

Table 9. Sustainability rating

RATING 4	Environmental sustainability/ Likely (L)
155. The project design proposed environmental sustainability based on "intersectoral governance", with a systemic approach, consisting of multisectoral and interjurisdictional coordination, capacity building and strengthening, and the inclusion of the needs, interests and perspectives of the different stakeholders that participate directly or indirectly. Also, the project integrates the "evidence-based" approach through activities related to the involvement and participation of key stakeholders in the three components with the support of responsible authorities. With the subject matter being very well accepted among the stakeholders, due to the multiple benefits that are expected, it is considered that Sustainability is Likely in the medium and long term.	
RATING 2	**Sociopolitical Sustainability/ Likely (L)**
156. In the project design, social and political sustainability is achieved through the awareness raising, empowerment and multilevel replication actions of the IB approach. The proposal is based on initial Top Down construction that provides "evidence" and "intersectoral governance" inputs which allows for replication of this set of approaches to other territories. To these ends, the project involves competent authorities at the national and provincial levels, in addition to working in coordination with civil society	

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organizations and academia in all components, as well as the additional link with local communities and organizations to ensure the effectiveness of interventions.

157. With these premises, and given the political dependency on implementation of the initiatives, and the consideration of decentralization and empowerment of the provinces, a rating of Moderate Sustainability is assigned.

158. The MTR identifies Chubut and Corrientes as provinces with less participation in the project, while there is strong involvement and interest from other stakeholders (Mendoza, Buenos Aires) that can be used as an example of the benefits to enhance the actions of other provinces.

159. Along the same lines, the MTR identifies the institutional dilution of the former MAyDS as the greatest risk. This evaluation strongly recommends the operationalization of governance mechanisms, binding agreements, and working groups that give a greater role to the provincial sector, under strategic directioning that defines the north, and renews the environmental agenda in government management.

RATING 4	Institutional framework and governance/ Likely (L)

160. In the project design and evidence at the MTR, institutional sustainability is based on the project's contribution to providing information for decision making, articulating sectoral partners and demonstrating with practices the benefits of adequate access to relevant and reliable information, complete and accessible to all; which includes spaces for dialogue, debate and decision making with strategies for conflict prevention and resolution when necessary.

161. Governance in a federal state could be a disadvantage since autonomy can disperse actions, good practices and lessons learned. However, due to the restructuring of the central state, promoting the participation of provinces (autonomy) can be the strength that propitiates sustainability and institutionality (bottom up).

162. There is also evidence of the involvement of academia and collegiate bodies that demand that the issue be promoted. This series of elements define the likelihood of deconcentrated institutionality and restrengthening of the central state.

RATING 1	Financial Sustainability/ Unlikely (U)

163. In the project design, financial sustainability is based on the establishment of conditions to demonstrate "benefits - evidence" of the intersectoral approach to biodiversity conservation. This approach has had a setback in terms of the use of available financial resources and co-financing leverage, which quantitatively show a 16% level of execution. This situation requires a solid implementation strategy to generate co-financing and regain stakeholder interest.

164. At the the time of the MTR an rating of Unlikely is assigned based on the evidence of execution, the possibility of raising counterpart funds and new funds to strengthen the IB approach, together with economic uncertainty, which requires a strategy for the substantial use of available resources that is agile and effective.

5. Conclusions & Recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

165. The project design is robust and in line with the country's reality. Ninety-fine percent (95%) of those interviewed affirmed that the initiative has a clear architecture based on a general objective with impact and results indicators that allow interaction and work with various stakeholders that can work under a strategy of complementarity. In addition, it presents a logical and incremental Theory of Change (ToC) that requires strong territorial involvement.

166. The project document identifies the barriers, action strategy, assumptions, outcomes, important stakeholders, and success factors using a set of approaches with Top Down characteristics, i.e. it is based

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on the intersectoral work of different institutions, resulting in national guidelines for subsequent local action, which is based on the "rescue of good local practices" to promote replication processes in the Republic of Argentina. Two very important management phases are distinguishable over time. The first one, which corresponds to strong stakeholder commitment, consensus for the preparation of corporate tools (Annual Work Plan, Adquisicion Plan, National Steering Committee) supported by a strong technical political commitment for project implementation, followed by a second phase, in which the rotation of authorities has a direct impact on the execution of the project. For example, not having the core PMU technical team staff (of 14 members) shows repercussions in the results.

167. Other elements, such as monetary uncertainty and the change of government due to the 2023 elections, require a strong mechanism for communication, integration and placement of environmental issues on the agenda. This second phase is particularly important for the second half of the project where technical and financial execution must make a positive and high impact leap so that environmental issues remain current and institutionalized.

168. Finally, a positive aspect of the MTR is the level of knowledge of the goals, products and indicators defined in the Logical Framework (LF) of results (Prodoc) demonstrated by the stakeholders, with 72% stating that they are aware of and assimilate the Prodoc.

169. The field mission to the intervention sites and the documentary analysis provided an integral vision of the activities proposed for IB implementation. Here it is important to note that the project started during the COVID-19 sanitary emergency. This particularity delayed key actions such as: the National Biodiversity Inventory; Intersectoral Biodiversity Plans; the Unified Information System for monitoring wind farms; the Biodiversity Management, Control and Verification System (SACVEBIO) and the progress of 1 of 4 pilot cases.

170. The participation of stakeholders through the National Steering Committee is evident and 3 management meetings have been held. However, no governance mechanisms have been generated for work at the territorial or provincial level. Although the project document mentions the possibility of generating technical groups or working groups at the provincial level, these have not been used, hence the importance of a deconcentrated and decentralized intervention strategy to strengthen provincial action. To this end, the working groups in the 6 provinces with the possibility of generating letters of agreement could be fundamental in a process of political transition. This evaluation strongly recommends that the project activate these mechanisms, formalize them and document their actions as a strategy for planning, resilience to change and project leadership.

171. Financial execution is the least advanced in the overall progress of the project. Aspects such as financial uncertainty, inflation and concentrated execution mechanisms through the Directorate of Cooperation Projects have resulted in a mid-term progress of 16% of the budget. The adaptive management and learning that the former MAyDS achieved should be highlighted. In this regard, important aspects such as the discussions and consensus to improve execution, and the development of work plans can be pointed out.

172. However, all these efforts must be translated into joint implementation strategies that enhance execution and align with project activities and goals, for which the formation of the minimum project team is mandatory. The evaluator considers that the conceptualization and enabling conditions are positive. Nonetheless, the implementation aspects should be strengthened with the support of professionals with knowledge of processes, operations, procurement, financial reporting and execution, i.e. an adequate balance between technical and operational aspects, promoting decentralization and deconcentration of actions through "win-win" agreements with the provinces, recognizing the importance of the project as expressed by the interviewees, 100% of whom affirmed the importance of intersectoral work as a tool for conservation and resilience.

173. Overall, the project has a clear intervention strategy conceptually that has been well assimilated in the province of Misiones and has strengthened capacities in the provinces of Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Santa Cruz, Corrientes and Chubut, in that order.

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174. During the MTR, three important elements were identified for the application of IB in the Argentine territory, resulting from political/regulatory support, the development of knowledge and evidence (tangible benefits). In this sense, the year 2024 with the rotation of national, local and institutional authorities, could be a potential risk for implementation, for which it is necessary to identify management and resilience strategies such as those mentioned throughout the document that are based on a leading role of provinces, UNDP and key stakeholders, as well as, innovative operational mechanisms such as letters of agreement, decentralization, highlighting the benefits of the effective implementation of the project and also the consequences of cancelling innovative projects for the Republic and of course for the region, since Argentina has been characterized by taking on challenging initiatives that later become a reference for other countries.

5.2. Recommendations

175. Strengthen the teams linked to the project (PMU) by hiring additional personnel to complete the minimum team required (14 staff members) and who are directly linked to project activities. It is essential to promote a balance between technical and operational performance, making the Labor Law No. 24,557, known as the “Alta por Baja” Law operational, considering the need to hire personnel to meet the deadlines and available resources.

176. Given that the projects financed by the GEF portfolio are binding agreements between the parties, including the Republic of Argentina, UNDP and the donor, it is recommended that the minimum budgeted and planned equipment be maintained. This measure is crucial to ensure compliance and achievement of the goals established in the project, considering that the necessary funds are available for implementation.

177. Given the current political conditions in the Republic of Argentina, the development of a comprehensive strategy is suggested in order for effective execution of the project's financial resources. It is recommended that critical stages be defined and, in line with the country's new monetary context, a solid strategy established to mitigate possible impacts on project execution.

178. Due to the reforms implemented by the current regime in the Republic of Argentina, it is necessary to strengthen the management, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the institution that currently hosts the project activities, i.e., the Secretariat of Sports, Tourism and Environment. It is suggested that the stakeholders of the Republic of Argentina, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, work towards greater project autonomy. The current situation implies that the actions must go through several filters that are not directly related to the subject matter, as in the case of Sports and Tourism. It is essential to understand the role of the GEF focal point, its institutional location and how it can better support the implementation of this initiative and others within the GEF portfolio. It is recommended that spaces be created for fostering greater autonomy and deconcentration along the lines set forth by the government and the regulations soon to be approved in the “Bases and Starting Points for the Freedom of Argentines” Law, better known as the 'omnibus law' to be revised on April 29, 2024.

179. Likewise, it is advisable to establish spaces for consensus, such as monthly operational meetings, in order to define short-term agreements to counteract monetary changes, fluctuations in bids, budget adjustments, allocation of funds (FACE) and payments. These meetings should be set up according to planned deadlines, seeking to ensure the efficient continuity of the project in the midst of variations in the economic environment.

180. The formalization and systematization of governance processes is suggested, since the project aims to compile and disseminate best practices developed in various provinces, seeking their scalability to the national level. Initiating a structured systematization process comes as an essential recommendation during the mid-term review.

181. This evaluation recommends that a Mid-Term Review (MTR) analysis meeting be held in the form of a "post-evaluation workshop". The purpose of this workshop is to confirm institutional commitments, define co-financing arrangements and elaborate a work strategy based on the "Pareto 80-20" principle, aligned with the project results framework. This horizontal approach involves the internalization of the biodiversity concept, the identification of essential actions (20%) and those deriving from their fulfillment (80%). This

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perspective will foster the implementation of various lines of work, capitalizing on the participation of multiple stakeholders as a strength to achieve the project's objectives.

182. It is recommended that a communication strategy be developed to promote visibility of the actions carried out by the Intersectoral Biodiversity project. This strategy must be coherently aligned with the guidelines established by the Republic of Argentina and the results that the project seeks to achieve. It is essential that the communication strategy be designed with a shielding approach, which implies the ability to clearly and concisely convey the project's message, its governance structure, its objectives and the rationale for its binding implementation commitment, both on the part of the GEF, UNDP and the nation. This measure will ensure the continuity of the project's message in the face of possible political changes in the Republic.

183. Given the situation and institutional structure of the former Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, it is recommended that a mechanism for deconcentration and decentralization of activities be established. To this end, exploration of the use of letters of agreement or investment letters that facilitate the execution of the activities planned in the project.

184. The project proposes the use of technology to carry out various monitoring activities, such as the use of radars, technological applications, complaint platforms and other technological instruments that can be considered as added value of the initiative. It is strongly recommended that collaboration with academic institutions or technological research centers is sought out in order to enhance these activities and achieve their mass use. The usefulness of radars in protected areas and the possibility of incorporating alerts in applications and navigators that activate warnings in low speed zones to prevent wildlife collisions in protected areas are highlighted. This recommendation applies significantly to the other components of the project, underscoring the importance of the use of technology as a whole.

185. It is suggested that an entrepreneurial or returns-based approach be adopted in the interventions, incorporating the participation of the private sector or other stakeholders that, after review, can drive economic sustainability in the medium term. In addition, exploration of the mechanisms established in the Prodoc is recommended, such as incentives, financing and cooperativism. These actions are significant within the framework of the horizontal work strategy, as well as important to bring together efforts and stakeholders after the Mid-Term Review (MTR), in order to achieve the project's objectives and goals within the established timeframe.

186. Regarding future actions, it is suggested that a specialist in project monitoring and follow-up be incorporated. This will enable the creation of an information repository, the systematization of the activities carried out, as well as the development of replicable strategies for other pilot sites.

187. This evaluation suggests that the economic flow of the project be expedited through structural interventions and substantial expenditures. The importance of adequately maintaining infrastructure, such as protected area guardhouses, interpretation centers, and forest firefighting equipment, is emphasized. Although they are not part of the original structure of the project, it was noted that forest fires, connectivity between guards and basic inputs for wildlife rescue and treatment can have an impact on project implementation. It is crucial to maintain harmony between the achievement of technical results and financial progress.

188. Although there is a gender action plan, there is no evidence of clear implementation strategies. It is strongly recommended that actions be oriented towards compliance, especially regarding the quantitative indicators established in the plan. It is also suggested that a mid-term update or revision strategy be developed, taking into account the institutional framework and possible changes in the government.

189. Given the turnover of authorities, it is strongly recommended that a strategy of decentralization of activities be established, giving a more prominent role to the provinces.

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190. Due to the findings of the MTR mainly on financial execution [16%] and the recent institutional reform of the former MAyDS, it would be opportune to define a formal no-cost extension that includes an execution acceleration strategy.

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6. Annexes

6.1. MTR ToR (excluding ToR annexes)

Términos de Referencia
Evaluación de MEDIO TERMINO
"Incorporación de criterios de conservación de la biodiversidad en los programas y las políticas públicas sectoriales e intersectoriales para salvaguardar la vida silvestre amenazada en Argentina "

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

De acuerdo con las políticas y procedimientos de M&E del PNUD (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo) y el FMAM (Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial), todos los grandes proyectos-y aquellos medianos-de PNUD, financiados por el GEMT, requieren pasar por una Evaluación Final (EMT) al término del proyecto. Estos Términos de Referencia (TdR) establecen las expectativas para la EMT del proyecto, implementado a través de PNUD/Ministerio del Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible de la Nación.

2. ANTECEDENTES DEL PROYECTO Y CONTEXTO

La República Argentina es un estado federal conformado por 23 provincias y la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires. Las provincias tienen jurisdicción y dominio originario sobre los recursos naturales que se encuentran dentro de sus territorios (Artículo 124 de la Constitución Nacional). El nivel federal es responsable del desarrollo de normas para establecer los estándares mínimos de protección ambiental y de desarrollo sustentable; que deberán ser luego implementados por las provincias. Este contexto ha llevado al desarrollo de leyes de presupuestos mínimos, de acuerdo con la Ley General de Ambiente (Ley N° 25.675), la que establece los presupuestos mínimos que deben existir y aplicarse en todo el país y que se relacionan con el manejo sustentable y apropiado del ambiente, la conservación y la protección de la biodiversidad y con el desarrollo sustentable.

El objetivo del proyecto propuesto es el de incorporar criterios de conservación en las políticas públicas sectoriales e intersectoriales para contribuir a su efectiva implementación a fin de salvaguardar la vida silvestre amenazada. Perseguirá este objetivo a través de tres Componentes: 1) Fortalecimiento de los marcos de gobernanza a nivel nacional y provincial para una efectiva incorporación de la conservación de la BD en las políticas públicas; 2) Aplicación de herramientas y procedimientos coordinados para la incorporación de criterios de incorporación de la biodiversidad; y 3) Marco de Gestión de Conocimientos y Aprendizaje para incorporar la conservación de la BD en los programas y las políticas públicas. El financiamiento del FMAM/GEF es de USD 2.703.196 y el cofinanciamiento asciende a USD 16.807.412.
El proyecto tiene una duración de 48 meses y se espera que proporcione los siguientes beneficios ambientales globales:

- 4.576.782 hectáreas de Superficie Total bajo gestión mejorada, correspondiente a:
  - Indicador Básico del 1 FMAM/GEF: 45.357 hectáreas de áreas protegidas terrestres bajo gestión mejorada para la conservación y el aprovechamiento sostenible;
  - Indicador Básico 4 del FMAM/GEF: 4.531.425 hectáreas de paisajes bajo prácticas mejoradas (excluidas las áreas protegidas);
- Indicador Básico 6 del FMAM/GEF: 5.276.774,4 toneladas métricas de emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero CO_2e mitigadas;
- Indicador Básico 11 del FMAM/GEF: 6.974 (3.626 mujeres + 3.348 hombres) beneficiarios directos como cobeneficio de la inversión del FMAM/GEF;

El proyecto contribuirá al Marco de Biodiversidad Global que se adoptará en la 15a Conferencia de las Partes del CDB. En particular, se espera el apoyo a los objetivos y metas que reemplazan a las actuales Metas de Aichi para la Biodiversidad 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 12, 14, 19 y 20. También incorpora enfoques innovadores para mejorar la implementación de los convenios internacionales tales como el CDB, la CMS y el CITES. Por ejemplo, las actividades relacionadas con el Inventario Nacional de Biodiversidad en el marco del Componente 1 contribuirán al cumplimiento del CDB y a la implementación del Eje 2 y de los Objetivos 13 y 18 de la Estrategia Nacional de Biodiversidad. Este proyecto se encuentra totalmente alineado con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible, en particular, con; (i) Objetivo 7: Garantizar el acceso a una energía renovable (eólica) sostenible; (ii) Objetivo 9: promover la construcción de infraestructura sostenible y fomentar la innovación (Desarrollo vial en equilibrio con la conservación de la biodiversidad, caminos amigables con la biodiversidad); (iii) Objetivo 15: promover el uso sostenible de ecosistemas terrestres, la gestión sostenible de los bosques, la lucha contra la desertificación, detener y revertir la degradación de tierras, y detener la pérdida de la biodiversidad. Este proyecto se implementa en seguimiento de los artículos del Convenio sobre la Diversidad Biológica para incorporar la biodiversidad, a saber, Artículo 6(b), 10(a) (c), 14, 11, 7 (c) y 8 (l). También se encuentra alineado con la Declaración de Cancún sobre Integración de la Conservación y Uso Sustentable de la Biodiversidad para el Bienestar, así como con el Enfoque Estratégico a Largo Plazo para la Incorporación de la Biodiversidad establecido en la 14ª Conferencia de las Partes del CDB.

3. OBJETO DE LA CONSULTORIA

El informe de EMT evaluará los resultados del proyecto frente a lo que se esperaba lograr, y proveerá las lecciones que podrán tanto mejorar la sostenibilidad de los beneficios de este proyecto, como ayudar a mejorar la programación general del PNUD. El informe EMT promueve la rendición de cuentas y la transparencia, y evalúa el alcance de los logros del proyecto.
La evaluación final se realiza en función de la finalización del plazo del Proyecto y se encuentra contemplada tanto en el Plan de Evaluación del PNUD Argentina como en los planes de evaluación del GEMT.

4. ALCANCE/ ACTIVIDADES DE LA CONSULTORIA

La EMT evaluará el desempeño del proyecto frente a las expectativas establecidas en el Marco lógico / Marco de resultados del proyecto (véase el Anexo A de TdR). La EMT evaluará los resultados de acuerdo con los criterios establecidos en la Guía para las EMT de los proyectos implementados por el PNUD y financiados por el FMAM (http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_SP_2014.pdf).

La sección de Resultados del informe de EMT cubrirá los temas enumerados a continuación. Un resumen completo del contenido del informe EMT se proporciona en el Anexo C de los TdR.

i. Estrategia del proyecto

Diseño del proyecto:

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- Analizar el problema abordado por el proyecto y las hipótesis aplicadas. Examinar el efecto de cualquier hipótesis incorrecta o de cambios en el contexto sobre el logro de los resultados del proyecto recogidos en el Documento del Proyecto.
- Analizar la relevancia de la estrategia del proyecto y determinar si ésta ofrece el camino más eficaz para alcanzar los resultados deseados/buscados. ¿Se incorporaron adecuadamente al diseño del proyecto las lecciones aprendidas en otros proyectos relevantes?
- Analizar cómo quedan recogidas en el proyecto las prioridades del país. Comprobar la propiedad nacional del proyecto. ¿Estuvo el concepto del proyecto alineado con las prioridades de desarrollo del sector nacional y los planes para el país (o de los países participantes en el caso de proyectos multipaís?
- Analizar los procesos de toma de decisiones. ¿Se tuvo en cuenta durante los procesos de diseño del proyecto la perspectiva de quienes se verían afectados por las decisiones relacionadas con el proyecto, de quienes podrían influir sobre sus resultados y de quienes podrían aportar información u otros recursos durante los procesos de diseño del proyecto?
- Analizar hasta qué punto se tocaron las cuestiones de género relevantes en el diseño del proyecto. Para un mayor detalle de las directrices seguidas véase *Guía para la Realización del Examen de Mitad de Periodo en Proyectos Apoyados por el PNUD y Financiados por el GEF* .
- Si existen áreas importantes que requieren atención, recomendar aspectos para su mejora.

Marco de resultados/marco lógico:

- Acometer un análisis crítico de los indicadores y metas del marco lógico del proyecto, evaluar hasta qué punto las metas de mitad y final de periodo del proyecto cumplen los criterios "SMART " (abreviatura en inglés de Específicos, Cuantificables, Conseguibles, Relevantes y Sujetos a plazos) y sugerir modificaciones/revisiones específicas de dichas metas e indicadores en la medida que sea necesario.
- ¿Son los objetivos y resultados del proyecto o sus componentes claros, prácticos y factibles de realizar durante el tiempo estipulado para su ejecución?
- Analizar si el progreso hasta el momento ha generado efectos de desarrollo beneficiosos o podría catalizarlos en el futuro (por ejemplo, en términos de generación de ingresos, igualdad de género y empoderamiento de la mujer, mejoras en la gobernabilidad, etc.) de manera que deberían incluirse en el marco de resultados del proyecto y monitorizarse de forma anual.
- Asegurar un seguimiento efectivo de los aspectos más amplios de desarrollo y de género del proyecto. Desarrollar y recomendar los indicadores de 'desarrollo' SMART, que deberán incluir indicadores desagregados en función del género y otros que capturen los beneficios de desarrollo.

ii. Progreso en el logro de resultados

Análisis del progreso en el logro de resultados:

- Revisar los indicadores del marco lógico y compararlos con el progreso realizado en el logro de las metas establecidas para fin de proyecto mediante la Matriz de progreso en el logro de resultados y en función de lo establecido en la *Guía para la Realización del Examen de Mitad de Periodo en Proyectos Apoyados por el PNUD y Financiados por el GEF*; reflejar los avances siguiendo el sistema de colores "tipo semáforo" basado en el nivel de progreso alcanzado; asignar una valoración del progreso obtenido a cada resultado; efectuar recomendaciones desde las áreas marcadas como "No lleva camino de lograrse" (rojo).

Tabla 1. Matriz de progreso en el logro de resultados (resultados obtenidos en comparación con las metas para el final del proyecto)

Estrategia del proyecto	Indicador[1]	Nivel inicial de referencia[2]	Nivel en el 1er PIR (auto- reportado)	Meta a Mitad de Periodo[3]	Meta a Final de Proyecto	Nivel y evaluación a Mitad de Periodo[4]	Valoración de los logros conseguidos[5]	Justificación de la valoración
Objetivo:	Indicador (si es aplicable):							
Resultado 1:	Indicador 1:							
	Indicador 2:							
Resultado 2:	Indicador 3:							
	Indicador 4:							
	Etc.							
Etc.								

Código para la Evaluación de los Indicadores

Verde= Logrado	Amarillo= Camino de lograrse	Rojo= No lleva camino de lograrse

Además del análisis de progreso en la consecución de resultados:

- Comparar y analizar la Herramienta de Seguimiento del GEF al nivel inicial de referencia con la completada inmediatamente antes del Examen de Mitad de Periodo.
- Identificar las restantes barreras al logro de los objetivos del proyecto en lo que resta hasta su finalización.
- Una vez examinados los aspectos del proyecto que han tenido éxito, identificar fórmulas para que el proyecto pueda ampliar los beneficios conseguidos.

iii. Ejecución del proyecto y gestión adaptativa

Mecanismos de gestión:

- Analizar la eficacia general en la gestión del proyecto tal y como se recoge en el Documento del Proyecto. ¿Se han realizado cambios? ¿Son efectivos? ¿Están claras las responsabilidades y la cadena de mando? ¿Se toman las decisiones de forma transparente y en el momento adecuado? Recomendar áreas de mejora.

[1] Completar con datos del marco lógico y los cuadros de mando

[2] Completar con datos del Documento del Proyecto

[3] Si está disponible

[4] Colorear sólo esta columna

[5] Usar la escala de valoración del progreso en el logro de resultados con sus 6 puntos: AS, S, MS, MI, I, AI

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- Analizar la calidad de la ejecución por parte del Organismo ejecutor/Socio(s) en la Ejecución y áreas de mejora recomendadas.
- Analizar la calidad del apoyo proporcionado por el Organismo Asociado del GEF (PNUD) y recomendar áreas de mejora.

Planificación del trabajo:
- Analizar cualquier demora en la puesta en marcha e implementación del proyecto, identificar sus causas y examinar si ya se han resuelto.
- ¿Están los procesos de planificación del trabajo basados en los resultados? Si no es así, ¿se pueden sugerir maneras de reorientar la planificación del trabajo para enfocarse en los resultados?
- Examinar el uso del marco de resultados/marco lógico del proyecto como herramienta de gestión y revisar cualquier cambio producido desde el inicio del proyecto.

Financiación y cofinanciación:
- Evaluar la gestión financiera del proyecto, con especial referencia a la rentabilidad de las intervenciones.
- Analizar los cambios producidos en las asignaciones de fondos como resultado de revisiones presupuestarias y determinar si dichas revisiones han sido apropiadas y relevantes.
- ¿Cuenta el proyecto con controles financieros adecuados, incluyendo una apropiada información y planificación, que permitan a la Dirección tomar decisiones informadas relativas al presupuesto y que faciliten un flujo de fondos en tiempo y plazos adecuados?
- A partir de la información contenida en la tabla de seguimiento de la cofinanciación que hay que rellenar, ofrecer comentarios sobre la cofinanciación. ¿Se utiliza la cofinanciación estratégicamente para ayudar a los objetivos del proyecto? ¿Se reúne el Equipo del Proyecto regularmente con todos los socios en la cofinanciación a fin de alinear las prioridades financieras y los planes de trabajo anuales?

Sistemas de seguimiento y evaluación a nivel de proyecto:
- Analizar las herramientas de seguimiento usadas actualmente. ¿Ofrecen la información necesaria? ¿Involucran a socios clave? ¿Están alineadas con los sistemas nacionales o incorporadas a ellos? ¿Usan la información existente? ¿Son eficientes? ¿Son rentables? ¿Se requieren herramientas adicionales? ¿Cómo pueden hacerse más participativas e inclusivas?
- Analizar la gestión financiera del presupuesto para el seguimiento y evaluación del proyecto. ¿Se asignan recursos suficientes para el seguimiento y evaluación? ¿Se usan estos recursos con eficacia?

Implicación de las partes interesadas:
- Gestión del proyecto: ¿Ha desarrollado y forjado el proyecto las alianzas adecuadas, tanto con las partes interesadas directas como con otros agentes tangenciales?
- Participación y procesos impulsados desde el país: ¿Apoyan los gobiernos locales y nacionales los objetivos del proyecto? ¿Siguen teniendo un papel activo en la toma de decisiones del proyecto que contribuya a una ejecución eficiente y efectiva del mismo?
- Participación y sensibilización pública: ¿Hasta qué punto ha contribuido la implicación y la sensibilización pública en el progreso realizado hacia el logro de los objetivos del proyecto?

Información:
- Analizar los mecanismos empleados por la Dirección del proyecto para informar de los cambios en la gestión adaptativa y comunicarlos a la Junta del Proyecto.
- Evaluar hasta qué punto el Equipo de Proyecto y sus socios llevan a cabo y cumplen con todos los requisitos de información del GEF (p. e: ¿qué medidas se han tomado para abordar los PIR con valoraciones bajas, cuando sea aplicable)?
- Evaluar cómo se han documentado y compartido las lecciones derivadas del proceso de gestión adaptativa con los socios clave y cómo han sido internalizadas por éstos.

Comunicación:
- Examinar la comunicación interna del proyecto con las partes interesadas: ¿Existe una comunicación regular y efectiva? ¿Hay partes interesadas importantes que se quedan fuera de los canales de comunicación? ¿Existen mecanismos de retroalimentación cuando se recibe la comunicación? ¿Contribuye la comunicación con las partes interesadas a que estas últimas tengan una mayor concienciación respecto a los resultados y actividades del proyecto, y a un mayor compromiso en la sostenibilidad a largo plazo de los resultados del mismo?
- Examinar la comunicación externa del proyecto: ¿Se han establecido canales de comunicación adecuados –o se están estableciendo– para expresar el progreso del proyecto y el impacto público deseado (por ejemplo, ¿hay presencia en la Web?)? ¿Llevó a cabo el proyecto campañas de comunicación y sensibilización pública adecuadas?).
- A efectos informativos, redactar un párrafo de media página que resuma el progreso del proyecto hacia los resultados en términos de su contribución a la generación de beneficios relacionados con el desarrollo sostenible y el medio ambiente global.

iv. Sostenibilidad

- Validar si los riesgos identificados en el Documento del Proyecto, el Examen Anual del Proyecto/PIR y el Módulo de Gestión de Riesgos de ATLAS son los más importantes y si las valoraciones de riesgo aplicadas son adecuadas y están actualizadas. En caso contrario, explicar por qué.
- Asimismo, evaluar los siguientes riesgos a la sostenibilidad:

Riesgos financieros para la sostenibilidad:
- ¿Cuál es la probabilidad de que se reduzca o cese la disponibilidad de recursos económicos una vez concluya la ayuda del GEF (teniendo en cuenta que los recursos potenciales pueden provenir de múltiples fuentes, como los sectores público y privado, actividades generadoras de ingresos y otros recursos que serán adecuados para sostener los resultados del proyecto)?

Riesgos financieros para la sostenibilidad:

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- ¿Existen riesgos sociales o políticos que puedan poner en peligro la sostenibilidad de los resultados del proyecto? ¿Cuál es el riesgo de que el nivel de propiedad e implicación de las partes interesadas (incluyendo el de los gobiernos y otras partes interesadas) sea insuficiente para sostener los resultados/beneficios del proyecto? ¿Son conscientes las diversas partes interesadas clave de que les interesa que los beneficios del proyecto sigan fluyendo? ¿Tienen el público y/o las partes interesadas un nivel de concienciación suficiente para apoyar los objetivos a largo plazo del proyecto? ¿Documenta el Equipo del Proyecto las lecciones aprendidas de manera continuada? ¿Se comparten/transfieren a los agentes adecuados que estén en posición de aplicarlas y, potencialmente, reproducirlas y/o expandirlas en el futuro?

Riesgos para la sostenibilidad relacionados con el marco institucional y la gobernabilidad:

- ¿Presentan los marcos legales, las políticas, las estructuras y los procesos de gobernabilidad riesgos que puedan poner en peligro la continuidad de los beneficios del proyecto? Al evaluar este parámetro, es preciso tener en cuenta también si están instalados los sistemas/mecanismos requeridos para la rendición de cuentas, la transparencia y los conocimientos técnicos.

Riesgos medioambientales a la sostenibilidad:

- ¿Hay algún riesgo medioambiental que pueda poner en peligro la continuidad de los resultados del proyecto?

Conclusiones y Recomendaciones

El equipo del MTR incluirá una sección en el informe donde se recojan las conclusiones obtenidas a partir de todos los datos recabados y pruebas realizadas[6].

Las recomendaciones deberían ser sugerencias sucintas para intervenciones críticas que deberán ser específicas, cuantificables, conseguibles y relevantes. Se debería incluir una tabla de recomendaciones dentro del informe ejecutivo del informe. Para más información sobre la tabla de recomendaciones, véase *la Guía para la Realización del Examen de Mitad de Periodo en Proyectos Apoyados por el PNUD y Financiados por el GEF*.

Las recomendaciones del consultor/equipo del MTR deberían limitarse a 15 como máximo.

Valoración

El equipo del MTR incluirá sus valoraciones de los resultados del proyecto y breves descripciones de los logros asociados en una *Tabla resumen de valoraciones y logros* en el Resumen Ejecutivo del informe del MTR. Véase el Anexo E para comprobar las escalas de valoración. No es necesario hacer una valoración de la Estrategia del Proyecto ni una valoración general del mismo.

[6] Otra posibilidad es integrar las conclusiones del MTR en el cuerpo del informe.

Tabla. Resumen de valoraciones y logros del MTR
(*Nombre del proyecto*)

Parámetro	Valoración MTR	Descripción del logro
Estrategia del proyecto	N/A	
Progreso en el logro de resultados	Valoración del grado de logro del objetivo. Valoración del logro: (Calificar según escala de 6 pt.)	
	Valoración del grado de logro del resultado 1: (Calificar según escala de 6 pt.)	
	Valoración del grado de logro del resultado 2: (Calificar según escala de 6 pt.)	
	Valoración del grado de logro del resultado 3: (Calificar según escala de 6 pt.)	
	Etc.	
Ejecución del proyecto y gestión adaptativa	(Calificar según escala de 6 pt.)	
Sostenibilidad	(Calificar según escala de 4 pt.)	

5. CRONOGRAMA ACTIVIDADES

La duración total de la evaluación final será de aproximadamente (40 días laborables en promedio) durante un período de (8 semanas). El cronograma tentativo de evaluación es el siguiente

PERIODO DE EJECUCIÓN	ACTIVIDAD
15/07/2023	Cierre de solicitudes
01/08/2023	Selección del equipo del MTR
25/08/2023	Preparación del equipo del MTR (entrega de los Documentos del Proyecto)
15/09/2023	Revisión de los Documentos y elaboración del Informe de Iniciación del MTR.

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10/10/2023	Finalización y validación del Informe de Iniciación del MTR: fecha más tardía para el inicio de la misión del MTR.
27/10/2023	Misión del MTR: reuniones con las partes interesadas, entrevistas, visitas de campo
07/11/2023	Reunión para el cierre de la misión y presentación de las primeras conclusiones: fecha más temprana para la finalización de la misión del MTR
17/11/2023	Elaboración del borrador del informe
15/11/2023	Incorporación del rastro de auditoría a partir de los datos ofrecidos en el borrador del informe/Finalización del informe del MTR
22/11/2023	Preparación y comunicación de la respuesta de la Dirección
25/11/2023	Taller de conclusión (Opcional) con las partes interesadas (no es obligatorio para el equipo del MTR)
30/11/2023	Fecha prevista para la finalización definitiva del MTR

Cabe destacar que las actividades presentadas anteriormente corresponden a un cronograma en el caso que pudieran realizarse visitas de campo. En caso de no poder realizar la misión de campo en virtud del impacto del covid-19, las entrevistas deberán realizarse de forma remota a través de plataformas digitales.

Si las restricciones a la pandemia no permitieran las misiones en campo, se deberán realizar esas actividades de forma remota. En este caso, se tendrán en consideración posibles retrasos, conforme lo consideren válidos la coordinación del proyecto, el oficial del proyecto y/o el RTA.
Nota: flexibilidad y posibles retrasos deben incluirse en el plazo para la evaluación, con un tiempo adicional para implementar evaluaciones virtualmente, reconociendo posibles retrasos en el acceso a grupos de partes interesadas debido a COVID-19. Se dará especial consideración a la entrega de resultados y productos de la evaluación si la misma se retrasara de cualquier manera debido a COVID-19.

6. CRONOGRAMA DE ENTREGABLES

#	Producto	Descripción	Plazo	Responsabilidades
1	Informe inicial de EMT	El equipo de EMT clarifica objetivos, la metodología y la duración de la EMT	No más tarde de 2 semanas antes de iniciar las entrevistas virtuales	El equipo de EMT envía el Informe inicial a la unidad encargada y a la gerencia del proyecto
2	Presentación	Hallazgos iniciales	Fin de la ronda de entrevistas por parte del Equipo de EMT:	El equipo de EMT presenta a la unidad encargada y a la gerencia del proyecto
3	Borrador del Informe final de EMT	Borrador final del Informe con anexos (utilizando las directrices sobre el contenido del informe en los TdR del Anexo C)	Dentro de las 3 semanas de finalización de la Misión del Equipo de EMT y de las entrevistas:	El equipo de EMT envía a la unidad encargada, es revisado por RTA, la Coordinación del Proyecto, FMAM, OFP
4	Informe* final de la EMT + Registros de Auditoría	Informe final revisado y registros de auditoría de la EMT en el que la EMT detalla cómo se han abordado (y cómo no) todos los comentarios recibidos en el Informe final de EMT (Ver modelo en los TdR del Anexo H)	Dentro de la semana en la que se reciben comentarios sobre el borrador de informe:	El equipo de EMT envía ambos documentos a la unidad encargada

*Todos los informes finales de EMT pasarán por una evaluación de calidad por la Oficina de Evaluación Independiente (OEI) del PNUD. Los detalles de la evaluación de calidad de la OEI de evaluaciones descentralizadas se pueden encontrar en la Sección 6 de las Directrices de evaluación del PNUD.[7]

7. CALENDARIO DE PAGOS

- Pago del 20% tras la entrega satisfactoria del Informe de inicio de EMT y la aprobación de la Unidad Adjudicadora. Estimado a los 10 días de firmado el contrato
- Pago del 40% tras la entrega satisfactoria del borrador del informe EMT a la Unidad Adjudicadora. Estimado a los 20 días de firmado el contrato
- Pago del 40% tras la entrega satisfactoria del informe final de EMT y la aprobación de la Unidad de puesta en marcha y RTA (a través de las firmas en el Formulario de autorización de informe de EMT) y la entrega del registro de auditoría de EMT completo. Estimado a los 60 días de firmado el contrato.

Criterios para la emisión del pago final del 40%[8]:

- El informe final de EMT incluye todos los requisitos descritos en los TdR de EMT y está de acuerdo con la guía de EMT.
- El registro de auditoría incluye respuestas y justificación para cada comentario enumerado.

De acuerdo con las reglamentaciones financieras del PNUD, cuando la Oficina País y/o el consultor determinaran que un producto o servicio no podrá completarse satisfactoriamente debido al impacto de la pandemia por el COVID-19 y las limitaciones de la evaluación, ese producto o servicio no será abonado.

[7] Access at: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml

[8] La Unidad Adjudicadora está obligada a emitir pagos al equipo de EMT tan pronto como se cumplan los términos de los TdR. Si hay una discusión en curso sobre la calidad e integridad de los resultados finales que no se pueden resolver entre la Unidad de Comisionamiento y el equipo de EMT, se consultará al Asesor Regional de M&E y a la Dirección del Fondo Vertical. Si es necesario, se notificará también a la alta gerencia de la Unidad de Comisionamiento, a la Unidad de Servicios de Adquisiciones y a la Oficina de Soporte Legal para que se pueda tomar una decisión sobre si se debe retener o no el pago de cualquier monto que pueda deberse al evaluador (es), suspender o rescindir el contrato y / o eliminar al contratista individual de las listas aplicables. Consulte la Política de contrato individual del PNUD para obtener más detalles:

https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_Individual%20Contract_Individual%20Contract%20Policy.docx&action=dEMTault

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Debido a la situación actual de COVID-19 y sus implicaciones, se podría considerar un pago parcial si el consultor invirtió tiempo en la entrega, pero no pudo completar un/os productos debido a circunstancias que estén fuera del control del consultor.

8 . PERFIL PROFESIONAL REQUERIDO PARA ESTA CONSULTORÍA

El equipo del MTR estará formado por un consultor independiente siguiendo las siguientes cualificaciones:

- Profesional universitario, de preferencia ingeniero agrónomo, o biología, ciencias ambientales, o carreras afines, con más de 10 años de experiencia en gestión social y desarrollo sostenible en comunidades vulnerables.
- Experiencia comprobable en evaluación de proyectos de Naciones Unidas vinculados al desarrollo local y experiencia de al menos 5 años en monitoreo y evaluación (MyE) de programas/proyectos complejos
- Preferentemente con conocimientos de los procedimientos vinculados a la gestión y seguimiento de Proyectos PNUD-FMAM.
- Experiencia en proyectos relacionados a la implementación de mecanismos de ABS
- Experiencia en análisis institucional y de actores.
- Experiencia en trabajo con equipos multidisciplinarios y relación con un amplio espectro de actores sociales.
- Excelentes habilidades analíticas y de redacción.
- Dominio tanto oral como escrito de inglés y español.

9. PREPARACIÓN DE LA EMT

La responsabilidad principal de administrar la EMT reside en la Oficina de País de PNUD en Argentina. La Oficina de País liderará el proceso de selección y contratación de los evaluadores y asegurará la provisión oportuna de viáticos y arreglos de viaje dentro del país para el equipo de EMT en caso de corresponder. El equipo de proyecto será responsable de establecer contactos con el equipo de EMT para proporcionar todos los documentos relevantes, establecer entrevistas con las partes interesadas y organizar visitas de campo.

10. ENFOQUE Y METODOLOGÍA DE LA EMT

El informe de EMT deberá proporcionar información basada en evidencia que sea creíble, confiable y útil. El equipo de EMT revisará todas las fuentes de información relevantes, incluidos los documentos preparados durante la fase de preparación (por ejemplo, PIF, Plan de Iniciación del PNUD, Procedimientos de Evaluación Social y Ambiental del PNUD / SESP), el Documento del Proyecto, informes del proyecto incluyendo los PIRs (Project Implementación Review) anuales, revisiones presupuestarias del proyecto, informes de lecciones aprendidas, documentos legales y estratégicos nacionales, y cualquier otro material que el equipo considere útil para esta evaluación basada en evidencia. El equipo de EMT revisará la línea de base y los Indicadores principales/Herramientas de seguimiento del área focal intermedia del FMAM remitidos al FMAM en las etapas de aprobación del CEO y de medio término y los Indicadores principales/Herramientas de seguimiento finales que deben completarse antes de que comience el trabajo de campo de la EMT.

Se espera que el equipo de EMT tenga un enfoque participativo y consultivo que garantice una estrecha colaboración con el equipo del proyecto, las contrapartes gubernamentales (el punto focal operativo del FMAM), los socios implementadores, la oficina país del PNUD, el asesor técnico regional, los beneficiarios directos y otras partes interesadas.

La participación de las partes interesadas es vital para una EMT exitosa. La participación de las partes interesadas debe incluir entrevistas con las partes interesadas que tienen responsabilidades de proyecto, que incluyen, entre otras, representantes del Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible de la Nación, representantes gubernamentales a nivel provincial, beneficiarios y distintos stakeholders vinculados al proyecto.

Se deberá evaluar la necesidad de realizar misiones de campo, salvaguardando la seguridad del equipo de EMT y de las partes interesadas. Si fuera posible; en caso de que las restricciones de movilidad debidas a la pandemia por COVID-19 disminuyeran, se espera que el equipo de EMT lleve a cabo misiones de campo a los sitios específicos de intervención identificados en el documento de proyecto. En el caso de que no se den las condiciones adecuadas, el equipo de EMT deberá buscar las mejores alternativas para recolectar toda la información necesaria para asegurar llevar a cabo la EMT con éxito, para lo cual el equipo del proyecto proveerá la lista de contactos detallada (teléfonos y direcciones de correo electrónico).

El diseño y la metodología específicos para la EMT deben surgir de las consultas entre el equipo de EMT y las partes antes mencionadas sobre lo que es apropiado y factible para cumplir con el propósito y los objetivos de la EMT y responder a las preguntas de evaluación, dadas las limitaciones de presupuesto, tiempo y datos. El equipo de EMT debe utilizar metodologías y herramientas con perspectiva de género y garantizar que la igualdad de género y el empoderamiento de las mujeres, así como otros temas transversales y ODS (Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible) se incorporen al informe de EMT.

El enfoque metodológico final, que incluye el cronograma de entrevistas, las visitas de campo y los datos que se utilizarán en la evaluación, se debe describir claramente en el Informe de inicio de EMT y se debe debatir y acordar completamente entre el PNUD, las partes interesadas y el equipo de EMT.

Cabe destacar que, para la EMT se deberá tomar en consideración la reprogramación de actividades debido a los retrasos ocasionados por las restricciones de movilidad por la pandemia por el COVID-19. Asimismo, notar que algunas actividades pueden ser reestructuradas para ser llevadas a cabo de forma remota.

El informe final debe describir el enfoque completo de EMT y la justificación del enfoque, haciendo explícitos los supuestos, desafíos, fortalezas y debilidades subyacentes sobre los métodos y el enfoque de la evaluación.

11. COMPORTAMIENTO ÉTICO DEL EVALUADOR

El equipo de EMT estará sujeto a los más altos estándares éticos y debe firmar un código de conducta al aceptar la asignación. Esta evaluación se llevará a cabo en conformidad con los principios descritos en las "Directrices éticas para la evaluación" de UNEG. El evaluador debe salvaguardar los derechos y la confidencialidad de los proveedores de información, los entrevistados y las partes interesadas a través de medidas para garantizar el cumplimiento de los códigos legales y otros códigos relevantes que rigen la recopilación de datos y la presentación de informes. El evaluador también debe

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garantizar la seguridad de la información recopilada antes y después de la evaluación y los protocolos para garantizar el anonimato y la confidencialidad de las fuentes de información donde se espera. El conocimiento de la información y los datos recopilados en el proceso de evaluación también deben usarse únicamente para la evaluación y no para otros usos sin la autorización expresa del PNUD y sus socios.

12. ANEXOS DEL TDR

- TdR Anexo A: Lógica del Proyecto/ Marco de Resultados
- TdR Anexo B: Paquete de informaciones del proyecto a ser revisados por el equipo de EMT
- TdR Anexo C: Contenido del Informe de EMT
- TdR Anexo D: Modelo de matriz de criterios de evaluación
- TdR Anexo E: Código UNEG de conducta para evaluadores
- TdR Anexo F: Escalas de calificación para la EMT
- TdR Anexo G: Formulario de autorización del Informe de EMT
- TdR Anexo H: Registro de auditor de la EMT

13. CONSIDERACIONES ADICIONALES DEBIDAS A LA PANDEMIA POR EL COVID-19

A partir del 11 de marzo de 2020, la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS (Organización Mundial de la Salud)) declaró al COVID-19 una pandemia mundial a medida que el nuevo coronavirus se propagó rápidamente a todas las regiones del mundo. Los viajes al país han estado restringidos desde 12/03/2020 y los viajes dentro del país también están restringidos, de acuerdo con las zonas y fases establecidas por decreto. Si no es posible viajar hacia o dentro del país para la evaluación, entonces el equipo de evaluación deberá desarrollar una metodología tomando en consideración la realización de la evaluación de forma virtual y remota, incluyendo el uso de métodos de entrevista remota y revisiones de gabinete extendidas, análisis de datos, encuestas y cuestionarios de evaluación. Esto debe detallarse en el informe inicial y acordarse previamente con el Gerente de Evaluación.

Si toda o parte de la evaluación se deberá llevar a cabo virtualmente, se debe tener en cuenta la disponibilidad de las partes interesadas, y la capacidad o la voluntad de ser entrevistados de forma remota. Adicionalmente, tomar en consideración que la accesibilidad a Internet/computadora podría representar un inconveniente, puesto que muchas contrapartes del gobierno y nacionales pueden estar trabajando desde sus hogares. Estas limitaciones deben reflejarse en el informe de evaluación.

Si no es posible una recopilación de datos/misión de campo, se pueden realizar entrevistas remotas por teléfono o en línea (Skype, zoom, etc.). Los consultores internacionales pueden trabajar de forma remota con el apoyo del evaluador nacional en el campo si fuera seguro para ellos operar y viajar. No se debe poner en peligro a los interesados, consultores o personal del PNUD y la seguridad es la prioridad clave.

Se puede considerar una breve misión de validación si se confirma que es segura para el personal, consultores, partes interesadas y si tal misión es posible dentro del cronograma de evaluación. Igualmente, se pueden contratar consultores nacionales calificados e independientes para llevar a cabo la evaluación y las entrevistas en el país siempre que sea seguro hacerlo.

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6.2. MTR scoring matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)

Initial question: Please describe your role and involvement with the project? According to the initial answer, the interview was conducted, and the corresponding question was chosen from the described portfolio			
Key questions	**Indicators**	**Sources**	**Methodology**
Project strategy:			
To what extent is the project strategy relevant to national priorities and country ownership and involvement?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Is this the best way to obtain the desired results?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
What were the internal and external factors that have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the results?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Are you aware of the coordination spaces established for this project?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Have the budgets and schedules initially established in the document been respected?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Are potential sources of co-financing identified, as well as leveraged and associated financing?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Is the existing team at the national, provincial, local level adequate to manage the project?	Quality of indicators (SMART), Feasibility of M&E plan	PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Are PIR reports, progress reports and other means of communication on project implementation adequate and of good quality?	Degree of adoption of corporate tools and follow-up on recommendations	PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews

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There is an M&E plan in design (results framework, indicators, measurement and reporting plan, use of evaluations) appropriate to the project and country context.		PIR	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Progress towards results:			
What is the degree of compliance with the desired results and objectives so far?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
What positive aspects such as lessons learned have been generated from the project so far and which ones could be important?	Degree of knowledge about the project	Interviews with key stakeholders, quantification of responses	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
In what way have the Project's stakeholders contributed to increase the visibility of the actions?	Statement of contribution and interest of local stakeholders in activities and outputs	Project outputs and communications	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Overall, what is the cost-effectiveness of the project in terms of resources invested and results achieved?	Number of outputs	Reports contrasted/compared with the Prodoc	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
What impact has the project had in social, environmental and conservation aspects?	Degree of knowledge about the outcomes	Interviews Project reports	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
What key results has the project generated (i.e., significant improvements in the state of natural resources, substantive progress in achieving these impacts)?	Progress of the results in the logical framework	Outputs achieved	
Project implementation and adaptive management:			
Has the project so far been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively and adapting to changing conditions?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
To what extent do the project's monitoring and evaluation, information and communication systems contribute to its implementation?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
To what extent is the project consistent with the GEF operational programs or strategic priorities on which the project was funded?	Level of alignment with UNDP Country Program	UNDP Regional Interview Compared with that described by the interviewee	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
What aspects do you consider to be barriers or limitations to the implementation of the project?	Degree of knowledge of the project	Interviews with key stakeholders, quantification of responses	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Have the resources been used appropriately, and to what extent were the project outputs achieved with those resources?	Progress of achievements in the	Scoring of indicators and achievements in the logical framework	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews

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	logical framework of results		
Is due diligence demonstrated in the management of funds, including periodic audits?	Due diligence reports	Spotcheck reports	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Sustainability:			
To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to the long-term sustainability of project results?		PRODOC, PIR, interviews, documentation provided by the Project Management Unit, etc.	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
What practices developed by any of the activities have contributed or can contribute to strengthen the other activities within the framework of the project?	Adaptive management measures reported in response to changes in context.	UNDP Regional Interview	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Does the project complement other strategies or projects implemented in the same territory and thematic area?	Qualitative identification of initiatives	Interviews with PMU and government authorities Prodoc compared/contrasted with background information	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Do the institutions incorporate expected project outcomes and objectives?	Number of instruments generated and adopted	Tangible outputs	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Cross-cutting issues (gender focus, SDGs, among others)			
How does the project contribute to cross-cutting issues of gender, women's empowerment and communities?	Adoption of the approach and scalability	Outputs that implicitly include the approach Number of formal gender documents	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
What is the impact of the project in terms of gender, participation and decision-making?	Percentage of participation	Participation record/registry	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Were the abovementioned processes planned or spontaneous, how are they adapted to the project context?	Degree of adoption of the subject matter	Perception surveyed with all the interviewees	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
How do you describe the participation of communities in relation to the project's subject matter?	Level of alignment to national and international standards	Formal documents Background information Interview with the Gender and Communities Specialist	Collection of primary information and key stakeholder interviews
Strengthening questions			
To what extent do you think the Project's objectives are being achieved?	1 - 5		
Are the financial gaps significant, moderate or none at all regarding the contributions from international cooperation and the Nation for addressing these issues?	Management level for replication and continuity	Interviews with governmental stakeholders UNDP Country Office	

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6.3. Example Questionnaire or Interview Guide used for data collection

Project "Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and programs to safeguard threatened wildlife in Argentina"	
Objective of the questionnaire: to collect data regarding the quality of project implementation	
The following questionnaire is aligned with the strategic objectives of the project. Please contextualize your answers according to your institution's role within the project.	
Project strategy	
To what extent is the project strategy relevant to national priorities and country ownership and involvement?	
Is it the best way to obtain the desired results?	
What were the internal and external factors that have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of the results?	
Are you aware of the coordination spaces established for this project?	
Have the budgets and schedules initially established in the document been respected?	
Are potential sources of co-financing identified, as well as leveraged and associated financing?	
Is the existing team at the national, provincial, local level adequate to manage the project?	
Are PIR reports, progress reports and other means of communication on project implementation adequate and of good quality?	
There is an M&E plan in the design (results framework, indicators, measurement and reporting plan, use of evaluations) appropriate to the project and country context.	
Progress Towards Results:	
What is the degree of compliance with the desired results and objectives so far?	
What positive aspects such as lessons learned have been generated by the project so far and which ones could be important?	
In what way have the Project's stakeholders contributed to increase the visibility of the actions?	
Overall, what is the cost-effectiveness of the project in terms of resources invested and results achieved?	
What impact has the project had in social, environmental and conservation aspects?	
What key results has the project generated (i.e., significant improvements in the state of natural resources, substantive progress in achieving these impacts)?	
Project implementation and adaptive management:	
Has the project so far been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively and adapting to changing conditions?	

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To what extent do the project's monitoring and evaluation, information and communication systems contribute to its implementation?	
To what extent is the project consistent with the GEF operational programs or strategic priorities on which the project was funded?	
What aspects do you consider to be barriers or limitations to the implementation of the project?	
Have the resources been used appropriately, and to what extent were the project outputs achieved with those resources?	
Is due diligence demonstrated in the management of funds, including periodic audits?	
Sustainability:	
To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to the long-term sustainability of project results?	
What practices developed by any of the activities have contributed or can contribute to strengthen the others within the project?	
Does the project complement other strategies or projects implemented in the same territory and thematic area?	
Do the institutions incorporate expected project outcomes and objectives?	
Cross-cutting issues (gender focus, SDGs, among others).	
How does the project contribute to cross-cutting issues of gender, women's empowerment and communities?	
What is the impact of the project in terms of gender, participation and decision-making?	
Were the abovementioned processes planned or spontaneous, how were they adapted to the project context?	
How do you describe the participation of communities in relation to the project's subject matter?	
Strengthening questions	
To what extent do you think the Project's objectives are being achieved?	
Are the financial gaps significant, moderate or none at all regarding the contributions from international cooperation and the Nation for addressing these issues?	

6.4. Rating scales

Progress Towards Results Rating Scale

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Highly satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all of its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objectives/outcomes can be presented as a "good practice".
Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, but with significant shortcomings.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Most of the established objectives/outcomes are not expected to be achieved by the end of the project. The objective/outcome has failed
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets

Project Implementation and Adaptive Management Rating Scale	
Highly satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Sustainability Rating Scale	
Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project’s closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that keys outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

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6.5. MTR mission itinerary

Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible
Presidencia de la Nación

"1983/2023 40 años de democracia"

Proyecto ARG 21G28 "Incorporación de criterios de conservación de la biodiversidad en los programas y las políticas públicas sectoriales e intersectoriales para salvaguardar la vida silvestre amenazada en Argentina"

AGENDA TENTATIVA – Viaje de recorrida por Evaluación de Medio Término

Fecha	Lugar	Actividad
6/11	Buenos Aires	Mañana: PNUD 12.30hs - Entrevista con Beatriz Domingorena, Secretaria en Política Ambiental y RN (ex – MayDS) Tarde: reunión en Cancillería Alejandro Puglisi
7/11	Iguazú, Misiones	Arribo a Iguazú. Check in en hotel. Almuerzo13hs- Visita y recorrida en Guira Ora.
8/11	Iguazú, Misiones	8 a 18hs - Recorrido junto a las autoridades DirecciónProvincial de Vialidad por las rutas 101 y 19. Visita al Parque Provincial Urugua-i.
9/11	Iguazú, Misiones Viaje a Posadas. Nocheen Posadas	9hs - Recorrido por las instalaciones del centro interpretativo Territorio Yaguarete. Parque NacionalIguazú. 17hs - Viaje a Posadas (4 horas) en camioneta
10/11	Posadas, Misiones Regreso por la noche aBuenos Aires	8hs - Recorrida Reserva Natural Campo San Juan. 14hs - Reuniones con autoridades y equipo técnico delMinisterio de Ecología y RRNN de Misiones Ministro de Vialidad Ministro de Ambiente Ministro de Obras Públicas 15hs Reunión equipo Misiones José y Stella Maris
13/11	Oficinas CABA	Entrevistas equipo, jornada en ex – MayDS Mercede Fino Rodrigo Fariña Marina Parra (Financiera) Silvana Pere
14/11	Temaiken, Escobar (traslado ida y vueltadesde Buenos Aires incluido)	9 a 18hs - Actividad práctica de la Diplomatura de manejode fauna silvestre bajo cuidado humano Reunión delegados Chubut Reunión delegados Mendoza
15/11	Temaiken, Escobar (traslado ida y vueltadesde Buenos Aires incluido)	9 a 18hs - Actividad práctica de la Diplomatura de manejode fauna silvestre bajo cuidado humano Reunión delegados Misiones
16/11	Oficinas CABA	9 a 11hs – Entrevista Punto Focal GEF 14 a 15hs – Entrevista PNUD Argentina Matías Mottet y Nahuel Pugliese 16 a 18hs – Entrevista Micaela Bonafina (UBA)
17/11	Oficinas CABA	9 a 11hs – Retroalimentación Mercedes Fino 14hs Reunión de revisión con Rodrigo Fariña

También se mantuvo una agenda de reuniones virtuales

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AGENDA OF VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

MTR AGENDA

15	Wednesday November	16	Thursday November	17	Friday November
08:00 - 09:00		08:00 - 09:00		08:00 - 09:00	Rodrigo Fariña
09:00 - 10:00		09:00 - 10:00		09:00 - 10:00	
10:00 - 11:00		10:00 - 11:00		10:00 - 11:00	
11:00 - 12:00	Silvana PeKer	11:00 - 12:00		11:00 - 12:00	
12:00 - 13:00		12:00 - 13:00		12:00 - 13:00	
13:00 - 14:00		13:00 - 14:00	Maricel Canosa	13:00 - 14:00	
14:00 - 15:00		14:00 - 15:00		14:00 - 15:00	
15:00 - 16:00		15:00 - 16:00		15:00 - 16:00	
16:00 - 17:00		16:00 - 17:00	Larrondo y Walter Servanc	16:00 - 17:00	
17:00 - 18:00		17:00 - 18:00		17:00 - 18:00	
18:00 - 19:00		18:00 - 19:00	Mariana Casella	18:00 - 19:00	
19:00 - 20:00		19:00 - 20:00		19:00 - 20:00	

MTR AGENDA

20	Monday November	21	Tuesday November
08:00 - 09:00		08:00 - 09:00	
09:00 - 10:00		09:00 - 10:00	
10:00 - 11:00		10:00 - 11:00	
11:00 - 12:00		11:00 - 12:00	
12:00 - 13:00	Susana Elsa Ciccioli	12:00 - 13:00	
13:00 - 14:00	Matias López	13:00 - 14:00	Dante Di Nucci
14:00 - 15:00		14:00 - 15:00	
15:00 - 16:00		15:00 - 16:00	
16:00 - 17:00		16:00 - 17:00	Alexandra Fischer
17:00 - 18:00		17:00 - 18:00	dra Romeo - Fundación Te
18:00 - 19:00		18:00 - 19:00	
19:00 - 20:00		19:00 - 20:00	

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6.6. List of people interviewed

NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION
Matías Mottet	matias.mottet@undp.org
Rodrigo Fariña	rfarina@ambiente.gob.ar
Maricel Canosa	mcanosa@ambiente.gob.ar
Andrea Larrondo	alarrondo@ambiente.gob.ar
Silvana Peker	speker@ambiente.gob.ar
Walter Prado	wprado@ambiente.gob.ar
Mariana Casella	mcasella@ambiente.gob.ar
Alejandra Romero	maromeo@temaiken.org.ar
Dante Di Nucci	dinuccidante@gmail.com
Matias Lopez	lkz@mrecic.gov.ar
Alexandra Fischer	alexandra.fischer@undp.org
Susana Elsa Ciccioli	suciccioli@hotmail.com
Micaela Bonafina	Face-to-Face interview
Mercedes Fino	mfino@ambiente.gob.ar
Beatriz Domingonera	Face-to-Face interview
Diego Javier Petzer	Face-to-Face interview
Stella Maris Carmen Brodzics	Face-to-Face interview
Mauricio Gallardo	mgallardo@vialidad.gob.ar
Carlos Luis Novak	Face-to-Face interview
Delegados Chubut	Temaiken Group workshop
Daniel Costa	Face-to-Face interview
Mendoza Park Rangers	Temaiken Group workshop
María Leal	Face-to-Face interview
Iguazú Park, Yaguarté Territory	Group interview
Uruagu-í Provincial Park	Group interview
Mafalda Clara	mafaldaclara@hotmail.com
GOSE Operations Group	Group interview
Guira Oga Rescue Center	Group interview

6.7. List of documents reviewed

Key project documents

• Project Identification Form (PIF)

• Project Document PRODOC

• Original detailed project work plan (CEO endorsement)

• Annual Project Operating Plans

• UNDP Initiation Plan

• UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD)

Project management documents

• Inception workshop

DocuSign Envelope ID: 609C3F6D-6EE5-4843-A703-D0AFA15E05D0

- Annual Project Reports to UNDP
- Quarterly Project Reports
- Audit report (2022)
- Project Steering Committee Minutes and Documents (CDN)
- Social and Environmental Screening Template (SEPS)
- Project Implementation Report (PIR 2023)

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6.8. UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Consultants

Los evaluadores/consultores:

1. Deben presentar una información completa y justa en su evaluación de las fortalezas y debilidades, de tal manera que las decisiones o acciones llevadas a cabo se encuentren bien fundadas.
2. Deben revelar el conjunto completo de conclusiones junto con la información de sus limitaciones y tenerlo a disposición de todos aquellos afectados por la evaluación que posean el derecho expreso para recibir los resultados.
3. Deberán proteger el anonimato y la confidencialidad de los informantes individuales. Deberán ofrecer el máximo tiempo de notificación, limitar las demandas de tiempo y respetar el derecho de las personas a no involucrarse. Los evaluadores deberán respetar el derecho de las personas a otorgar información de manera confidencial, y deben asegurarse de que la información sensible no pueda ser rastreada hasta su origen. Los evaluadores no están obligados a evaluar a personas individuales, pero están deben mantener el equilibrio entre la evaluación de las funciones de gestión y este principio general.
4. En ocasiones, al realizar las evaluaciones destaparán pruebas de delitos. Se debe informar de manera discreta sobre tales casos al órgano de investigación apropiado. Los evaluadores deberán consultar con otras entidades de supervisión relevantes cuando exista la mínima duda sobre si estos temas deberían ser comunicados y de cómo deberían comunicarse.
5. Deberán ser sensibles hacia las creencias, usos y costumbres y actuar con integridad y honestidad en sus relaciones con todas las partes interesadas. En la línea de la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas, los evaluadores deben ser sensibles hacia los temas de discriminación e igualdad de género. Deberán evitar ofender la dignidad y autoestima de aquellas personas con las que establezcan un contacto durante la evaluación. Sabiendo que existe la posibilidad de que la evaluación afecte negativamente a los

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6.9. Signed MTR Final Report Approval Form

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:

Commissioning Unit

Name: Matias Mottet

Signature: DocuSigned by: Matías Mottet 571CC23557BC401... Date: 12-Jun-2024

UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Advisor

Name: Gabriel Jaramillo

Signature: DocuSigned by: 94281976E4884D9... Date: 13-Jun-2024

6.10. Audit trail obtained from comments received on draft MTR report

Informe_Rastro_BD_6198.docx

6.11. Relevant Midterm Tracking Tools

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6.12. Matrix of Assessing Progress Toward Results

Indicador	Baseline Level	Level at latest PIR 2022	Midterm Target	End of Project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
Objetive: Mainstream conservation criteria in sectoral and intersectoral public policies and contribute to their effective implementation to safeguard threatened wildlife.							
UNDP Mandatory Indicator 1 / GEF Core Indicator 11: Number of direct project beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (individuals), including:							
a) Government and judiciary officials trained on wildlife trafficking and illegal hunting control; b) livestock producers (at non-pilot sites), government officials, technical institutions, academia, NGOs, etc. trained in sustainable livestock production; c) Government officials trained on EIA and monitoring for wind energy and road infrastructure; d) People using the Pilot Site roads benefited by avoiding medium/large size wildlife roadkill; e) People with access to legal transport and hunting of wildlife permits issued with SACVEBIO;	Total: 0 a) 0 b) 0 c) 0 d) 0 e) 0 f) 0 g) 0	Total: 387 (161 women + 226 men) a) 129 (68 women + 61 men) b) 134 (32 women + 102 men) c) 123 (61 women + 62 men) d) 0 e) 0 f) 1 g) 0	Total: 1010 a) 500 b) 50 c) 50 d) 300 e) 100 f) 10 g) 0	Total: 6,974 (3,626 women + 3,348 men) a) 1,730 b) 400 c) 118 d) 2,302 e) 400 f) 24 g) 2,000	Total: 387 (161 women + 226 men) a) 129 (68 women + 61 men) b) 134 (32 women + 102 men) c) 123 (61 women + 62 men) d) 0 e) 0 f) 1 g) 0	On track to be achieved	Despite the fact that the mid-term goals have not been completed, there is evidence of considerable progress in the achievement of the indicator. However, it is expected that they will be met by the end of the project, as they are advancing at a considerable pace. The achievements obtained so far in the evaluation of this indicator are as follows: Training aimed at strengthening and promoting the integration of conservation criteria into public policies, both at the sectoral and intersectoral levels, to ensure the protection of threatened wildlife. Approximately 387 people participated in this process, including authorities, technicians and civil society. Preliminary meetings with various key stakeholders to

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f) Livestock producers enhancing sustainable livestock production (at pilot sites); g) People having access and using the information of the National Biodiversity Inventory.							establish and define the terms of reference for the consultancy responsible for conducting the National Biodiversity Inventory. Collaboration is being established with the Biological Information System (SIB) to expand an existing data visualization platform and build on previous efforts in this area.
Mandatory Indicator 2 / GEF Core Indicator 1: Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (hectares), measured by: GEF Sub-indicator 1.2: Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness.	0	4,117 hectares	5,000 hectares	45,357 hectares	82.34% mid-term goal	On track to be achieved	The progress of this indicator in the project has been significant, reaching satisfactory progress with respect to the goal established at mid-term, as evidenced by the installation of three speed control devices, two on National Route (RN) 12 and one on RN 101. This action affects an area of 4,117 hectares, covering the Iguazú National Park (3,380 hectares) and the Puerto Península Provincial Park (737 hectares).
Mandatory Indicator 3 / GEF Core Indicator 4: Area of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (million hectares), as measured by:	0	10,000 hectares	1,083,600 hectares	4,531,425 hectares	10,000 hectares	On track to be achieved	According to the latest Progress Report (PIR), a letter of commitment has been signed with a producer in Corrientes to initiate sustainable livestock production activities on approximately 10,000 hectares. Although the level of

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GEF Sub-indicator 4.1: Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (qualitative assessment, non-certified)							compliance with the latest PIR is below the target set for the mid-term, it is anticipated that the targets at the end of the project will be achieved through increased efforts by the Project Management Unit and key partners.
Mandatory Indicator 4 / GEF Core Indicator 6: Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (million metric tons of CO2e)	0 tons	(not established or not applicable)	3,395,500 tons	5,276,774.4 tons	0 tons	Not on track to be achieved	In this phase of the project, emissions measurements were not carried out due to the lack of a monitoring unit, as well as administrative issues, such as limited personnel, which has prevented the execution of the indicator. However, meetings have been held with universities and NGOs qualified to carry out these measurements in the provinces of Corrientes and Buenos Aires. It is expected that, after the mid-term evaluation and at the end of the project, this indicator will be able to achieve the project objectives with minor deficiencies. In addition, ongoing training in sustainable livestock practices is planned.
Outcome 1: Strengthen federal and provincial governance frameworks for the effective integration of biodiversity conservation into public policies. Cross-sectoral governance of threatened BD strengthened							
Indicator 5: UNDP's Capacity Development Scorecard adapted to measure effectiveness of	Implemented on 03/13/2020 I9: 1 I10: 1	(not established or not applicable)	I9: 2 I10: 2 I11: 1	I9: 3 I10: 3 I11: 3	Reference measure not established.	On track to be achieved	Although the UNDP capacity development scorecard has not yet been implemented, it must be adapted and validated

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cross-sectoral governance and/ or strengthened policy framework. Indicator 9: Extent of the environmental planning and strategy development process. Indicator 10: Existence of adequate environmental policy and regulatory frameworks. Indicator 11: Adequacy of the environmental information available for decision-making.	I11: 1						to the national and local reality. However, progress has been made in relation to regulatory frameworks, such as the drafting of a Traffic Bill, incorporating speed restrictions in National Parks as a preventive measure against animal runovers. The Federal Council of Environment Ministries (COFEMA) approved the first resolution on wildlife roadkill, highlighting this issue as a significant threat to biodiversity in Argentina. In addition, the project is coordinating with indigenous affairs institutions to ensure that project activities do not have negative impacts on the communities. The indicator is expected to be achieved by the end of the project.
Indicator 6: Strengthened national sectoral and provincial policies for wind energy, road infrastructure, livestock management, hunting and wildlife trafficking, and clear enforcement and monitoring mechanisms, measured by: a) # Intersectoral	a) 0 b) 0 c) 0 d) 0 e) 0 f) 3	a) 1 b) 0 c) 1 d) 0 e) 0 f) 3	a) 2 b) 0 c) 2 d) 20% e) 0 f) 3	a) 4 b) 12 c) 6 d) 100% e) 100% f) 5	a) 1 # intersectoral plans b) 0 # prioritized actions		The PIR does not report significant progress with respect to the reference level established for the mid-term. However, it can be observed that there is considerable progress in the development of activities aimed at meeting sub-indicator c, the achievements obtained so far correspond to a consensus methodology, incorporating the

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Biodiversity Plans developed through a participatory process for each one of the prioritized sectors. b)# actions prioritized and implemented as a result of the Intersectoral Biodiversity Plans. c) # instruments prioritized in Output 1.3, developed or updated to integrate biodiversity considerations in targeted sectoral policies d) % of wildlife trafficking control posts inoperation in the departments of Alvear, La Paz and Lavalle in the Province of Mendoza, applying updated and standardized action procedures. e) % integration of the National Biodiversity Inventory into the National Environmental Information System and the National Biological Data Portal.					c) 1 # instruments d) 0 % of checkpoints e) 0 % of integration f) 3 # of species conservation plans		gender perspective and the participation of local communities in project activities, covering both the general objectives and the particularities of each pilot site. In sub-indicators b, d and e, no mid-term target is reported. However, preparatory meetings were held for the contracting of a computer consultancy to develop the National Biodiversity Inventory. No progress is reported for sub-indicator (f). However, technicians in the provinces received training through the “Diploma in wildlife management under human care” to strengthen sectoral policies on wildlife trafficking, and work is currently underway on specific training for the province of Mendoza. Through the execution of these activities, the indicator is expected to be achieved at the end of the project.

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f) # Endangered Species Conservation Plans developed.							
Outcome 2: Implementation of coordinated tools and procedures for integration Sector policies harmonized with BD conservation policies, resulting in reduced threats on selected ecoregions, ecosystems, habitats and species							
Indicator 7: Maintenance or increase in populations of target species in project sites by project end							
a) Ruddy-headed Goose - *Chloephaga rubidiceps* (Case 1); b) Macá tobiano or Hooded Grebe - *Podiceps gallardoi* (Case 1); c) Yaguareté (jaguar): *Panthera onca* (Case 2); d) Yellow Cardinal - *Gubernatrix cristata* (Case 3); e) Pampas Deer - *Ozotoceros bezoarticus* (Case 4)	a) 630 individuals b) 776 c) Aprox. 78 - 120 (Misiones) d) 140 e) 1,495 (Cuenca del Río Aguapey / Aguapey River Watershed, Corrientes Province). 120 (Parque Nacional Iberá / Iberá National Park, Corrientes Province) 149 ± 48 (Bahía de Samborombón / Samborombón Bay, Province of Buenos Aires)	a) 464 b) 650-800 c) 72 - 122 d) 650-1650 e) 148	a) equal or greater b) equal or greater c) equal or greater d) equal or greater e) equal or greater	a) equal or greater b) equal or greater c) equal or greater d) equal or greater e) equal or greater	100 % mid-term benchmark target	Achieved	The project according to the last PIR reports compliance with the indicator because the results of the monitoring of the Ruddy-headed Goose - *Chloephaga rubidiceps*, Macá tobiano or Hooded Grebe - *Podiceps gallardoi*, Yaguareté (jaguar) - *Panthera onca*, Yellow Cardinal - *Gubernatrix cristata* and the Pampas Deer - *Ozotoceros bezoarticus*, show that the project's target species are generally stable. Therefore, this indicator shows satisfactory progress with respect to the goal set for the middle of the period. Monitoring was conducted annually in July 2022 and 2023.
Indicator 8: Degree of implementation/application of models in priority sectors, measured by:							
a: # legal hunting and trade permits issued. b: # vehicle strikes of animals at pilot sites per year.	a) 0 b) 3760 c) 0 d) 0	(not established or not applicable)	a) 200 b) 3760 c) 0 d) 2	a) 300 b) 2632 c) 25% d) 24	Reference measure not established.	On track to be achieved	For this indicator, the PIR has not established a level of progress. However, progress is reported for sub-indicators such as a) the design of a computerized system for inter-jurisdictional biodiversity traffic

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c: % decrease in the mortality rate associated with wind farms. d: # livestock producers applying sustainable livestock production practices.							control. b) a bill was presented to reduce speeds in national parks and three radars were installed; although the law has not been approved by the legislature, it has been implemented in Misiones[7]. c) a working group was created with key stakeholders to define a wind farm monitoring plan. d) technicians and producers were trained in sustainable livestock production practices. By carrying out these activities, it is expected that the indicator will be met at the end of the project.
Outcome 3: Learning and knowledge management framework for the integration of biodiversity conservation into public policies and programs. Knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation carried out, facilitating the integration of BD conservation in sectoral and intersectoral public policies in other areas of the country and internationally							
Indicator 9: % of awareness of key sectoral Ministries about threats and appropriate mitigation measures to increase wildlife conservation in the wind energy, road infrastructure development, livestock management, hunting and illegal wildlife trafficking sectors	The survey will be applied to key sectoral ministries at the beginning of project implementation.	(not established or not applicable)		25% increase in awareness among key sectoral ministries.	Reference measure not established	On track to be achieved	According to the PRODOC, the baseline level of the indicator would be established based on a survey of key sectoral ministries at the beginning of project implementation. However, as reported in the PIR 2023, the mid-term level has not yet been defined, but the implementation of actions aimed at reporting activities of the indicator is highlighted, such as conducting surveys to

[7] https://www.argentina.gob.ar/noticias/herramientas-viales-para-la-conservacion-de-la-fauna-en-el-parque-nacional-iguazu#:~:text=Velocidades%20m%C3%A1ximas%20y%20responsabilidad%20colectiva&text=La%20velocidad%20m%C3%A1xima%20dentro%20del,la%20mayor%C3%ADa%20de%20los%20tramos.

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							identify environmental training needs within the entity, the creation of a video as part of the campaign on wildlife roadkill, the development and implementation of the "RUTA VIVA" campaign, and the ABC of Biodiversity course. With the implementation of these activities, the indicator is expected to be achieved by the end of the project.
Indicator 10: % implementation of the communication strategy and knowledge management (best practices, lessons learned)	0	(not established or not applicable)	20%	100%	Reference measure not established	On track to be achieved	There is no formal communication strategy, due to the centralization of communication approvals, however, the contribution to the RUTA VIVA campaign, aimed at raising awareness among drivers in protected areas is noteworthy. Also the Yaguareté territory, a thematic site for the conservation of species in the Iguazú National Park always uses the logos of GEF and UNDP.
Indicator 11: % implementation of community-based BD monitoring plans.	0	(not established or not applicable)	30%	100%	Reference measure not established	On track to be achieved	Activities aimed at meeting the indicator are reported, such as monitoring for the red-headed goose in Chubut, capybaras in Buenos Aires and the jaguar and birds in Misiones during the year 2022. With these activities, the indicator is expected to be achieved at the end of the project.

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							In this component, there has been an exchange of information (enabling conditions) with the Directorate of Guaraní Affairs. The National Epidemiological Surveillance Program and Fauna Management Protocol are also part of the component and are already being implemented.
Green = Achieved		**Yellow** = On track to be achieved			**Red** = Not on track to be achieved		

6.13. Theory of Change

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