Public Disclosure Authorized

Forest Conservation and Sustainability in the Heart of the Colombian Amazon (P144271)

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN | Colombia | IBRD/IDA | Investment Project Financing (IPF) | FY 2015 | Seq No: 21 | Archived on 13-Nov-2024 | ISR02236

Implementing Agencies: IDEAM, Instituto SINCHI de Investigación Amazónica, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Parques Nacionales Naturales

1. OBJECTIVE

1.1 Development Objective

Original Development Objective (Approved as part of Approval package on 07-Dec-2014)

The project's global environmental objective (GEO) is the same as the project's development objective (PDO), namely, to improve governance and promote sustainable land use activities in order to reduce deforestation and conserve biodiversity in the Project area.

Has the Development Objective been changed since Board Approval of the Project Objective?

No

2. COMPONENTS

Name
1. Protected Areas Management and Financial Sustainability:(Cost 4,560,000.00)
2. Sustainable forest and water management and use:(Cost 9,000,000.00)
3. Governance, Policies and Incentives:(Cost 1,310,000.00)
4.Project Coordination, Communications, Monitoring and Evaluation:(Cost 3,500,000.00)

3. OVERALL RATINGS

Name	Previous	Current
Progress towards achievement of PDO	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Overall Implementation Progress (IP)	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Overall Risk Rating	Substantial	Substantial

4. KEY ISSUES & STATUS

4.1 Implementation Status and Key Decisions

This ISR updates the one cleared on September 20,2024 to incorporate the results from the implementation support mission that was held in Bogota on September 23 to 27, 2024. The mission allowed for the team to gather more information and discuss project accomplishments and challenges since the last reporting period. The mission also provided an opportunity to review the technical and evaluation steps that will be necessary for the closing of AF1 in November 2024, particularly considering the need to make implementation decisions in those areas where conflict has prevented the expected access.

Progress towards achieving the PDO and implementation progress remain satisfactory. At the mission, it was ratified the strategic contribution the project has done to key government strategies in the Amazon, namely the Deforestation Control Strategy and National Restoration Plan. In particular, through the project, the methodologies towards social agreements for conservation, restoration and non deforestation were established and then adopted to be put in place in prioritized areas that have the potential to shift from active deforestation hotspots to development nuclei for community-led forestry economy and biodiversity (NDFyB due to its name in Spanish).
A positive accomplishment was announced during the mission: the formal adoption of the management plan for the Ramsar site Estrella Fluvial de Inirida. This was a long 10 year coordinated effort between multiple relevant institutions and with the project's support. The next period will most likely see an increase in project results in terms of indicators as new conservation, non-deforestation and restoration agreements will be signed.

Overall, and despite rising challenges due to internal conflict, the project continues making progress in the development and intermediate outcomes, especially those related to improved management of protected areas, indigenous territories and other area based conservation measures such as Ramsar sites, and increased areas under sustainable management practices. Strengthening community governance for both indigenous and campesino communities is an ongoing positive effort from the project. Compliance of the signed Conservation, Restoration and Non-Deforestation Agreements (ACRND) continues being monitored with satisfactory results. Commendable efforts are also those by which the project supports and informs with environmental criteria land use planning at different scales (national and subnational levels) and sectors (infrastructure). The Governance Roundtable for Peace with Nature in Guaviare was established, positively contributing to the regional and national strategies to stop deforestation. During the semester 97% of respondents to surveys indicated satisfaction to the training events carried out by the project.

Lessons Learned. Next year, the project will complete 10 years since the original financing became effective. As part of the mission, two days were spent to reflecting on the lessons, achievements, and challenges since the project began operations. This workshop included representatives of relevant public institutions from the environmental sector, leaders of local communities and indigenous peoples, as well as the project team's specialists. Lessons were gathered along several topics ranging from the participatory institutional arrangements, community engagement, mainstreaming environmental criteria in other sectors that can potentially drive deforestation, and providing a development pathway that ensures communities benefit from conserved, standing and well managed forests. This has been designed as part of a larger process that will include workshops in the regions to gather successes, challenges and recommendations for this and other complementary projects. The results will be disseminated through several products.

5. SYSTEMATIC OPERATIONS RISK-RATING TOOL

Risk Category	Rating at Approval Approval Package - 08 Dec 2014	Last Approved Rating ISR Seq. 020 - 24 Sep 2024	Proposed Rating
Political and Governance	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Macroeconomic	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Sector Strategies and Policies	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Technical Design of Project or Program	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Fiduciary	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Environment and Social	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Stakeholders	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Other	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial
Overall	Moderate	Substantial	Substantial

6. RESULTS

6.1 PDO Indicators by PDO Outcomes

Indicator Name	Baseline		Actual (Previous)		Actual (Current)		Closing Period	
	Value	Month/Year	Value	Date	Value	Date	Value	Month/Year
Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness (Hectare(Ha))	0.00	Aug/2014	7,056,335.00	29-Dec-2023				
	Comments on achieving targets		Current value reflects the year 2023 for 9 national protected areas and 3 regional ones. The actual number of hectares with improved management declined because of: 1. a decrease in the METT value in one protected area (Picachos NPA, whose strategic plan was not fully completed), and 2. the increase in the value for two regional PAs was not what was estimated for that year (Serrania de la Lindosa and Bajo Guayabero). The project continues supporting the activities to improve management, bearing in mind that not all decisions lie within the scope of the project. The adoption of the management plan for La Lindosa depends on a consultation with indigenous communities that was requested in 2023 and goes beyond the project's scope. For Picachos PA, a consultant has been hired to work in the strategic plan to be completed by the end of 2024.On the declaration of Bajo Guayabero area, see comment in indicator below.						
Areas under new or improved integrated sustainable management plans as a result of project activities (excluding PA) (Hectare(Ha))	10,110.00	Dec/2016	2,009,237.00	30-Jun-2024	2,009,237.00	30-Jun-2024		
	Comments on achieving targets		No change compared to the past semester. However, community-forestry plans were designed, and training activities conducted in the 4 NDFyB of intervention. Forest inventories were conducted to identify potential for value chains, and studies to obtain the licenses to produce and commercialize specific NTFPs. When new agreements are signed, the corresponding hectares will be tracked in the indicator. With field visits and remote sensing, compliance with previous agreements was verified with a level of compliance above 80%. In addition, action plans with indigenous communities are being designed or under implementation to recover and disseminate knowledge on native species, dyes for handcrafts, and local languages. The project continued working with the communities of the						

		EFI and Tarapoto Lakes wetlands in the implementation of their management plans, including community monitoring and tourism activities.						
New areas of environmental significance brought under legal protection (biodiversity conservation, avoided deforestation) (Hectare(Ha))			3,104,945.00	29-Dec-2023				
	Comments on achieving targets	No new areas are expected. However, the process towards the declaration of the new regional Bajo Guayabero PA, that was prioritized by the government, continues making some progress with new studies that justify its importance in terms of connectivity with other key PAs, and its biophysical value and existing socioeconomic dynamics. The analysis concluded that, if the rate of fragmentation continues, due to transformations caused by agriculture, the natural ecosystems of the Bajo Guayabero run the risk of losing their functionality. Regardless of the project's target, achieving the declaration of this new protected area has encountered challenges, but the project has persevered in supporting the government in this activity to protect a strategic area for connectivity. If the final formal declaration is not achieved during the project's lifetime, support will still be provided for conservation and non deforestation activities.						
Land area under sustainable landscape management practices (Hectare(Ha))			25,177.60	29-Dec-2023			699,628.00	Sep/2026
	Comments on achieving targets	The area under sustainable management practices reported in the previous period was maintained. The fact the indicator value has no change, does not reflect the complete scope and multiple steps being accomplished. Consultations towards new agreements, land use planning at farm level, forest inventories in the nuclei are among the activities delivered. Hectares under sustainable management practices will only be registered when the management plan for community forestry is presented to the environmental authorities. Review of the status of the farms with already signed agreements have proven more demanding in terms of costs and time than expected and this has also shifted project's efforts.						
GHG emission levels established annually for the Amazon Region by IDEAM (Number)			1.00	29-Dec-2023			1.00	Sep/2026
	Comments on achieving targets	The project continues to measure greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation on an annual basis in accordance with the methodology implemented by IDEAM and the Ministry of the Environment. Compared to the official report for 2022, the results obtained for 2023 show that the deforestation was reduced by 36% at the national level (79,256 hectares deforested), and that, for the Colombian Amazon, it was reduced by 38% (44,274 hectares						

		deforested). It is worth noting that in 2023 in the Colombian Amazon, deforestation was the lowest in the last 23 years. The reports which have been disseminated as needed, also indicate that the protected areas with higher reduction in deforestation were those ones in the Amazon.

6.2 Intermediate Results Indicators by Components

Not Categorized								
Indicator Name	Baseline		Actual (Previous)		Actual (Current)		Closing Period	
	Value	Month/Year	Value	Date	Value	Date	Value	Month/Year
Mechanism for funding of PA system in Colombia designed and operational (Colombia Heritage- HECO) (Number)	0.00	Aug/2014	1.00	29-Dec-2023			1.00	Sep/2026
	Comments on achieving targets		The closing conditions to consider HeCo operational were met in previous periods with the support of project resources and co-financing. With the mechanism in place, activities have been focused on supporting implementation of activities with indigenous communities that contribute to HeCo's conservation goals.					
Leverage funding for the national financing mechanism for protected area system (Amount(USD))			47,277,000.00	29-Dec-2023				
	Comments on achieving targets		The indicator value already surpassed the expected amount. In terms of additional funding to secure the sustainability of the mechanism its worth highlighting the commitment from the GoC to allocate 17% of the governments Fund for Life and Biodiversity to HeCo. This Fund receives 80% of the carbon tax established by the country at national level. A review of the first years of HeCo since its inception will provide lessons to National Parks for the years to come.					
Area of land restored (Hectare(Ha))			1,707.00	30-Jun-2024	1,707.00	30-Jun-2024		
	Comments on achieving targets		No new hectares were reported this semester. The project made progress in the identification and selection of new potential areas for restoration, applying biophysical and socio-cultural criteria, both inside and outside protected areas. Existent community led nurseries continued preparing seedlings. Monitoring of existent restoration areas is ongoing, and technical assistance to improve management practices continued. Restoration in					

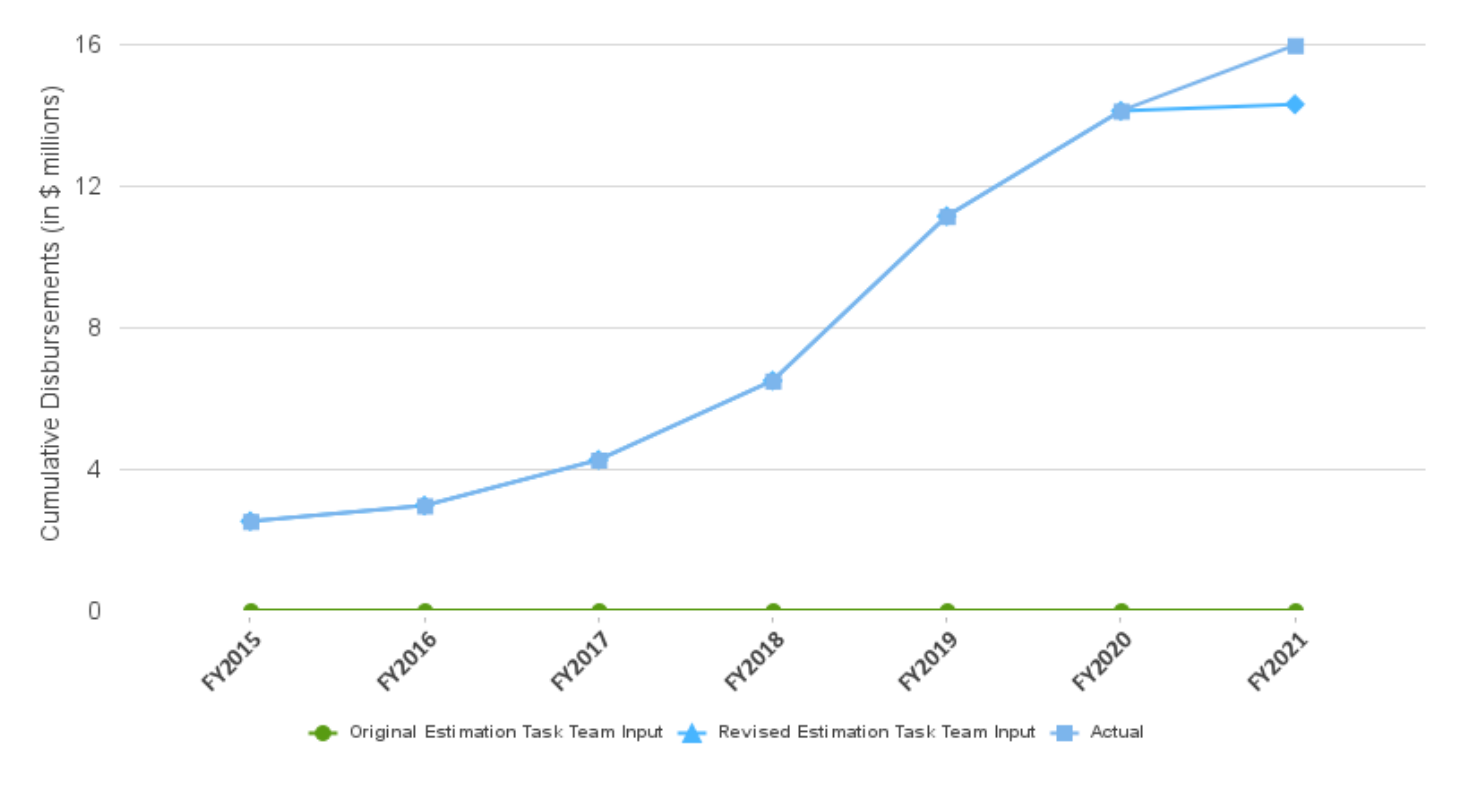
			indigenous reserves under traditional practices continues as planned. In addition, adjustments have been made in areas of intervention in cases of intensified conflict, and together with communities and government entities, and following safeguard procedures, the project has either suspended activities until things improve or for a couple of cases its exploring moving the activities to other areas.					
Farmers reached with agricultural assets or services (Number)			947.00	29-Dec-2023				
	Comments on achieving targets		An increase in the indicator was achieved. This is the result of engaging 22 new beneficiaries (including 2 women) in the monitoring, surveillance, and control program in the Ramsar EFI. On the other hand, 947 beneficiaries who signed agreements last semester remain engaged and participating in project activities.					
Farmers reached with agricultural assets or services - Female (Number)	229.00		340.00				917.00	
Number of agreements w/ sectors driving deforestation on land-use plan, strat for integrated landscape manag, policies or regulations, signed and under implementa (Number)	0.00	Aug/2014	18.00	29-Dec-2023			13.00	Sep/2026
	Comments on achieving targets		The number of agreements signed and under implementation remains. Agreements with municipal governments to incorporate environmental criteria in their road infrastructure plans were renewed and there are ongoing conversations with new municipalities. The format of these Memorandums of Understanding with the municipal government was adjusted to broaden the scope of the support and technical advice to be provided. The scope of the new agreement includes: (i) inventory of land accesses and development of the Municipal Road Plan, (ii) apply the Green Road Infrastructure Guidelines (LIVV), the Environmental Management Guide for Tertiary Roads, the Guide to diagnose the running over of Wildlife in Colombia and the Guide for Fauna Passages in Linear Infrastructure, (i) studies for the Environmental License process for roads classified as illegal that have a high social and economic importance.					
Number of properties at the agricultural frontier that have been subject to zoning (Number)			313.00	30-Jun-2024	313.00	30-Jun-2024		
	Comments on achieving targets		This goal was met in the second semester of 2021.					

			14,630.00	29-Dec-2023				
Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender (Number)	Comments on achieving targets		During this semester, the number of direct beneficiaries of the project's investments increased with 374 new participants in capacity building activities, 127 of which are women. During this period, the project continued to adopt strategies to increase not only attendance, especially indigenous and rural women, where their participation has been lower. A lesson learned with the consolidation of this indicator is that the formats of the attendance lists need to be adjusted to clearly identify the new people who are joining the project and to differentiate those who are accompanying and/or facilitators participating in the training.					
Percentage of women (Percentage)			44.00					
Strengthened capabilities of environmental authorities for forest monitoring according to specific action plans (Number)			9.00	29-Dec-2023			9.00	Sep/2026
	Comments on achieving targets		Training by IDEAM to other environmental authorities continues to result in increased capacity to generate accurate data on natural forest and deforestation at national and regional levels. With the goal of providing training on specific relevant environmental protection themes, four workshops were held with the participation of the technical teams of the Environmental Authority, local governments, the police's Rural Security Directorate. The training focused on monitoring deforestation and forest cover, control of deforestation and wildlife trafficking, and deforestation alerts. Satisfaction surveys were conducted and assessments done to track increased capabilities.					
Early warning system (deforestation alerts) in the Amazon region operational according to defined criteria (Number)	0.00	Aug/2014	4.00	30-Jun-2024	4.00	30-Jun-2024		
	Comments on achieving targets		In this semester, IDEAM generated and published the Early Deforestation Alert Bulletins (AT-DD) No.37 (Quarter IV of 2023) and No.38 (Quarter I of 2024), which present the results of monitoring forest loss and deforestation drivers, resulting from the automated processes of coverage analysis based on satellite images in the Colombian Amazon. These two bulletins become the required deforestation alerts and complete the total four expected per year.					
Levels of satisfaction on the effectiveness and relevance of training and knowledge	0.00	Aug/2014	90.00	29-Dec-2023				
	Comments on achieving targets		In this semester, 97% of the people that responded the surveys indicated a satisfactory or highly satisfactory level on the effectiveness and relevance of the training provided. A total					

exchange events (Percentage)			of 207 surveys were analyzed, following the methodology and instrument for their application. Regarding specific questions included in the survey, 97% of respondents considered that the objectives of the trainings were achieved; 93% considered that the topics and contents were clear; and, 80% that the practical exercises and tools were useful to increase understanding of the topic.					
Grievances registered related to delivery of project benefits that are addressed (Percentage)			100.00	29-Dec-2023			100.00	Sep/2026
	Comments on achieving targets		In the first half of 2024, twenty eight (28) grievances were submitted to the project through the virtual and in person channels. Additional options for submitting grievances or requests, plus the increased visibility of the project intervening in the NDFyB, has resulted in more requests for information. Most of them were requests for information or support from the project, and all cases were timely attended, managed, and resolved. Training on the mechanism was agreed to happen with new team members.					

7. DATA ON FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

7.1 Cumulative Disbursements



7.2 Disbursements (by loan)

Loan/Credit/TF	Status	Original	Revised	Cancelled	Disbursed	Undisbursed	% Disbursed	Historical Disbursed
TF-B5182	Effective	18.37	18.37	0.00	4.31	14.05	23.48%	18.37
TF-A5789	Effective	12.00	12.00	0.00	12.00	0.00	100.00 %	12.00
TF-18478	Closed	10.40	10.37	0.00	10.37	0.00	100.00 %	10.40

7.3 Key Dates (by loan)

Loan/Credit/TF	Status	Approval	Signing	Effectiveness	Orig. Closing	Rev. Closing
TF-18478	Closed	21-Jan-2015	21-Jan-2015	02-Mar-2015	30-Jun-2019	30-Jun-2019
TF-A5789	Effective	31-Oct-2017	07-Nov-2017	07-Nov-2017	30-Jun-2022	30-Nov-2024
TF-B5182	Effective	30-Apr-2021	13-May-2021	05-Oct-2021	30-Nov-2024	30-Sep-2026

8. KEY DATES

Key Events	Planned	Actual
Approval	05-Dec-2014	08-Dec-2014
Effectiveness	02-Mar-2015	02-Mar-2015
Mid-Term Review No. 01	03-Feb-2020	02-Mar-2020
Operation Closing/Cancellation	30-Sep-2026	

9. RESTRUCTURING HISTORY

Restructuring Level 2 Approved on 15-Jun-2022
Restructuring Level 2 Approved on 20-Dec-2023

10. ASSOCIATED OPERATION(S)

There are no associated operations