



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



global
environment
facility
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

FAO-GEF Project Implementation Report

2025 – Revised Template

Period covered: 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Table of Contents

[1. BASIC PROJECT DATA](#)

[2. PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING PROJECT OBJECTIVE\(S\) \(DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE\)](#)

[3. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS \(IP\)](#)

[4. SUMMARY ON PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES](#)

[5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS \(ESS\): RISKS FROM THE PROJECT](#)

[6. RISKS TO THE PROJECT](#)

[7. FOLLOW-UP ON MID-TERM REVIEW OR SUPERVISION MISSION](#)

[8. MINOR PROJECT AMENDMENTS](#)

[9. STAKEHOLDERS' ENGAGEMENT](#)

[10. GENDER MAINSTREAMING](#)

[11. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES](#)

[12. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES INVOLVEMENT](#)

[13. CO-FINANCING TABLE](#)

[14. GEO LOCATION INFORMATION](#)

[Annex. Monitoring Area-based GEF Core Indicator Commitments and Progress with FERM](#)

IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER:

The final version of this PIR will be submitted to the GEF Secretariat.

The report will then be publicly available on the GEF website ([click here](#)).

Sensitive information should be submitted in Annex to be uploaded separately.

In such cases, please contact faogef-pir-support@fao.org for guidance.

1. Basic Project Data

General Information

Region:	Latin America and the Caribbean (RLC)
Country(ies):	Ecuador
Project Title:	LDN Target-Setting and Restoration of Degraded Landscapes in Western Andes and Coastal areas
FAO Project Symbol:	GCP/ECU/093/GFF
GEF ID:	10184
Type of Trust Fund(s):	GFF
GEF Focal Area(s):	Land Degradation
Project Executing Partners:	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
Initial project duration (years):	Five (5) years

Project Dates

GEF CEO Endorsement Date:	03/06/2021
Actual Agency Approval Date	02/02/2021
Project Implementation Start Date/EOD:	21/09/2021
First Disbursement Date	31/12/2021
Planned Project End Date/NTE1:	09/09/2025
Revised project implementation End date (if approved)2:	31/12/2026
Actual Completion Date:	N/A
Expected Financial Closure Date:	31/12/2027

Funding

GEF Grant Amount (USD):	\$	4,416,210.00
Total GEF grant delivery (as of June 30, 2025 (USD):	\$	2,509,229.70
Total Co-financing amount (USD)3:	\$	28,328,787.00
Total estimated co-financing materialized as of June 30, 2025:	\$	22,663,441.71

M & E Milestones

Date of Last Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting:	07/02/2025
Expected Mid-term Review date5:	n/a
Actual Mid-term review date (if already completed):	09/04/2025
Expected Terminal Evaluation Date6:	31/06/2026

Overall ratings

Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/outcomes (cumulative):	Satisfactory (S)
Overall implementation progress rating:	Satisfactory (S)
Overall risk rating:	Moderate

Status

Implementation Status (1st PIR, 2nd PIR, etc. Final PIR):	3rd PIR
---	---------

1 Date that was originally foreseen at the project’s operationalization and indicated in FPMIS.
2 If NTE extension has been requested and approved by the FAO-GEF Coordination Unit.
3 This is the total amount of co-financing as included in the CEO Document/Project Document.
4 Please refer to the Section 13 of this report where updated co-financing estimates are requested and indicate the total co-financing amount materialized.
5 The Mid-Term Review (MTR) should take place after the 2nd PIR, around half-point between EOD and NTE. The MTR report in English should be submitted to the GEF Secretariat within 4 years of the CEO Endorsement date.
6 The Terminal Evaluation date should be discussed with OED 6 months before the project’s NTE date.

Project Contacts

Contact	Name, Title, Division/Institution	E-mail
Project Coordinator (PC)	Manuel Peralvo / CONDESAN	manuel.peralvo@condesan.org
Budget Holder (BH)	Gherda Barreto /FAO	gherda.barreto@fao.org
GEF Operational Focal Point (GEF OFP)	Fabián Jaramillo/ MAATE	ecuador.gef@ambiente.gob.ec
Lead Technical Officer (LTO)	Andrea Jessica Casaza / FAO RLC	Jessica.Casaza@fao.org
GEF Technical Officer (GTO)	María Kattia Escudero Rodríguez / FAO OCB	Maria.EscuderoRodriguez@fao.org

Key Project Management Unit Personnel

Please indicate the composition of the PMU as per the Terms of Reference in the ProDoc. If any new position was established during the project implementation, please insert it accordingly.			
Position planned (as per ProDoc)	Position filled (Yes/No)	Start date, Name, Contact	Comments
ADMIN: Administrative support	Yes	June 2022; Giovanna Cevallos; giovanna.cevallos@condesan.org	
CTA: Chief Technical Advisor	Yes	June 2022; Manuel Peralvo; manuel.peralvo@condesan.org	
AT1: Governance and Land Use Planning Specialist	Yes	November 2022; Alexandra Garces; alexandra.garces@ndtcondesan.org	
AT2: Sustainable Land Management Practices Specialist	Yes	December 2022; Rossana Proaño; rossana.proanio@ndtcondesan.org	
AT4: LDN Monitoring specialist	Yes	December 2022; Eric Metzler; eric.metzler@ndtcondesan.org	
AT5: Technical and Operational Liasson and Project Monitoring Specialist	Yes	July 2024; Carol Tapia; carol.tapia@ndtcondesan.org	
AT3: Value chain and incentive specialist	Yes	April 2023; Liggia Estrella; liggia.estrella@ndtcondesan.org	
TL1: Field site leader, Northern Andes Site	Yes	July 2023; Margarita Vaca; margarita.vaca@ndtcondesan.org	
TL2: Field site leader, Central Andes Site	Yes	June 2023; Víctor Anguieta; victor.anguieta@ndtcondesan.org	
TL3: Field site leader, Coastal Cordillera Site	Yes	June 2023; Alberto Borbor; alberto.borbor@ndtcondesan.org	
TL3: Field site leader, Coastal Cordillera Site Communications Specialist (partial time).	Yes	June 2024; Giovanny Cevallos; fabricio.cevallos@condesan.org	

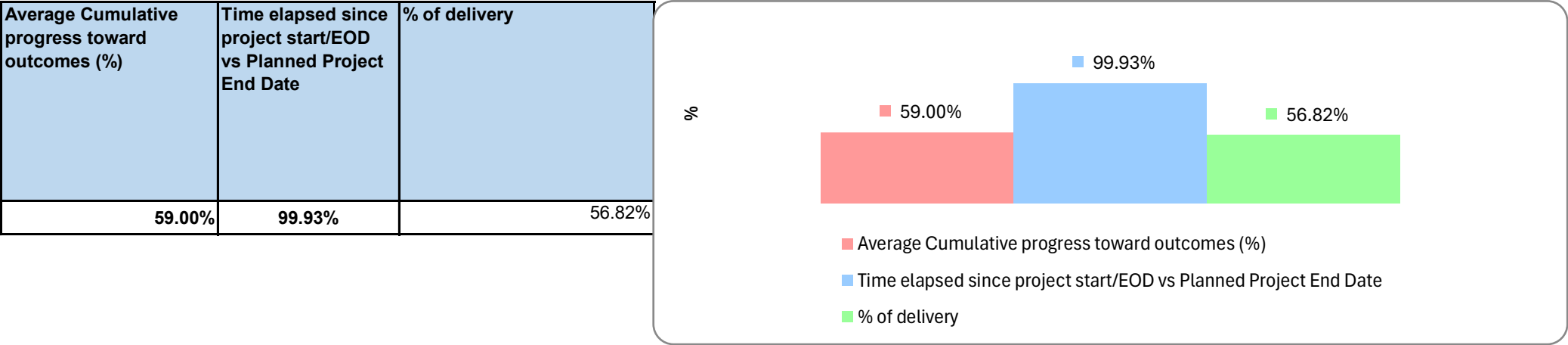
2. Progress towards Achieving Project Objective(s) (Development objective)

(All inputs in this section should be cumulative from project start, not annual)

Please indicate the project's main progress towards achieving its objective(s) and the cumulative level of achievement of each outcome since the start of project implementation.								
Project or Development Objective	Outcomes	Outcome indicators	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End-of-project Target	Cumulative progress level at 30 June 2025	% of cumulative progress	Progress rating
Objective: Prevent, reduce and reverse land degradation processes (SDG 2, 13, 15) to promote the sustainable development of rural communities, ensuring the provision of key ecosystem services and food sovereignty, within the framework of national efforts to achieve the LDN in Ecuador (2.4.1; 13.2.1; 15.3.1)	Outcome 1.1: Institutional actors make decisions with a LDN approach based on an established monitoring system that is regularly fed	Project Indicator # 1: LDN information gathering and monitoring system working and producing LDN national indicator reports mainstreaming gender and interculturality variables.	There are several national monitoring initiatives led by the MAAE and the MAG, this includes national progress for LUCC and COS. In addition, MAAE and MAG have environmental (SUIA), agricultural (SIPA) and forest information systems. Progress is needed in the development of national LDN indicators and targets that are reported to the Convention.	Information system gathering and monitoring the LDN established, defining national LDN targets, protocols for monitoring indicators and institutional arrangements, sensitive to gender and multiculturalism, for long - term monitoring agreed among key actors (including MAAE and MAG).	System survey information and monitoring of LDN running and generating national LDN indicators, reports, integrating variables related to gender and multiculturalism.	The National Observatory of Land Degradation (ONDT) continues its development, and the Santa Elena Peninsula State University (UPSE) has joined the working group of the eight universities, MAATE, and MAG for methodological development, monitoring, and practical experimentation in the nodes and working groups, highlighting the important work of women researchers in this process. The project encourages the participation of women in key research positions. During this period, the ONDT system already has a defined management model, a first version of a website, and a geoportal under development. The development of national indicators for monitoring land degradation was finalized during this reporting period. The models and maps developed during the 2000-2023 period, as well as the final report, were validated by MAATE and MAG. The national indicator SO2-3 Trends in the proportion of population exposed to land degradation disaggregated by sex is part of the PRAIS report, and will be reviewed for PRAIS5, to incorporate variation in trends by geographical region, and to add an intercultural dimension to the report. In addition, the governance of the National Observatory on Land Degradation (ONDT) was defined in a workshop held on April 2025. Monitoring of land degradation and the impact of SLM practices continued in the nodes of the ONDT: 1) dry forest restoration in Santa Elena, 2) linkages between soils, vegetation and water in degraded paramos in Bolivar, and 3) impacts of minimum tillage practices in Cotacachi. First versions of protocols to monitor herbaceous paramo and high elevation wetlands have been developed as well as a first version of the webpage and online map viewer for the ONDT.	62.00%	Satisfactory (S)
	Outcome 1.2: Key actors at national and sub-national levels apply knowledge and tools for the implementation of the LDN approach to measures planning, implementation and monitoring.	Project Indicator # 5: Number of people with capacities strengthened in the LDN approach for the implementation of SLM/SFM practices and that apply knowledge and tools in the three intervention areas (disaggregated by sex, ethnicity and age).	The LDN approach is new to most actors at the national and sub-national level. The application of knowledge and tools relevant to the LDN approach will require the development of capacities and tools that allow their use by technicians and landowners / users to plan, execute and monitor LDN measures.	At least 30 Technical (national, subnational, researchers) with capacities strengthened in planning the LDN approach to the monitoring of the LDN. At least 10 community promoters with training to promote the LDN approach (40% are women; 30% belong to peoples and nationalities). At least 30 people with strengthened capacities to implement SLM practices (40% are women; 30% belong to peoples and nationalities).	At least 100 technical (national, subnational, researchers) with knowledge and capabilities strengthened in the LDN approach planning, implementation of measures and the monitoring of the LDN. At least 30 community promoters with training to promote the LDN approach (40% are women; 30% belong to towns and nationalities). At least 90 people with strengthened capacities to implement SLM practices (40% are women; 30% belong to peoples and nationalities).	The project continues to implement various activities to improve understanding and capacity to design, implement, and monitor actions to combat land degradation. These include: 1) Capacity building within the ONDT Observatory: testing of land management practices within monitoring nodes. 2) Capacity development for the adoption of SLM practices at intervention sites, related to: reseeding pastures on livestock farms, productive livestock and grazing time, regenerative livestock farming, nutrient replenishment in pastures, integrated fire management, production and application of bioinputs, establishment of living fences and infiltration ditches on livestock farms, sustainable management practices for toquillales, and management of agroforestry systems. 3) Sustainable land management initiatives and their governance processes. 4) Financial education and management models for productive organizations in the identified value chains. As a result of these actions, the following progress is reported: - Capacity building for national LDN monitoring: From the start of the project through June 2025, a total of 381 attendances (133 women and 248 men) were recorded for in-person and virtual work activities, corresponding to approximately 140 people (91 men and 49 women) who are currently undergoing capacity building for LDN monitoring. During the specific reporting period (July 2024–June 2025), a total of 169 attendances (69 women and 100 men) were recorded for capacity building events. Training activities include workshops, exchanges, and training sessions on the fundamentals of national, subnational, and local monitoring, baseline development, and indicators, among others. - Community promoters in the 3 project implementation sites: 22 promoters (16 men and 6 women) - People with strengthened capacities to implement SLM practices: Since the start of the project until June 2025, 1,018 people have attended training events related to the implementation of SLM practices in the three intervention sites (347 women, 669 men and two others), which corresponds to approximately 567 people who are in the process of strengthening their capacity in SLM practices in the project. In the specific reporting period (July 2024 to June 2025), a total of 527 attendances at training events are recorded (183 women, 342 men and 2 others). Training activities include: field schools, field practices, workshops, courses, talks, and exchanges. The final systematization process will determine the effective number of people who participated in the various capacity-building activities based on recorded attendance.	56.00%	Satisfactory (S)
	Outcome 1.3: National and sub-national authorities include the LDN approach into national policies and planning processes, at different levels and with appropriate inter-agency coordination mechanisms.	Project Indicator # 7: Effective inter-institutional and / or multilevel coordination mechanisms to achieve LDN	Inter-institutional coordination mechanisms on this issue are weak and are not implemented on a regular basis.	At least 1 intersectoral and / or multilevel coordination mechanism activated with LDN actors.	At least 1 intersectoral and / or multilevel coordination mechanism activated with LDN actors.	Through the LDN Project, MAATE and MAG formed the Ad Hoc Group (GTAH) in June 2024 to provide support and technical assistance for the formulation of the National LDN & CRS Action Plan. The LDN Project supports the Environmental Authority and the Agricultural Authority in the development of this tool. In this regard, the Project's role in this space is to prepare the meeting content (technical inputs, agendas, methodology), facilitate meetings, systematize progress, and provide feedback on the consultancy products based on the input received. Its members are technical counterparts from MAATE (National Landscape Restoration Program, Biodiversity Directorate, National Forestry Directorate, Climate Change Adaptation Directorate, and Vice Ministry of Water) and MAG (Directorate of Agricultural Risks and Insurance, Family and Peasant Agriculture, CGINA, Undersecretariat of Agricultural Productivity, Undersecretariat of Livestock Productivity). At the moment, the group is actively operating and has met with the following objectives: - First meeting – June 2024: Formation of the Ad Hoc Group - Second meeting – July 2024: Review of contributions to the development of the National Action Plan on Land Degradation (NAP) for LDN&CRS - Third meeting – August 2024: Review of the econometric model to identify drivers of land degradation - Fourth meeting – January 2025: Presentation of the results of the land degradation model and its main variables, and future hypotheses for constructing degradation scenarios - Fifth meeting – April 2025: Identification of actions and costs related to the assessment of neutrality and other degradation trajectories Furthermore, support continues to be provided for the development of territorial planning mechanisms and tools at the subnational level, as is the case in Bolivar with the Territorial Planning and Development Plan, a sustainable agricultural production strategy, and in Imbabura with the Strategy of Natural Capital Management.	54.00%	Satisfactory (S)

	Outcome 2.1: Landowners and users adopt sustainable land management practices at intervention sites to prevent and/or reduce land degradation and restore ecosystem services.	GEF Indicator # 3.2: Area in hectares (ha) of forest areas restored to maintain ecosystem services in 3 intervention sites	0		0	2,000 ha	The implementation of MST practices continues at intervention sites together with local partners:: <i>Coast</i> - Natural regeneration: Dry forest restoration in San Marcos - Santa Elena / San Marcos Commune - MST support mechanisms: Strengthening of the provincial plant nursery in Santa Elena / GAD Santa Elena <i>Northern Sierra</i> - Protection, Control and Surveillance: Monitoring of community brigades for integrated fire management in the Intag valley, which includes areas of forest under restoration/Cotacachi Communities. <i>Central Sierra</i> - Moderately assisted regeneration: Maintenance of the restoration area in JunJun - Tungurahua/Frente Sur Occidental Commonwealth. Currently, 2,325 ha of forest are under restoration.	59.00%	Satisfactory (S)
		GEF indicator # 3. 3: Area in hectares of paramo areas and shrub ecosystems restored to maintain ecosystem services in 3 intervention sites	0		0	2,000 ha	The implementation of MST practices continues at intervention sites together with local partners: <i>Northern Sierra</i> - Protection, Control and Surveillance: Monitoring community brigades for comprehensive fire management in the Cotacachi and Intag regions, which includes areas of shrub ecosystems undergoing restoration / Cotacachi Communities. <i>Central Sierra</i> - Natural regeneration: Conservation for the recovery of degraded páramos in Salinas-Guaranda/Natawa, Pachancho and Yurak Uksha Communities. - Moderately assisted regeneration: Support in the development of a restoration profile in San Simon with the Municipality of Guaranda for funding from the MAATE PNRF (National Forestry Program). Currently, 11,108 ha of paramos and shrub ecosystems are under restoration.		
		GEF indicator # 4. 3 : Area in hectares of landscapes under SLM in productive systems in 3 intervention sites				4,750 ha	The implementation of MST practices continues at intervention sites together with local partners: <i>Coast:</i> - Sustainable management in plantations: Sustainable management practices in toquilla forests in Santa Elena (Phase II) that includes new beneficiaries from additional communities in the communities of Barcelona, Sinchal and Febres Cordero / Toquilla Straw Processing Artisanal Center - Restoration in agricultural systems: Biological control practices and strengthening of the provincial laboratory in Santa Elena (Phase II) which includes a new work cycle with the 60 producers from Phase I, the integration of 20 new beneficiaries, and a second purchase of supplies and equipment to strengthen the GADPSE entomophagous laboratory / Santa Elena GAD. <i>Northern Sierra:</i> - Agroecology practices: Implementation of SLM practices in the agrodiverse chakras of Cotacachi (Phase II), which corresponds to the continuation of Phase I, implemented the previous year, with 20 additional beneficiaries / Committee CCMU. - Agroforestry Practices: Implementation of agroforestry systems in Urcuqui / Vida Verde and Tumbabiro Associations of Guarango Collectors <i>Central Sierra:</i> -Soil and pasture restoration in livestock systems: First and second phases of implementation of sustainable livestock practices / Association of Livestock Farmers, Producoop and Yakubiana Cooperative in Salinas and the Pimbalo Community in Simiatug. - Agroforestry Practices: Support for the restoration and implementation of agroforestry systems/ San Simon GAD - Guaranda. Currently, 1,567 ha of landscape areas are under SLM.		
		GEF indicator # 4. 4 : Area in hectares of high-value forests conserved in 3 intervention sites				20,000 ha	The implementation of MST practices continues at intervention sites together with local partners: <i>Northern Sierra:</i> - Protection, Control and Surveillance: Monitoring community brigades for comprehensive fire management in the Cotacachi and Intag fires, which also includes forest areas under conservation / Cotacachi Communities. - Protection: Suport to conservation and sustainable use (tourism activities) in a community conservation area in Iruguincho / Iruguincho community. Currently, 5,600 ha of forest and/or paramos are under conservation.		
		GEF Indicator # 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and ethnicity as a co-benefit of the GEF investment	0		0	At least 1,250 people (500 women and 375 belonging to peoples and nationalities) have implemented SLM practices on the farm and their comprehensive impact has been evaluated.	At least 3,750 people (1,500 women and 1,125 belonging to peoples and nationalities) have implemented SLM practices on the farm and their comprehensive impact has been evaluated.		
		GEF Indicator # 6: tCO2e sequestered or emissions avoided due to SLM practices and avoided deforestation	0		0	9'596,730 tCO2e q	The volume of emissions sequestered and/or avoided will be determined at the end of the project once the SLM measures have been implemented. A methodology is available for estimating carbon capture based on the information generated from the implementation of these practices. This will be defined at the end of the project once the implementation of SLM practices concludes, using the EX-ACT tool (Ex-ante Carbon Balance Calculation Tool) developed by FAO. The baseline information for estimating carbon sequestration will be estimates of the area with vegetation cover under conservation, under restoration, and productive areas that integrate SLM practices, which are being recorded by the project.		
			0		0				

	Outcome 3.1 Actors in selected value chains include the SLM approach to enhance resilience and generate socio-economic benefits based on incentives and improvements in market access mechanisms.	GEF Indicator # 11: Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and ethnicity as a co-benefit of the GEF investment		At the least 300 beneficiaries access SLM incentives and mechanisms that promote SLM in value chains. At least 360 people with strengthened capacities in LDN (disaggregated by sex and ethnicity).	At the least 1000 beneficiaries / as access SLM incentives and mechanisms to strengthen the SLM in value chains. At least 480 people with strengthened capacities in LDN (disaggregated by sex and ethnicity).	The implementation of initiatives continues in the three project sites (Coast, Northern Sierra, and Central Sierra), through the provision of incentives and the development of market access mechanisms. Financial incentive initiatives include: Coast - Strengthening producers, the value chain, and the toquilla straw processing center that implements SLM practices. Northern Sierra - Strengthening business centers and developing value chain management models for chakra and guarango products. - Development of savings accounts and green products. Central Sierra - Strengthening the milk and cheese value chains with a focus on sustainable livestock farming. As a non-financial incentive mechanism: Organizational strengthening of Community Business Centers and management models of the six organizations in the three sites of implementation. This outcome emphasizes work with organized women's groups, such as the CCMU, or those with clear women's leadership (e.g., Toquilla Straw Processing Center, Vida Verde Association). The nature of the processes to which the incentives are linked responds to specific challenges faced by rural women. To date, the following number of beneficiaries related to this outcome has been recorded: - 812 beneficiaries accessing incentives (455 women and 357 men)*. - 280 attendances at capacity-building events related to market access incentives (approximately 103 women and 177 men). The final systematization process will determine the effective number of people who participated in the various capacity-building activities based on recorded attendance.	67.00%	Satisfactory (S)
		Project Indicator # 12: On-farm generated smallholder income improved through SLM / SFM practices and incentives	To be defined in year 1.	0	At least 10% increase in the income generated in the farm of small owners who have incorporated the SLM.	On April 2025 a pilot workshop was held with producers of toquilla fiber, and with the team at the Barcelona artisanal center to identify impacts of the adoption of sustainable practices on cost and benefits along the value chain. An increment in fiber productivity has been observed as a result of the implementation of SLM practices in the toquilla fields. The results of this exercise have also been incorporated in the design of the TORs for a consultancy that will assess the economic aspects of the implementation of SLM practices in three case studies, and that will be defined in the second semester of 2025.		
	Outcome 4.1: Knowledge management, M&E and disseminated lessons learned from the project.	Project Indicator 15: Project results achieved and demonstrating sustainability	N/A	10 0% of goals fulfilled medium term.	100% scope in achieving results. Proven sustainability.	The LDN project has continued implementing the proposed actions based on the goals established in the results framework, resulting in 94% compliance with the mid-term goals, according to the Mid-Term Evaluation report executed in the first half of 2025. Regarding the implementation of the communications strategy, it continues as planned, fulfilling the line of action: NDT positioning and management support, with the development of publications, coverage of events and actions carried out by the project, production of POP material, and design and updating of the visual elements of the project's corporate image, in coordination with key stakeholders at the institutional and local levels. This includes the creation of Social Media Notes: 46, Press Releases: 7, Newsletter: 1, Printed Graphic Materials: 6 printed materials (notebooks, roll-ups, folders, baking supplies, vests, corporate stationery, project branding), Coverages: 11, Videos: 3, Life Stories: 2. All of them disseminated by the digital media of the project and CONDESAN. There is a preliminary knowledge management strategy in place, which defined the development of products covering, among others, topics such as the impact and patterns of land degradation processes at the national level, identification of direct and underlying causes of degradation, analysis of integrated intervention strategies at project work sites, and others.	56.00%	Satisfactory (S)



*Note: This report presents a decrease in the number of beneficiaries registered in the second PIR. This is due to the fact that, after a subsequent technical analysis of the beneficiaries, it was decided that the beneficiaries of the toquilla straw FFS should be registered only in the data of beneficiaries of SLM practices, considering that this constitutes a more direct benefit, despite the fact that they have also benefited from the processes being improved in the toquilla straw value chain. Despite this, and considering the above, there was an increase in beneficiaries during this period attributed to the other managed actions, thus reaching a total of approximately 812 people.

Development Objective (DO) Ratings, and Overall Assessment

Please note that the overall DO ratings should be substantiated by evidence and progress reported above. The ratings and comments should reflect the overall progress of results since project start

FY2025 Development Objective rating ¹	Project Manager/ Coordinator	Budget Holder	Lead Technical Officer13	GEF Operational Focal Point	GEF Technical Officer (GTO)
--	------------------------------	---------------	--------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------------

3. Implementation Progress (IP)

(Please indicate progress achieved during this FY as per the Implementation Plan/Annual Workplan)

Outcomes and outputs	Indicators (as per the logical framework)	Main achievements in the last 12 months (please DO NOT repeat results reported in previous year PIR)	Describe any variance 9 in delivering outputs
Outcome 1.1 Institutional actors make decisions with a LDN approach based on an established monitoring system that is regularly fed			
Output 1.1.1 LDN indicators baseline assessed at national and local level.	Project Indicator # 2: Number of LDN base line indicators established	In the reporting period (July 2024 - June 2025) the following progress was recorded: The improvement of three main national indicators (Land Cover Transitions - LCT, Land Productivity Dynamics - LPD, Carbon Stocks - SOC) and a complementary national indicator (Potential Water Erosion) was continued and completed with support from WOCAT and final calibration by the Project. The models, land degradation maps for the period 2000-2023, and the final report were validated by MAATE and MAG. At the subnational level, baseline data collection of subnational indicators (vegetation, fauna, soils) began in permanent monitoring plots in the Dry Coastal node, and through studies conducted in Cotacachi and Bolivar. In addition, the development of protocols for monitoring páramos and peatlands began in permanent plots in the High Andean node. As of the reporting date, the following cumulative results are reported in relation to compliance with the proposed indicator: - A validated SDG15.3.1 national baseline integrating three improved key national indicators (Land Cover Transitions - LCT, Land Productivity Dynamics - LPD, Carbon Stocks - SOC) and one complementary national indicator developed (Potential Water Erosion). - A subnational baseline was established at (1) the comprehensive dry forest monitoring site implemented in San Marcos, Santa Elena Province (vegetation, fauna, soil), (2) the Study of Water-Important Areas and Degraded Areas of the Paramo in Bolívar Province (land cover, soils, water resources), and (3) the Participatory Trial of Sustainable Soil and Crop Management Practices in Andean Chakras of Cotacachi (soils).	
Output 1.1.2 Participatory assessment of SLM practices that prevent and reduce land degradation, restore ecosystems, reduce emissions and enhance the provision of	Project Indicator # 3: Methodologies to systematize and evaluate SLM practices aligned with LDN targets and land degradation trends at the national and sub-national level that are implemented with a gender and intercultural	During the reporting period (S2 2024 - S1 2025), 10 SLM measures were evaluated and systematized within the framework of the national synthesis study on SLM practices. These measures include Protection, control, and surveillance for conservation, assisted regeneration, Agricultural practices, Livestock practices, Structural practices, Transitions to sustainable production systems, Reduced-impact Forest management, Sustainable use of forest plantations, Harvesting of NTFPs, and Camelid grazing. In this study, the challenges and achievements in the articulation of women and youth in these initiatives were characterized. Overall, it was found that sustained capacity building is key to foster effective participation of women in ecosystem monitoring activities. However, effective participation of women continues to be a challenge, as workshops add to already charged time commitments related to household reproduction. Activities such as ecosyste restoration have yet to provide effective employment opportunities in local communities for women and young individuals. In agricultural landscapes, diversification with, for example, fruit orchards are seen as interesting options by young individuals. Local organizations led by women, such as Vida Verde and UNORCAC do incorporate more specific mechanisms to promote women´s participation, through traditional knowledge and adding value. These organizations need sustained processes of organizational strenthening and promoting access to markets in better conditions. At the time of reporting, the following cumulative results are presented in relation to compliance with the proposed indicator #3:	

ecosystem services.	approach.	The validation and systematization of 22 cases of successful SLM practices at the intervention sites was completed, including an analysis of women's participation. Thus, 10 SLM measures have been evaluated and systematized, including intercultural and gender aspects.	
Output 1.1.3 Monitoring of LDN indicators at national and sub-national levels, integrated with reporting mechanisms.	Project Indicator # 4: Methodologies and institutional-operational arrangements to monitor long-term progress and fulfillment of LDN targets that facilitate the participation and representation of women and men in decision-making on SFM/SLM	The models for the four national indicators improved and validated by the Project for monitoring SDG 15.3.1 were automated. The consolidation and field testing of a proposed set of indicators for comprehensive monitoring of dry forest degradation through permanent plots began. The consolidation of the National Observatory on Land Degradation (ONDT) continued, connecting two key institutional monitoring units (MAATE and MAG) and the universities participating in methodological development, monitoring, and practice testing within nodes and working groups with a defined management model, a first version of a website, and a geoportal under development. The PRAIS report 4 includes a national level indicator SO2-3 "Trends in the proportion of population exposed to land degradation disaggregated by sex". For the next report due in the first semester of 2027, the project will propose a review of this indicator to make visible trends in different regions of Ecuador, and to incorporate an intercultural dimension in this indicator. As of the reporting date, the following cumulative results are reported in relation to compliance with the proposed indicator #4: -Three protocols for monitoring dry forests, páramos, and high Andean peatlands are being developed within the framework of the National Observatory on Land Degradation (ONDT). - 1 active National Observatory on Land Degradation with the participation of 9 universities and links with MAG and MAATE - 3 active Observatory Nodes (Dry Coast, High Andean, Inter-Andean Valleys) under 2 Agreements (ESPOL, UCE), 3 Letters of Commitment (ESPOCH, UNACH, UTN), 1 Research Program (UNACH), 1 Research Project (ESPOCH), and 2 expressions of interest (UNL, UTPL) for monitoring land degradation and designing SLM practices.	
Outcome 1.2 Key actors at national and sub-national levels apply knowledge and tools for the implementation of the LDN approach to measures planning, implementation and monitoring.			
Output 1.2.1 Capacity strengthening tools for LDN targets planning, implementation and monitoring, with a gender and intercultural approach, and available, operational and implemented by key actors.	Project Indicator # 6: Number and type of capacity building tools for planning, implementing and monitoring the LDN targets, SLM and SFM with a gender and intercultural approach, available, operational and applied by key stakeholders	Actions implemented in the second half of 2024 - first half of 2025 and continuing into 2025 are: 1. Development of a Capacity Development Strategy with a gender and intercultural approach. The strategy includes a conceptual phase, a planning phase, and a monitoring phase. 2. Development of an exchange of experiences between LDN Project partners and sustainable land management initiatives and their governance processes in the Andean Chocó region. Participants in this event were representatives of: UNORCAC Central Women's Committee, Iruguincho Community Tourism Association, Salinas Parish Council, Salinas Community Tourism Association, Mojanda Cambugan ACUS Management Committee, Tungurahua Páramos Fund and the Fight Against Poverty, and Urcuqui Beekeepers. 3. Consolidation of partnerships with participating universities within the framework of the National Observatory on Land Degradation. 4. Start of planning for the Sustainable Land Management course with the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, whose implementation is projected for the end of 2025. 5. Development of a preliminary data warehouse, geoserver, and geoportal for the Land Degradation Observatory. 6.Progress in developing a conceptual proposal for the development of the Integrated Territorial Planning Course in conjunction with CONGOPE (Action initiated in 2025). As of the reporting date, the following cumulative results are reported in relation to compliance with the proposed indicator #6: - A consolidated and developing Capacity Building Strategy for the project. - Two exchanges held: a regional workshop to enhance South-South Cooperation in GEF-funded projects in Latin America and the Caribbean and a National Symposium on Conservation and Soil Management Strategy. - Strategic alliances are being developed with the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar to develop courses related to LDN, and with CONGOPE to manage tools for territorial planning.	Regarding the course proposal with CONGOPE, there was a delay due to the change in leadership at the end of May 2025, which forced the process to be halted. The course design process is expected to resume in July 2025 once the new directors have been appointed.

		- An online platform for the National LDN Observatory is being developed.	
Outcome 1.3 National and sub-national authorities include the LDN approach into national policies and planning processes, at different levels and with appropriate inter-agency coordination mechanisms.			
Output 1.3.1 National policies and sub-national territorial planning instruments (new or existing) are part of the LDN approach and consider the specific priorities of women and peoples and nationalities.	Project Indicator # 8: Number and type of policy instruments national and territorial planning tools that incorporate LDN and SLM and capacities, priorities and territorial conditions for women, men and indigenous populations	Between July 2024 and June 2025, significant progress has been made in strengthening territorial planning tools with a sustainable land management approach that contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality at the national and subnational levels. Below are the results obtained based on compliance with the proposed indicator #8, also indicating those developed in the current reporting period: 1) National policy instrument: National Páramos Plan completed. 2) Subnational policy instruments: Six tools are under development, five were completed during the reporting period, and one is under development. They are detailed below:: - Bolívar Macrozonning - Completed 2023: Support in defining management areas in the province. - Bolívar PDOT - Completed 2024: Support for the update process, incorporating elements to reduce land degradation processes, a diagnosis, and macrozonning. - Bolívar Sustainable Agricultural Production Strategy - Ended 2025: Strengthening strategic production planning through a diagnosis, definition of production areas, a management model, monitoring, and a proposed ordinance. - Guidelines for updating the Tungurahua Paramo Management Plans - Ended 2025: Strengthening criteria for reducing land degradation and climate change, and developing a methodology for identifying priority management areas (conservation, restoration, and sustainable production). This includes updating the Páramo Management Plan of the “Mancomunidad del Frente Sur Occidental (FSO)”, which is still in the process of developing the proposal and management model. - Imbabura Macrozonning - Ended 2025: Incorporation of elements to reduce land degradation processes in the 2023-2027 provincial PDOT, and development of provincial zoning to determine priority areas for conservation, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable production. - Chimborazo Environment and Production Roundtable Management Model (Start 2025 - in progress): Presentation of the work plan and logical framework for the Macroprograms and Productive Development Projects of the PDOT 2023 - 2027, and the development of working roundtables and the productive management model are in progress.	

Output 1.3.2 National LDN Action Plan designed and operational including national LDN targets.	Project Indicator # 9: National action plan for LDN with a gender perspective	In the reporting period (July 2024 - June 2025) the following progress was recorded: In the second half of 2024, the development of the National LDN & CRS Action Plan began as a coordination tool between the Environmental Authority and the Agricultural Authority with a vision of joint work. The process continued in 2025 with six workshops in the provinces of Imbabura, Chimborazo, Loja, Napo, Macas, and Manabí, covering stakeholders from all three regions of the country. The workshops brought together 175 stakeholders (56 women and 119 men) from Provincial and Municipal GADs (District Governments), Universities, as well as stakeholders with expertise in natural resource and protected area management and productive activities such as INIAP (National Institute of Agricultural Research and Land Use) and Agrocalidad. Work is underway to construct and review hypotheses for land degradation scenarios, future degradation trends, a proposed target for restoration and sustainable livestock farming by stratum, SLM actions and their associated costs for the assessment of neutrality and other degradation trajectories, and the generation of a proposed LDN target. Through the Ad Hoc Group, the outputs of these inputs have been reviewed and provided feedback. At the same time, the consultancies that provide input to the LDN&CRS Plan, such as the Driver Analysis and Land Degradation Scenarios, continued to be developed.	There have been difficulties in obtaining information on sustainable livestock practices from MAATE and MAG, so the consultancy for the development of the LDN&CRS Plan has had to be extended. It is estimated to conclude in the second half of 2025.
Outcome 2.1 Landowners and users adopt sustainable land management practices at intervention sites to prevent and/or reduce land degradation and restore ecosystem services			
Output 2.1.1 Ongoing participatory plans for the LDN implementation (mainstreaming gender, landscape, and intercultural approaches) in the context of the LDN National Action Plan.	Project Indicator # 10: Number of plans designed for the implementation of LDN level subnational, in coordination with governance processes and local consultation, and focusing s landscape, gender and intercultural	The development of three participatory planning tools for LDT continues: 1. San Marcos Commune Management Plan and Dos Mangas Commune Management Plan: Formation of a Local Working Group in each Commune with neighborhood and sectoral members to gather diagnostic information and develop territorial vision objectives and proposed activities for the Management Plans. 2. Páramos Management Plan of the FSO Commonwealth: Development of the FSO Commonwealth's zoning for the management of conservation, restoration, and sustainable production actions. Development of the plan carried out in the first half of 2025 with the identification of problems and key actors in the territory, prioritization of programs and projects, and establishment of a governance mechanism for the tool. 3. Imbabura Territorial Development and Planning Plan: Construction of the province's macrozoning in a participatory manner with municipal and parish GADs (decentralized governments), and protected area stakeholders. In addition, objectives for the management of the province's natural heritage were defined, opportunities for generating sustainable land-use transitions in Cotacachi were identified based on the results, and a final document was prepared with elements to be considered in the 2023-2027 PDOT update to reduce land degradation processes.	Delays by the consultant hired to develop the San Marcos and Dos Mangas Management Plan, forcing the process to restart in 2025.

Output 2.1.2 Gender and intercultural-sensitive SLM/SFM practices implemented in the project intervention areas (ecosystems and productive landscapes), which restore vegetative cover, soil organic carbon, water regime and increase productive systems sustainability.	Project Indicator # 11: Number and type of SLM / SFM practices promoted, with a gender and intercultural approach in the three areas of intervention	The implementation of MST practices continues in the three intervention sites: Costa, Sierra Norte, and Sierra Central, in compliance with the proposed indicator. Some processes are nearing completion, while others continue in a second phase. Progress by process is detailed below: <i>Coast</i> - Biological pest control, fertilization, and crop association in corn – Santa Elena: Completion of Phase I and planning and purchase of inputs for Phase II. - Strengthening of the entomophagous insect laboratory of the Santa Elena Provincial Government (GADPSE) with the purchase of equipment and inputs. - Nursery strengthening: Delivery of a water reservoir and necessary inputs for the GADPSE dry forest nursery. - Sustainable management of toquilla forests – Santa Elena: Systematization of 110 producers who implemented practices in the first phase (2024). - Assisted regeneration: Implementation of a fence in the area designated for dry forest restoration in San Marcos - Santa Elena (100 ha), including the design of a trial in a smaller area. <i>Northern Sierra :</i> - Second phase of implementation of SLM practices in agrodiverse chakras of Cotacachi: crop diversification, organic fertilization, pest control with bioinputs, establishment of agroforestry systems. Coordinated work with women from the indigenous communities of the CCMU. - Establishment of guarango agroforestry systems: On 37 farms in the San Blas Parish in Urcuquí. - Integrated fire management: Monitoring the functioning of community brigades and proper use of equipment in Cotacachi and Intag. - Planning for the implementation of SLM practices in the Mojanda Cambugan ACUS. <i>Central Sierra</i> - Recovery of degraded páramos: Definition and fencing of conservation areas in 5 communities in Salinas-Guaranda, based on established agreements. - Implementation of sustainable livestock practices in Salinas and Simiátug: Phase I completed, and Phase II is underway, which includes living fences, infiltration ditches, establishment of conservation areas, sowing of grass for silage, aeration of pastures, and subdivision of pastures, among others. Planning of a third phase, which will include water management actions. - Maintenance of the restoration area established in JunJun-Tungurahua. The gender and intercultural perspective applied by the project has highlighted the processes led by and/or with the majority and active participation of women within local organizations, such as the Barcelona Straw Toquilla Craft Center, the UNORCAC Women's Committee in Cotacachi, and the Vida Verde and Tumbabiro Cooperatives in Urcuquí. These organizations maintain specific characteristics in terms of their traditional knowledge and organizational forms that provide added value to the implementation of sustainable management practice initiatives. The project promotes and facilitates the role of female heads of households in the paradigm shift proposed by sustainable management, as well as providing training in the use of different tools that facilitate access to these practices and their benefits.	
	Project Indicator # 13: Number and type of mechanisms of incentives and institutional arrangements that	Regarding exchange opportunities, in the second half of 2024, a youth tour on MST initiatives was held in the Andean Chocó region with 15 participants (6 women and 9 men), and a tour on regenerative livestock farming was held in Cotacachi and Imbabura. In the first half of 2025, the following exchange experiences were carried out: Observation tour of various agroforestry systems with guarango in Buellara, with the participation of 64 people (42 women and 22	

	facilitate the adoption of SLM / SFM practices by small producers (men and women) in each area of intervention	- Observation tour of various agroforestry systems with guarango in Fuenfaro, with the participation of 64 people (43 women and 23 men), which complements the tour conducted the previous year on bioinput manufacturing at the GAD level. - Visit to production farms and collection and processing sites where the Sustainable Production Strategy of the LDN Project is being implemented in the province of Bolívar, with 71 members (30 women and 41 men) of the ASARATY organization participating in the SEAP - Parks for Life project and the Amazon Without Fire Project (PASF).	
--	--	--	--

Outcome 3. 1 Actors in selected value chains include the SLM approach to enhance resilience and generate socio-economic benefits based on incentives and improvements in market access mechanisms			
Output 3.1.1 Designed and operational mechanisms and institutional arrangements for the implementation of incentives to promote the adoption of SLM/SFM, mainstreaming gender and interculturality.	Project Indicator # 13: Number and type of mechanisms of incentives and institutional arrangements that facilitate the adoption of SLM / SFM practices by small producers (men and women) in each area of intervention	The work on financial and non-financial incentives during the reporting period (S2 2024 – S1 2025) in compliance with the proposed indicator was carried out as follows: <i>Non-financial incentives :</i> -Organizational and business center strengthening: Technical assistance for the diagnosis, action plan, and management model of the following organizations – value chains was developed and completed in S1 2025: - a)UNORCAC CCMU Women's Central Committee (Cotacachi, Imbabura) - Andean Chakra products. Associated practice: Maintaining a biodiverse agro-farm. - b)Toquilla Straw Artisanal Processing Center (Barcelona, Santa Elena) – toquilla straw. Associated practice: Sustainable management of toquilla straw - c)Cattle Ranchers Association, Produccop Cooperative, Yakubiana Cooperative, Funorsal (Salinas de Guaranda, Bolívar) – milk and cheese. Associated practice: Sustainable livestock farming -Strengthening of three sustainable management models for the following business centers: - a)CCMU – Chakra products: Associated practice: Maintaining a biodiverse agro-farm. - b)Vida Verde Cooperative, Tumbabiro Cooperative, and Irugincho Community – guarango: Associated practice: Agroforestry - c)Barcelona Artisanal Center – toquilla straw: Associated practice: Sustainable management of toquilla straw -CCMU Women's Committee In-kind Fund: Strengthening of the mechanism. Associated practice: Maintaining a biodiverse agro-farm. <i>Financial incentives :</i> -Savings bank of the Toquilla Straw Artisanal Processing Center: Implemented and operational, including updated regulations and a raw material purchasing management manual. Associated practice: Sustainable management of toquilla straw -Savings bank of the CCMU Women's Committee: Updated bylaws and regulations for administrative management. Associated practice: Maintaining a biodiverse agro-farm. -Green Product from the Santa Anita Cooperative - Cotacachi: Start of technical assistance to strengthen green financial products and conduct of a pilot project with the CCMU Women's Committee. Associated practice: Maintaining a biodiverse agro-farm.	
Output 3.1.2 Designed and operational mechanisms and institutional arrangements to improve market access for smallholders (men and women) that are part of the SLM approach into the	Project Indicator # 14: Number and type of mechanisms and institutional arrangements to improve market access at local and national level of the products generated by small producers partners (men and women) that integrate the SLM approach in value chains prioritized in each area	During the reporting period (S2 2024 - S1 2025), the development of three market access mechanisms identified in compliance with the proposed indicator continues:: 1) Fairs: - Agroecological Fair – Bolivar - Sierra Centro: Planning a communication campaign as a strategy to raise awareness of agroecological production linked to the SLM practices that the project develops in the province, together with producer organizations. - "La Pacha Mama Nos Alimenta" Agroecological Fair – Cotacachi - Sierra Norte: Gathering information from members participating in the fair in order to design strategies for its management. 2) Direct Sales: - Direct sale of toquilla straw – Santa Elena - Costa: Process between producers who implemented the ECA I and ECA II Field Schools and the Barcelona Artisanal Center in recognition of their implementation of SLM practices. Furthermore, the Barcelona Center is delivering sustainably produced straw that meets quality standards to the Dorfzaun Export Company. 3) Supplier Development: - Andean Chakra Products - Cotacachi - Imbabura: Development of a pilot initiative with 10 agroecological producers who apply SLM practices to market dried herbs to the Galletti company (currently underway). An incentive is also being developed with the Nunalabs company to make CCMU a preferred supplier of raw materials for a food-based beverage extract. - Sustainable Livestock Products - Salinas - Bolivar: Advising producers on the adoption of SLM practices in the milk and cheese value	

selected value chains	intervention	chain, verifying compliance with good livestock practices, and implementing a service center to ensure this approach in the products sold. - Corn suppliers that have applied biological control – Santa Elena: Quality control of corn to verify the application of MST practices for marketing with the D2Snacks company.	
Outcome 4. 1 Knowledge management, M&E and disseminated lessons learned from the project.			
Output 4.1.1 Mid-term review and Final evaluation carried out.	Project Indicator # 16: Number and type of evaluation reports	The midterm evaluation of the LDN project was conducted between March and June 2025, with a review of relevant documentation and field visits to the three project implementation sites. The final evaluation report concludes that the project has achieved 94% compliance with the targets proposed for each outcome in the project's results framework. In addition, conclusions and recommendations are presented for the project's implementing and supervising entities.	
Output 4.1.2 Overall environmental benefits, co-benefits and costs of SLM/SFM monitored, assessed and lessons learned from the project analyzed.	Project Indicator # 17: Project results framework with outcome and output indicators, baseline and targets Gender perspective incorporated in project management and actions	The Annual Operating Plan and Annual Procurement Plan for 2025 were prepared and approved by the Project Steering Committee in February 2025. Additionally, semiannual and monthly progress reports were prepared and reported to FAO and the Undersecretariat for Climate Change at MAATE, respectively. During this period, the need for a budget reform was raised, in line with the initiatives underway and with the objective of strengthening the project's sustainability, in terms of equipment for the consolidation of the ONDT Observatory, implementation of SLM practices, strengthening local governance, among others. This reform will be presented for approval in July 2025. The need for budget reform was confirmed in the results presented at the Mid-Term Evaluation.	The budget reform review and approval process could delay the implementation of the initiatives proposed by the bill in the second half of 2025 and 2026.
Output 4.1.3 Knowledge management outputs, developed and disseminated.	Project Indicator # 18: Number and type of products knowledge about the causes of land degradation, best practices SLM and lessons learned about LDN published and disseminated (including the impact differentiated in women and men, and the way it has been integrated I do gender approach in project implementation) and cultural / ethnic relevance.	There is a preliminary knowledge management strategy in place, which defined the development of products covering, among others, topics such as the impact and patterns of land degradation processes at the national level, identification of direct and underlying causes of degradation, analysis of integrated intervention strategies at project work sites, and others.	The budget reform review and approval process could delay the implementation of the initiatives proposed for the second half of 2025 and 2026.
		With the hiring of a new Communications Specialist starting in June 2024, operational progress in this area has been improved. This includes the creation of Social Media Notes: 46, Press Releases: 7, Newsletter: 1, Printed Graphic Materials: 6 printed materials (notebooks, roll-ups, folders, baking supplies, vests, corporate stationery, project branding), Coverages: 11, Videos: 3, Life Stories: 2, that will allow for the achievement of the objectives of the LDN project's Communication Plan and the proposed indicator: 1) Communication Materials: - Production and post-production of a Podcast: Raising awareness of the project's actions in the Sierra Centro, with the participation of local organizations in Bolivar who shared their experiences and approaches, as well as the contribution of women to conservation and sustainable production in the area	

Output 4.1.4 Communication strategy developed and implemented to support the expansion of SLM/SFM to achieve LDN targets.	Project Indicator # 19: Number and type of communication materials about LDN gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate, disseminated	sustainable production in the area. - Development of a life story: Through the story of Emerita Quinatoa, a woman producer, beneficiary, and promoter of the LDN project in the North Sierra, her vision is shared, inspiring soil and biodiversity conservation. - Production and post-production of a video: Stories of men and women who adopted SLM practices in Bolivar – Center Sierra, highlighting the importance of soil conservation and protecting available resources. 2) Communications Campaigns By the end of 2024, the design, development, and implementation of three major campaigns were planned and structured to highlight the project's actions and activities in the region. These campaigns will be implemented throughout 2025: - General "No Dañes la Tierra" campaign - Agroecological campaign in the Central Zone "Consume Bolivar" - Campaign to strengthen the "Santa Elena Saludable" biological control laboratory The " No Dañes la Tierra " campaign began with the aim of disseminating and positioning the project's activities nationwide in a participatory manner. During this period, pre- and post-production work was carried out on a podcast called "Consume Sano y Local," which highlights key men and women involved in sustainable production and the various practices in the Center Sierra. Associated Communications Actions: - Design, development, and coordination for the creation and on-air publication of a website for the ONDT Observatory. - Design and conceptualization of an observatory brand that allows for the creation of an institutional framework and graphic identity aligned with the ONDT. - Dissemination of the first exchange of experiences with medicinal and aromatic plant producers at the Cahuasqui Organic Winery with the CCMU (Cultural and Agricultural Cooperation), with the goal of promoting sustainable practices and strengthening capacities to improve the quality of organic production at the chakra level. - Communications note on 70 livestock producers from the parishes of Simiatug and Salinas de Bolivar, who received training in Sustainable Land Management techniques. - Coverage and writing for the presentation of the work and intervention of the LDN project in the restoration of inter-Andean xeric ecosystems in Jun Jun, in the cantons of Cevallos and Quero; a tourist corridor surrounded by waterfalls, trails, and recreational areas. You can review all the publications produced by the project and disseminated through its digital channels at the following link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1S1ajoZVjW_ZJx4qOQUMTclqX3a45hogp/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=108408616092853663657&rtpof=true&sd=true	
--	---	--	--

Implementation Progress (IP) , and Overall Assessment

Please note that the overall IP ratings should be substantiated by evidence and progress reported above. The ratings and comments shoud reflect the overall progress of results during the fiscal year (July 1 2024, to June 30, 2025)

	Project Manager/ Coordinator	Lead Technical Officer	Budget Holder	GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP)	GEF Technical Officer (GTO)
FY2025 Implementation Objective rating10	Satisfactory (S)	Satisfactory (S)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Satisfactory (S)
	The project has consolidated	The project is progressing satisfactorily	The project has shown significant	The overall project evaluation reflects satisfactory	The project is

Comments/reasons justifying the ratings for FY2025 and any changes (positive or negative) in the ratings since the previous reporting period	its operations, with important progress in national level processes (e.g. National Land Degradation Observatory, National LDN Action Plan) and in the implementation of SLM practices in the intervention sites. Collaborative arrangements with institutional allies such as decentralized autonomous governments (DAG) and individual and associated local producers have been strengthened. Capacity building activities have reached a diverse set of target groups, including researchers, local communities and technical teams in the Ministries and GADs.	with the activities planned for the reporting period, particularly in the implementation of sustainable land management practices, in supporting sustainable productive value chains, and in developing local capacity in the three intervention sites. Progress is also evident in incorporating the LDN approach into some territorial planning instruments, especially at the subnational level, although it is not yet clear how this diversity of processes underway in the three landscapes is linked and scaled to strengthen public policies at the national level. The development of a knowledge management strategy will enable progress in the process of systematizing the best practices, technological innovations, results, impacts, and lessons learned from the local to the national level. The project is facing some administrative and operational challenges that may affect its efficiency. However, measures are being taken to address these challenges, and overall, the project is operating as planned in the workplan and with an adaptive implementation approach in the different landscapes.	progress in its territorial actions and in its engagement with local governments (GADs). However, its integration with the initiatives of the central government, particularly the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition (MAATE) has yet to be clearly demonstrated. While overall implementation currently stands at 59%, it is important to note that the project is under technical and budgetary execution alert, as 79% of the total implementation period has already elapsed. Therefore, it is essential that the institutions represented in the Steering Committee take concrete measures to accelerate progress and ensure that the project's goals and targets are achieved. Additionally, it will be important for the project to strengthen its information systematization and reporting processes, as the reports submitted so far have experienced significant delays. Having more timely and systematic reporting will support better decision-making and more effective monitoring of project progress	progress in consolidating its operations, with advances in key national processes and in the implementation of sustainable land management practices in the territories. The active participation of local governments, communities—including women and youth—and productive stakeholders is noteworthy, strengthening the legitimacy and sustainability of the actions. Furthermore, the incorporation of the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) approach into subnational planning instruments and the development of a knowledge management strategy position the project as a catalyst for national policies. Although administrative challenges and reporting delays persist, corrective measures are being implemented that, together with appropriate planning, will achieve the intended objectives and generate sustainable impacts on environmental governance and community well-being.☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	progressing well toward the achievement of its intended outcomes. A number of field-level activities such as SLM practices have been successfully implemented with the collaboration of diverse stakeholders and active participation from a broad spectrum of local community members including women and youth. The project is contributing to institutional transformation, making significant efforts to establish a national Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) platform. The project is already demonstrating measurable outcomes, with tangible improvements observed both at the national policy level and in the well-being of local communities. It is positioned to generate a transformative impact across the country.
---	---	---	--	--	--

9 Variance refers to the difference between the expected and actual progress at the time of reporting.

10 Implementation Progress Rating – A rating of the extent to which the implementation of a project’s components and activities is in compliance with the projects approved implementation plan.

4. Summary on progress and challenges

Please provide a summary paragraph on project implementation progress consistent with the information reported in section 2 and 3 of the PIR (Max 400 words) (This section will be uploaded to the GEF portal)

The project has worked in the consolidation of processes aimed at improving national and local responses to land degradation. The National Land Degradation Observatory, constituted by research groups of nine universities, has started collecting data in three monitoring sites: 1) dry forest regeneration in San Marcos (Santa Elena), 2) water and soil interactions in degraded paramos in Salinas (Bolívar), and 3) impacts of reduced tillage in Cotacachi (Imbabura). The governance structure of the Observatory has also been defined collaboratively. Furthermore, the development of the Land Degradation Action Plan has continued, with a series of workshops held in different provinces to better capture land degradation dynamics and local action priorities.

At the subnational level, integrated land use planning and policy tools were developed to strengthen the enabling environment for the adoption of sustainable land management (SLM) practices. In Bolívar, a sustainable agricultural production strategy was developed in collaboration with the government of the province. Likewise, in Imbabura, a macro zoning to identify SLM priorities was developed.

Support for the adoption of SLM practices continued in the intervention sites, with second phases implemented in: 1) biological pest control using entomophagous insects in maize systems (Santa Elena), 2) establishment and enrichment of agroforestry systems with emphasis on guarango (*Caesalpinia spinosa*) in Urcuquí (Imbabura), 3) organic agricultural practices and integrated pest management in agrobiodiverse chakras (subsistence farms) in Cotacachi (Imbabura), 4) sustainable management of pastures and complementary water management and live fencing in milk production farms in Salinas (Bolívar). Additional practices have focused on the restoration of degraded dry forest (Santa Elena) and paramo (Bolívar) areas, and support for strengthening a tree nursery specialized in dry forest species in Santa Elena.

Sustainability for the implemented SLM practices is being promoted through work with related value chains. Commercial alliances have been established with three private businesses to secure better conditions for the supply of medicinal herbs (Cotacachi) and of toquilla fiber used in the production of Panama hats (Santa Elena). Complementary activities seek to strengthen local financial mechanisms such as savings banks in Cotacachi and Santa Elena, through development of internal regulations.

An effective capacity building strategy has been implemented, through visits to successful examples in the adoption of SLM practices (e.g. visit to sustainable cattle ranching farm in Imbabura) and in the development of locally rooted land governance processes (e.g. visit to initiatives in the Andean Choco region of Pichincha).

Please provide a summary paragraph on challenges of project implementation consistent with the information reported in section 2 and 3 of the PIR (Max 400 words) (This section will be uploaded to the GEF portal)

The main challenges in this FY are related to changes in operational conditions, and the need to enhance the sustainability of the LDN and SLM approaches promoted by the project at different scales. Operationally, challenges have arisen related to changes in the teams and directives of allied organizations. This causes delays in planned activities as transition periods can be substantial until the new teams regain knowledge regarding the approach and planned operations of the project. Also, the deterioration of the conditions of public security in the country has become a concern, especially for operations in the intervention site in the Coast.

Promoting the sustainability of the SLM practices and related processes (e.g. local governance arrangements) is taking a center place as the project entered the second half of its implementation period. Extended and complementary technical assistance activities have been identified to support a more effective adoption of SLM practices in the intervention sites, in practices related to sustainable management of pastures (Bolívar), strengthening local capacities to supply medicinal herbs for private businesses (Cotacachi), support for the adoption of SLM practices in smallholder farms in Cotacachi, improvement of production processes in milk and toquilla value chains.

Implementation of Exit Strategy

Has the project developed an Exit	The project has not developed yet an exit strategy. This will be part of the evaluation and systematization strategy that is currently under development. The main elements that have been identified to foster sustainability of the approaches and concepts of the project include: - Integrating SLM and LDN approaches in land use planning tools and land management policies at the subnational levels, to guide further efforts and investment in conservation, restoration, and sustainable agriculture practices. This includes incorporating information regarding land degradation and SLM priorities in land use planning tools (e.g. macrozoning of Bolívar, Imbabura and Tungurahua provinces), and policy tools (e.g. Strategy for sustainable agricultural production in Bolívar).
-----------------------------------	--

Strategy? If yes, please describe the progress to implement it.	- Strengthening existing governance arrangements, promoting more integrated approaches to dialogue and definition of priorities that link environmental and productive goals. For example, support has been provided to integrate sustainable production practices and conservation and restoration priorities to secure water provision in the paramos of Bolivar. Likewise, in close collaboration with the government of the Province of Imbabura, priorities for sustainable land use transitions have been identified with a more integrated environmental and productive approach. - Strengthening value chains to improve access to markets that put a premium on products that result from SLM practices (e.g. medicinal herbs, milk, toquilla straw). This strategy incorporates a substantial investment in improving information management processes, such as maintaining registries for the implementation of SLM practices, improving capabilities to monitor prices and other aspects relevant to the provision of inputs to other links in he value chains.
How is the project enhancing institutional capacities to foster country ownership for more durable / sustained results?	The strategies to foster country ownership include: □ - Promote the consolidation and growth of the National Land Degradation Observatory to cover the rest of landscapes and ecosystems in continental Ecuador (e.g. in the Amazon basin) through linkages to initiatives that promote SLM practices (e.g. Phase 2 of Mountain Program implemented by GIZ) and by its integration in the LDN National Action Plan. - Establishment of technical cooperation arrangements between the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition and the Ministry of Agriculture to implement land degradation monitoring at the national scale, and promote coordinated actions under the umbrella of the LDN National Action Plan. - Continue and consolidate strengthening of local producers' organizations, in order to sustain improved conditions for access to markets. The main allies of the project with which this strategy is being applied are: 1) Barcelona Artisanal Center (paja toquilla value chain), 2) Producoop, Yacubiana, and Association of Cattle ranchers in Salinas (mil production for the fabrication of mature cheese), 3) Indigenous Women´s Association of Cotacachi (medicinal herbs and vegetables), and 4) Vida Verde Association (management of guarango in agroforestry systems). □

5. Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS): risks from the project

Initial ESS Risk Classification (at CEO Endorsement/Approval Stage)	Moderate
New environmental and social risks.	N/A
Progress made towards implementing the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) (only for Moderate and High Risk Projects)	ESS 2: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Natural Habitats <i>2.5 - Would this project involve access to genetic resources for their utilization and/or access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources that is held by indigenous, local communities and/or farmers?</i> <u>Expected mitigation measures</u> The project will seek to implement practices that consider the neutrality approach to land degradation in various areas of the country, which may include indigenous populations. As part of the activities, pasture and crop management will be carried out, planting native plants and strengthening their value chains. For these activities, the use of native plants will be promoted according to the landscape and area to be intervened, in accordance with national regulations. The development of participatory plans for the implementation of LDN will be supported. The operationalization of the PDOTs in each intervention area aligned with the LDN approach will be supported. <u>Actions taken</u> The Project works in preserving and making visible local knowledge. In Cotacachi, with the Women’s Indigenous Organization, work is in progress to improve the supply of medicinal plants by smallholder farms to private businesses. In Barcelona, similar efforts are underway to sustain the adoption of sustainable practices as part of an improved supply chain to produce and export straw hats. In Salinas, local and technical knowledge are being integrated to support better price conditions for milk producers, through the promotion of improved pasture and soil management, water conservation, implementation of live fences, among other practices. ESS 3: Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture <i>3.2.1 - Would this project involve the importing or transfer of seeds and/or planting materials for cultivation?</i> <u>Expected mitigation measures</u> It will work in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Provincial Governments who manage the agroecological nurseries in each province. The sowing material must be previously cultivated, in most cases it belongs to the sowing of native agrobiodiversity. The procurement processes are carried out based on FAO standards. The terms of reference are approved by the LTO of the FAO project. <u>Actions taken</u> The Project is strengthening local tree nurseries that promote the use and conservation of locally adapted tree and plant species and varieties: 1) tree nurseries operated by the Province government of Santa Elena (Dry forest species), Imbabura (interandean valley species) and Chimborazo (high elevation species), 2) tree nursery operated by the Chimborazo National Park (paramo species for ecosystem restoration) and 3) community operated greenhouses to support agroforestry systems and related restoration efforts in Sinchal, Barcelona (Santa Elena), and Pimbaló (Bolívar). <i>3.4 - Would this project establish or manage planted forests?</i> <u>Expected mitigation measures</u> Support the definition of local instrument plans, such as conservation agreements that promote sustainable forest management. Activities will promote sustainable land management based on the LDN approach. The restoration activities of 4,000 hectares of forests and paramos will be coordinated in conjunction with MAAE and MAG, as well as monitored for greater control. <u>Actions taken</u> The Project does not establish or managed planted forest for commercial or wood production goals. Tree and plants are being used in restoration processes and to enrich agroforestry systems in the three intervention landscapes. Native species and locally adapted agricultural varieties are being used in all cases, in combination with capacity building of local communities to promote effective and sustainable restoration processes. ESS 9: Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage <i>9.2 - Are there indigenous peoples living in the project area where activities will take place?</i> <u>Expected mitigation measures</u> The project's complaint mechanism will be implemented and publicized, which can be activated by project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

	During the first year of project execution, an FPIC process will be carried out. <u>Actions taken</u> In this fiscal year, the project has continued coordination and collaboration with indigenous groups in its intervention sites, using the existing local governance platforms. These include: 1) Central Women's Comitee in Cotacachi, to coordinate implementation of activities that strengthen agrobiodiverse farms belonging to members of the association, 2) Environment and water working group in Salinas, to engage in existing efforts to support conservation and restoration of paramo areas in Salinas, Bolívar, 3) Barcelona Artisanal Center, to coordinate the adoption of sustainable practices to manage toquilla fiber in Santa Elena. 9.4 - Would this project be located in an area where cultural resources exist? <u>Expected mitigatin measures</u> Hold bilateral meetings in-situ as each indigenous people that will participate in the project activities through a prior approach and signed consensus. Carry out a FPIC process once the communities according to province and parish have been specifically identified for the implementation of the project. Inception workshops will be held in each intervention zone that has indigenous peoples as part of the FPIC process. <u>Actions taken</u> No substantial physical cultural resources have been identified in the intervention areas.
Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)	No grievances have been received using the established procedure during the reporting period.

6. Risks to the Project

The following table summarizes risks identified in the Project Document and reflects also any new risks identified during the project implementation.					
	Type of risk	Risk rating ¹¹	Identified in the ProDoc Y/N	Description of Risk	Mitigation measure implemented
1	Environmental	Low	Yes	Extreme weather conditions adversely affect restoration and SLM practices. Accelerated land degradation and biodiversity loss due to severe climate change.	Weather conditions in the second half of 2024 were drier than usual, whereas the opposite was true in the first semester of 2025. Potential of uncontrolled fires in the Northern Andes intervention site was high, and accordingly a communal brigade for integrated fire management was trained in september 2024. Tree plantin was prioritized to occur before may 2025, to take advantage of favorable rainfall conditions in Bolivar and Imbabura (agroforestry systems). Water trenches were implemented in pasture areas in Salinas (Bolivar) to mitigate impact of excess precipitation on soil erosion, and favour water regulation.
2	Social	Moderate	Yes	Problems in land tenure regularization make it difficult for landowners to access to incentives and other schemes that promote the adoption of SLM practices.	Measures to secure or improve land tenure conditions as part of the work with the partners in the intervention sites continue to be developed. In this fiscal year it was validated with the Government of the Santa Elena Province and with the Matapalo Association the elaboration of management plans for five farms that are important for the collection of Tagua (Phytelephas macrocarpa). This is part of a process of land tenure regularization following the normative of the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition.
3	Social	Moderate	Yes	High migration rates in intervention sites affect the capacity of communities and farmers to adopt SLM practices.	In the communities of the highlands of the Salinas Parish (Bolivar), collaborative work was implemented to create a paramo conservation zone. This complements other local, long term development efforts that seek to improve the social and ecological conditions in this area. Other efforts to tacke this structural process include: 1) strengthening production of medicinal plants in smallholders farms led by indigenous women in Cotacachi, 2) strengthening the Barcelona Artisanal Center to improve its market position, and securing better toquilla fiber prices for its suppliers, 3) support enhanced pasture management practices in Salinas to improve family income.□
4	Social	High	Yes	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, local people will avoid attending training spaces for fear of contagion, reducing	The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the end of the COVID-19 pandemic on May 2023. Official biosecurity measures are being monitored and followed.

				spaces for fear of contagion, reducing their participation in project activities, especially the vulnerable population.	
5	Political	Moderate	Yes	Changes in administrations and institutional organizations can affect decision-making, project continuity, as well as the appropriate scaling of experiences and lessons.	In February and April 2025 presidential elections were held in Ecuador. This generated a level of uncertainty as changes occurred in authorities of the executive branch. The technical team of the project is implementing meetings with the new authorities in the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, and in the Ministry of Agriculture both in Quito and in the intervention sites, to communicate the status of operations and programmed activities for the next FY.□
6	Political	Moderate	Yes	Low local technical capacity at different work levels leads to delays in the project activities implementation.	The capacity building strategy of the Project identifies local technicians as one important target group. With the association of governments of provinces (CONGOPE by its Spanish acronym), planning a course in integrated land use planning started. The main goal is to promote adoption of best practices in planning land management goals that integrate environmental (e.g. conservation and restoration) and productive (e.g. sustainable agriculture) goals. Development of the course is expected in the second semester of 2025. □
7	Political	Moderate	Yes	National and local development programmes that discourage the adoption of SLM practices in the project's intervention areas.	The project works with the teams of the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) in Quito and in the intervention sites to foster collaborative actions around the implementation of SLM practices. For example, a collaborative arrangement is maintained with MAATE to implement integrated management training sessions in the influence area of the Cotacachi Cayapas National Park. Also, the project works with the Chimborazo Protected Area to improve coordination with the conservation and sustainable use area created in the paramos of Bolivar by the Government of the province. In Imbabura and Santa Elena, the project works with the decentralized autonomous governments (DAG) to improve land use management tools that promote conservation, restoration and sustainable agricultural practices.
8	Economic	Moderate	Yes	Market fluctuations affect profits in the sustainable value chains promoted by the project.	The overall economic context in Ecuador continues to be problematic, with scarcity of funds available for public and private investments. Work has focused on specific strategies that seek to improve market access by the smallholder producers the project works with: 1) Alliances with Galleti and Nunalabs to secure provision of medicinal herbs by the Indigenous Women's Association in Cotacachi, 2) work with K. Dorzfaun, exporter of Panama hats, to improve administrative and operational processes in the supply chain by the Barcelona Artisanal Center, 3) work with Producoop en Salinas (Bolivar) to manage incentives for the adoption of SLM practices in pasture management in the farms that provide milk for the production of mature cheese.
9	Economic	Moderate	Yes	Lack of engagement of the private sector along the selected value chains	In the firs semester of 2025, the project build the conditions to establish alliances between local producers and their organizations, and private actors in the relevant value chains. The main strategy is to motivate private actors to offer better conditions of access to market opportunities, based on the implementation of good social and environmental practices in the supply of goods and services. Alliances are being developed between the Cotacachi Indigenous Women's Association

					the supply of goods and services. Alliances are being developed between the Cotacachi indigenous women s Association (CCMU) and Galleti and Nunalabs enterprises, to establish preferential conditions in the supply of medicinal herbs, with an explicit goal to have positive impacts in households led by indigenous women. Similarly, an alliance is being developed between K. Dorzfaum, exporter of Panama hats, and the Barcelona Artisanal Center, to provide better price conditions in the supply of toquilla palm fiber. Finally, with Producoop an incentive is being designed to recognize and foster SLM practices in milk production farms.
10	Economic	Moderate	Yes	The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic can affect the sources of co-finance for the project	After the end of the pandemic, the economic crises is generating pressures on public and private investment processes. The strategies described in risks #8 and #9 above apply to mitigate this risk.
11	Economic	Moderate	Yes	The COVID-19 pandemic causes an economic downturn that constrains the demand for the products promoted by the project in the identified value chains.	The effects of the current post-pandemic economic crisis are being addressed through capacity building of our on-the-ground allies. Illustrative activities include: 1) sustainable management of pastures with milk producers in Salinas and Yakubiana (Bolívar) 2) financial education workshop with the participation of representatives of the Indigenous Women’s Organization of Cotacachi, 3) second field school to train toquilla straw collectors in sustainable management practices (Santa Elena), 4) production and use of bioinputs in Urcuqui (Imbabura).□
12	Environmental	Substantial	No	Impacts relate to ENSO phenomena in Ecuadorian coast	Climate variability is becoming an important challenge for local productive systems, with alternance of unusually dry (e.g. 2024) and wet (e.g. first semester of 2025) conditions. The project seeks to improve the resilience of the households of our allies in the intervention sites through capacity building in the adoption of SLM practices, and improving the conditions for market access in the selected value chains.
13	Social	Substantial	No	Deterioration of the context of public security	Ecuador has experienced a sustained escalation of violence linked to organized criminal groups. Now the country ranks first among the most violent countries in Latin America. Operational conditions are stable in the Northern and Central Andes intervention sites. In the Coastal intervention site, the situation is continuously being monitored to minimize risks to the technical team and on-the-ground allies.□

Project overall risk rating (Low, Moderate, Substantial or High):		
FY2024 rating	FY2025 rating	Comments/reason for the rating for FY2025 and any changes (positive or negative) in the rating since the previous reporting period
Moderate	Moderate	A new risk related to the deterioration of the context of public security has been identified during this fiscal year. However, this does not change the overall risk rating for the project for the 2025 fiscal year.

11 Risk ratings means a rating of the overall risk of factors internal or external to the project which may affect implementation or prospects for achieving project objectives. Risk of projects should be rated on the following scale: Low, Moderate, Substantial or High.

7. Follow-up on Mid-term review or supervision mission

If the project had an MTR or a supervision mission in 2024, please report on how the recommendations were implemented during this fiscal year as indicated in the Management Response or in the supervision mission report.

MTR or supervision mission recommendations	Measures implemented during this Fiscal Year
Recommendation 1: <i>For Condesan</i> : Strengthen knowledge management actions framed within the Communications Strategy and the Capacity Building Strategy to enable the systematization of good practices, technological innovations, results, impacts, and lessons learned at the local, provincial, and national levels. It is also necessary to continue developing communication products to disseminate the project's achievements and progress and make them known to both internal and external audiences.	The Knowledge Management Strategy is being developed jointly with the Communications Department to develop a comprehensive proposal that highlights the project's key results in the areas of action in which it is implemented. Through the budget reform proposal, an increase in investment associated with the development of knowledge management products and additional technical support for the communications department has been proposed.
Recommendation 2: <i>For Condesan</i> : Consolidate the established Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System, ensuring its integration into the project's planning and decision-making processes, as well as strengthening the capacities of professionals responsible for the technical and financial reporting mechanisms required by FAO (Factors Affecting Progress/M&E).	The NDT project's Monitoring and Evaluation System is continuously improving, responding to the project's reporting needs and the implementing agency's recommendations.
Recommendation 3: <i>For Condesan</i> : Bundling (grouping) products and services contracted from organizations and consulting firms in the territories could contribute to improving the cost-effectiveness of actions and accelerating budget execution (Effectiveness/Efficiency).	The proposal has already been accepted in the first half of 2025, with agreements being consolidated with local non-profit organizations for the implementation of initiative packages at the intervention sites. This is the case of the LDN project's partnership with the Pasos Foundation, FUCAE, and the De Waal Foundation to manage actions at the project's three intervention sites. This aims to streamline the project's work processes.
Recommendation 4: <i>For Condesan</i> : Strengthen budget and program planning processes to streamline activity and budget execution and ensure continuous cash flow to ensure the project's proper functioning (effectiveness/efficiency).	At the end of the reporting period, the project had a plan of activities for the second half of 2025 and 2026, which allowed for an assessment of the amount of funds available for its operation and the development of the budget reform proposal, which will be presented in July 2025. In parallel, hard work is underway to ensure that the technical and financial reports meet the needs of the implementing agency. The training suggested by FAO is expected to streamline the process of preparing, reviewing, and approving reports, as well as the delivery of project disbursements.
Recommendation 5: <i>For Condesan</i> : Review, with the support of gender, interculturality, and LDN specialists, the scope of the target in Outcome 1.1 related to the gender- and interculturality-sensitive indicators, protocols, and institutional arrangements of the LDN monitoring system. This review should allow for the definition of clear criteria for effectively integrating gender and interculturality variables into the system, recognizing that access to productive resources, capacities, and power differs among women, men, and ethnic groups.	For the second reporting period, a review of the project's goals is planned, in conjunction with the technical team and specialists who may be involved in this process, in relation to the integration of the gender, intercultural, and LDN approach, to establish their consistency with the project's reality at the intervention sites.
Recommendation 6: <i>For FAO and CONDESAN</i> : Review the administrative procedures established in the Operational Manual, identifying those that the parties consider subject to simplification, with the goal of implementing improvements that streamline the technical and administrative management of the project. At the same time, strengthen the management capacities of the FAO and CONDESAN teams to reduce delays in the delivery and review of technical and financial reports (Efficiency).	Condesan is undergoing a continuous improvement process to streamline technical and administrative processes. It is expected that the training suggested by the implementing agency will be provided to address the difficulties encountered in the review and approval process for technical and financial reports.

Recommendation 7: <i>For FAO, CONDESAN, MAATE, and MAG</i> Structurally integrate the project's instruments and approaches, including the National Observatory on Land Degradation (ONDT), into national, provincial, and local development plans and policies, complemented by resource mobilization and institutional strengthening strategies at different scales (Sustainability).	The project's approach promotes the coordination of various stakeholders in the field to implement the proposed initiatives, thereby strengthening their implementation. It has also identified opportunities to strengthen capacity and governance processes that will allow for greater project sustainability. The project seeks to build a solid platform among institutions to foster the sustainability of the initiatives, their improvement, and possible replication.
Recommendation 8: <i>For FAO, CONDESAN, MAATE, and MAG</i> Evaluate the possibility of requesting a project extension, at no additional cost, for a period of six to twelve months. This extension would allow for the consolidation of the technical and territorial processes initiated, systematize and package the main results and good practices, and strengthen the conditions for institutional ownership and the integration of the LDN approach into public policies. To manage this extension, it is recommended as a first step to review and adjust the current budget structure to ensure the continuity and consolidation of the ongoing technical and territorial processes. This adjustment should prioritize the allocation of resources to strategic activities such as technical assistance, capacity building, and the operation of the ONDT. It is also essential to analyze actual expenses incurred in relation to the original results-based budget, so as to demonstrate that available resources are sufficient to complete the activities without deviating from the project's objective. Budget planning should be accompanied by detailed and realistic activity planning (effectiveness/efficiency/sustainability).	The budget reform proposal will be submitted in July 2025, allowing for progress on the actions planned for 2025 and 2026, based on the needs identified in the region and the requirements for strengthening ongoing processes, such as the consolidation of the ONDT Observatory. The possibility of extending the budget will be analyzed in the second half of 2025, after reviewing the available budget and the implementation needs to meet the goals proposed in the project's results framework.

8. Minor project amendments

Minor amendments are changes to the design or implementation that do not have significant impact on the project objectives or scope, or an increase of the GEF project financing up to 5% as described in Annex 9 of the GEF Project and Program Cycle Policy Guidelines 12. Please describe any minor changes that the project has made under the relevant category or categories and provide supporting documents as an annex to this report if available. (This section will be uploaded to the GEF Portal)

Category of change	Provide a description of the change	Indicate the timing of the change	Approved by
Results framework			
Components and cost			
Institutional and implementation arrangements			
Financial management	Towards the halfway point of the project's effective operation period, some budget adjustment needs have been identified, which were raised at the project's last Steering Committee meeting (February 2025). These initiatives seek to expand the positive impacts in the territories and with target groups, strengthen an enabling environment that promotes the adoption and sustainability of SLM practices, consolidate the ONDT Observatory, broaden the focus of capacity-building processes, and strengthen the project's communication and knowledge management processes. The adjustment does not imply a modification of the project's total budget, but rather a rebalancing of investment items.	July 2025 - August 2026	Must be approved by FAO after submission
Implementation schedule			
Executing Entity			
Executing Entity Category			
Minor project objective change			
Safeguards			
Risk analysis	A new social risk has been identified: deterioration of the public security context, due to the conditions Ecuador has been experiencing in recent months.However, this does not change the overall risk rating for the project for the 2025 fiscal year.☐☐☐	July 2025 - August 2026	FAO
Increase of GEF project financing up to 5%			
Co-financing			
Location of project activity			
Other minor project amendment (define)			

9. Stakeholders' Engagement

Please report on progress, challeges, and outcomes on stakeholder engagement (based on the description of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan) included at CEO Endorsement/Approval during this reporting period. (This section will be uploaded to the GEF Portal)			
Profile	Stakeholder name	Type of partnership	Progress, results & Challenges on Stakeholder's Engagement
Government Institutions	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE)	Main focal point of the Project. Continuous communication and validation of the progress in implementation.	Coordination and supervision by MAATE has continued normally, especially in the contex of the LDN National Action Plan.
Government Institutions	Ministry of Agriculture and Cattle Management (MAG)	Main technical and political partner	Continuous communication and validation of the progress in implementation. Changes in authorities has required an induction to the current status of implementation of the project.
IGOs	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	Implementing Agency	The mechanisms of supervision and technical and administrative support by FAO continue to be applied. Strategies are being identified to speed up the approval of financial reports and the disbursement of funds for the project. Delays in the disbursement of funds caused an operational pause in the fourth quarter of 2024.
Government Institutions	Decentralized Autonomous Government (DAG) of Imbabura	Partner	The project has developed an integrated land use planning tool, to identify opportunities to promote conservation, restoration, and sustainable agriculture in the province. Coordination with this DAG is also active in the implementation
Government Institutions	DAG of Bolivar	Partner	A sustainable agricultural production strategy was developed with the Bolivar DAG, to guide intervention in SLM practices in the main agricultural production systems in the Province.

Government Institutions	DAG of Santa Elena	Partner	Coordination has continued with the Santa Elena DAG in the implementation of biological control practices that diminish reliance on agrochemicals used in the corn productive systems, in the strengthening of the dry forest tree nursery, and in the support of operations of the biological control laboratory operated by the DAG.
Government Institutions	DAG of Chimborazo	Partner	With this DAG a management model is being developed for the production working group of the province, which seeks to establish a roadmap for the discussion around sustainable agriculture in Chimborazo.
Government Institutions	Tungurahua Fund for Paramo Conservation and Fight Against Poverty (FPTLP)	Partner	With the FPTLP, a set of guidelines to update paramo conservation plans was developed, that integrate transversally SLM practices.
Government Institutions	Association of Municipalities of Southwestern Tungurahua (FSO)	Partner	The paramo conservation plan for the municipalities of Mocha, Quero, Tisaleo, Cevallos is being developed in coordination with the FSO.
NGOs	Ecuadorian Fund Populorum Progressio (FEPP)	Partner	Technical assistance to adopters of sustainable pasture management practices has been coordinated with FEPP in the Simiatug parish.
NGOs	Foundation of Local Organizations of Salinas (FUNORSAL)	Partner	The authorities of FUNORSAL changed in december 2024. The coordination mechanism with FUNORSAL has been reestablished in the first semester of 2025.
NGOs	Sustainable Landscapes Foundation (PASOS)	Partner	In the first semester of 2025, a joint planning was conducted to identify activities that seek to strengthen the Province System of Areas of Conservation and Sustainable Land Use.
NGOs	Management Committee – Mojanda Cambugán Conservation and Sustainable Use Area (ACUS)	Partner	A joint planning was conducted to identify activities aimed at strengthening SLM practices and governance in the Mojanda Cambugan Conservation and Sustainable Land Use Area (ACUS)
NGOs	FUCAE Foundation	Partner	An operational arrangement has been developed with FUCAE to implement ecosystem restoration and sustainable cattle management in the upper elevational range of the Mojanda Cambugan Conservation and Sustainable Land Use Area (ACUS)
Private Sector entities	Nunalabs	Partner	Development of alliance to support supply of medicinal herbs in Cotacachi.
Private Sector entities	Cafe Galleti	Partner	Development of alliance to support supply of medicinal herbs in Cotacachi.

Private Sector entities	K. Dorzfaun	Partner	Development of alliance to support provision of toquilla by the Barcelona Artisanal Center
Others	Research groups at: Superior Polytechnic School of Chimborazo (ESPOCH), Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo (UNACH), Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL), Universidad Técnica del Norte (UTN), Universidad Central del Ecuador (UCE)	Partners	A proposal for a governance model for the National Observatory of Land Degradation was developed in collaboration with the research groups at the universities currently participating in the Observatory.
Others	Indigenous Women´s Organization of Cotacachi	Partner	Coordination with the Indigenous Women's Committee of Cotacachi has focused on the second phase of the implementation of SLM practices in chakras, and the strengthening of organizational capabilities through work in financial and non-financial mechanisms that support local families.
Others	Communities of the highlands of Salinas and Simiatug, Bolivar: Pachancho, Yurak Usha, Natawa, Yakubiana, Verdepamba, Pimbalo	Partner	The project uses the governance platforms of each community (e.g. Cabildos) and the working groups at the Salinas Parish level, and the province level to coordinate the implementation of SLM practices related to sustainable management of pastures and establishment of paramo conservation areas.

10. Gender Mainstreaming

Information on Progress on Gender-responsive measures as documented at CEO Endorsement/Approval in the gender action plan or equivalent (when applicable) during this reporting period. (This section will be uploaded to the GEF Portal)		
Category	Yes/No	Briefly describe progress and results achieved during this reporting period.
a. Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources	Yes	In this sense, the project maintains initiatives where the role of both men and women in the management of productive areas is fundamental, as they promote and make visible actions that maintain and enable the development and sustainability of SLM practices in the intervention sites. Thus, we can mention the following examples: - Active participation, women's leadership, and maintenance of SLM practices: This aspect is evident in the Costa sites with the Toquilla Straw Artisanal Processing Center in Barcelona and in the Sierra Norte sites with the CCMU and Coop. Vida Verde and Tumbabiro - Urcuquí - Imbabura where women play key leadership roles. - Sustaining production systems: The cases of the organizations Producoop, Cooperativa Yakubiana, and the Association of Livestock Farmers in Salinas - Bolívar - Sierra Centro show that, although the leadership role of the male gender is significant for cultural reasons, the importance of women in supporting the household is evident when men go to their farms and/or perform additional work, allowing for the implementation and sustainability of these measures. Some of these initiatives were identified in the project's practice synthesis study, which highlighted differences in gender roles.
b. Improving women's participation and decision making	Yes	The leadership role of women in the following organizations is highlighted: <i>Northern Sierra</i>: Vida Verde and Tumbabiro - Urcuquí - Imbabura, and <i>Coast</i>: Toquilla Straw Processing Artisanal Center in Barcelona - Santa Elena, where they decide, promote, and convene their members to implement SLM practices and generate alliances for market access. - Strengthening Women's Indigenous Organization in Cotacachi, with emphasis in building procedures to sustain a procurement process of medicinal herbs for private businesses, improving management skills and financial education, among other aspects. The project makes these roles visible and promotes their legitimization so that they are valued and generate equal opportunities for both access to benefits and market integration.
c. generating socio-economic benefits or services for women	Yes	In the cases mentioned, the women's activities generate economic resources for their families, which promotes equity at the family and community levels. -The project is developing alliances with private enterprises to provide access to markets in better condition for households and local organizations, with emphasis on activities that are led by women: 1) production of medicinal herbs for Galleti and Nunalabs, which commercialize teas and essences, respectively. 2) processing and procurement of toquilla fiber to K. Dorzfaum, which export Panama hats. Also, in April 2025, a pilot workshop was held with toquilla fiber producers and the women-led team at the Toquilla Straw Artisanal Processing Center in Barcelona-Costa to identify the impacts of adopting sustainable practices on costs and benefits along the value chain. The results of this exercise have also been incorporated into the design of the terms of reference for a consultancy that will evaluate the economic aspects of implementing SLM practices in three case studies, highlighting the gender-disaggregated benefits. The workshop will be defined in the second half of 2025.
Any other good practices on gender	No	

11. Knowledge and Learning Activities

Knowledge activities/products (when applicable), as outlined in Knowledge Management (and Learning) Approach approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval, during this reporting period. (This section will be uploaded to the GEF Portal)	
Knowledge management and Learning (KML): Does the project have a KML strategy?	Yes
If YES, what is the implementation progress? In your answer, please describe how the project is fostering knowledge sharing and learning among stakeholders at national and sub-national level.	The KML strategy has three constitutive elements: 1) capacity building strategy, 2) communications strategy, and 3) publications and knowledge management items plan. In the context of these three components, the following main activities have been implemented to foster knowledge sharing and learning: - Identification of knowledge management products that have the potential to be generated within the framework of project implementation, reflecting its approach and comprehensive intervention at the territorial and institutional levels. - Identification of the elements that will be part of the final systematization of the project, the basic inputs and the systematization strategy, including recognition of lessons learned. - Coordination with the communications department for the development of both the Communications Strategy and the Knowledge Management Strategy, and identification of the need for additional technical and financial support.
If NO, how does the project identify, collect and document good practices?	
Please list good practices, including key-technical and/or institutional innovations, from the project thus far.	The main technical and institutional innovations so far include: - Creation of a network of research teams working coordinately in monitoring land degradation patterns, and the impacts of SLM practices under the umbrella of the National Land Degradation Observatory. - Development of market alliance arrangements with actors of the private sector (Nunalabs, Galleti and K. Dorzfaun) to secure better conditions in the supply of fresh herbs and toquilla fiber by local producers in Cotacachi and Santa Elena, respectively. - Supporting the adoption of biological control practices based on the use of benefic entomophagous insects in maize productive systems in Santa Elena.
Communication strategy: Does the project have a communication strategy?	Yes
Please provide a brief overview of the communications successes and challenges this fiscal year.	Between July 2024 and June 2025, several project activities have been supported in the field to document, record with photography and video, and generate high-quality communication products that will enable the project's long-term positioning among key stakeholders promoting LDN. Actions such as the creation of life stories, podcasts, and videos reflecting the perspectives of project beneficiaries are innovative proposals that have been presented during this period. Thus, the actions being implemented within the framework of the following campaigns are highlighted: - General "No Dañes la Tierra" campaign - Agroecological campaign in the Central Zone "Consume Bolívar" - Campaign to strengthen the "Santa Elena Saludable" biological control laboratory Initiatives that require significant coordination of stakeholders to position and disseminate the project's actions.
Human-interest story: Please share a human-interest story from your project, focusing on how the project has helped to improve people's livelihoods while contributing to achieving the expected Global Environmental Benefits. Please indicate any Socio-economic Co-benefits that were generated by the project. Include at least one beneficiary quote and perspective, and please also include related photos and photo credits.	In order to demonstrate the implementation of SLM practices in the landscape of Salinas de Guaranda, Bolívar province, a video was created that captured the perceptions of the beneficiaries and key stakeholders involved in these practices. It also reflected the positive socio-environmental and productive impact that the project's intervention is having in this area. The objective of this material is to generate synergies among the various stakeholders and promote SLM initiatives at the provincial and national levels.

Please provide links to related website, social media account	You can review all the publications produced by the project and disseminated through its digital channels at the following link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1S1ajoZVjW_ZJx4qOQUMTclqX3a45hogp/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=108408616092853663657&rtpof=true&sd=true
Please provide a list of publications, leaflets, video materials, newsletters, or other communications assets publised on the web, if any.	Creation of Social Media Notes: 46, Press Releases: 7, Newsletter: 1, Printed Graphic Materials: 6 printed materials (notebooks, roll-ups, folders, baking supplies, vests, corporate stationery, project branding), Coverages: 11, Videos: 3, Life Stories: 2, that will allow for the achievement of the objectives of the LDN project's Communication Plan. You can review all the publications produced by the project and disseminated through its digital channels at the following link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1S1ajoZVjW_ZJx4qOQUMTclqX3a45hogp/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=108408616092853663657&rtpof=true&sd=true
Please indicate the Communication and/or knowledge management focal point's name and contact details.	Giovanny Cevallos fabricio.cevallos@condesan.org

12. Indigenous Peoples and Local Communitites Involvement

Are Indigenous Peoples and local communities involved in the project (as per the approved Project Document)? If yes, please briefly explain.

If applicable, please describe the process and current status of on-going/completed, legitimate consultations to obtain Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) with the indigenous communities.

The FPIC processes continue to develop as progress is made in implementing the work processes in Indigenous territories and will remain in effect until the project's completion, estimated at the end of 2026. The FPICs approved and under development during this period are:

- Central Committee of Women of the Union of Peasant and Indigenous Organizations of Cotacachi (CCMU) - UNORCAC: Signed in September 2024. Active participation in the implementation of SLM practices with traditional knowledge and the development of sustainable products from the Andean chakra.
- Pachancho Community: Signed in November 2024. Participation in the definition and implementation of conservation/restoration agreements through the application of fencing and restoration trials
- Natawa Community: In the approval process. Participation in the definition and implementation of conservation/restoration agreements through the application of fencing and restoration trials
- Yurak-Uksha Community: In the approval process. Participation in the definition and implementation of conservation/restoration agreements through the application of fencing and restoration trials.

The supporting documents for the FPICs can be reviewed at the following link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1so3cTrxPB4GcZbLglfcKZDp_pyXysMP8?usp=drive_link

Do indigenous peoples and/or local communities have an active participation in the project activities? If yes, briefly describe how.

- Indigenous and local communities play an active role in project activities through:
- Identification and prioritization of SLM practices in the context of the elaboration of farm and community plans.
 - Participation of local promoters in planning, implementation and follow up activities.
 - Individual and collective local actors contribute to the implementation of SLM practices through their work and traditional knowledge regarding species, cultural practices, and local governance of land and resource access.

13. Co-Financing Table

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Amount Confirmed at CEO endorsement/approval (in USD)	Actual Amount Materialized at 30 June 2025 (in USD)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of the Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (national government)	In-kind	\$4,545,914	\$1,346,479
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (national government)	In-kind	\$18,612,692	\$18,433,891
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (national government)	Grant	\$46,111	\$0
GEF Agency	FAO	In-kind	\$3,125,000	\$2,239,640
GEF Agency	FAO	Grant	\$50,000	\$10,000
Recipient Country Government	REM Program (National government)	In-kind	\$1,000,000	
Donor Agency	GIZ	In-kind	\$300,000	\$300,000
Recipient Country Government	GADP Manabí (Decentralized Autonomous Government)	In-kind	\$77,070	-
Recipient Country Government	GADP Chimborazo (Decentralized Autonomous Government)	In-kind	\$100,000	-
Recipient Country Government	GADP Imbabura (Decentralized Autonomous Government)	In-kind	\$200,000	\$32,621
Civil Society Organization	CONDESAN	In-kind	\$67,852	\$56,500
Civil Society Organization	CONDESAN	Grant	\$204,148	\$176,135
Recipient Country Government	GADP Bolivar (Decentralized Autonomous Government)	In-kind		\$68,175
Total		Total	\$28,328,787	\$22,663,442

Please explain any significant changes in project co-financing since CEO Endorsement/Approval, or differences between the pledged and materialized co-financing amounts.

1) The Ministry of Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition (MAATE) updated the amount of co-financing provided through 2024, as previously reported in the previous report. The updated co-financing amount for 2025 will be announced later, as the institution is experiencing staff and authority changes. The update will also include information regarding the REM Program's contribution to the project.

2) The working agreements with the Chimborazo and Manabí GADs are being analyzed by the project's technical team to determine whether any actions will be taken in these provinces during the remaining project period. Instead, the contribution provided by the Bolívar GAD has been incorporated. Despite not having an initial commitment, it has carried out joint environmental and productive actions with the project. In the case of the Imbabura GAD, an update has been provided on the amount reported as being contributed to the project, through June 2025.

3) The contribution provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock is broken down by each of the project components and primarily comprises the technical support provided for structuring the inputs generated for the development of the National LDN Action Plan, the National Observatory on Land Degradation, monitoring processes, and coordination of actions in the territory at the three implementation sites with the institution's initiatives that present synergies with the overall objectives of the LDN project.

14. Geo Location Information

This section should be completed ONLY by projects with 1st PIR and in case the geographic coverage of project activities has changed since last reporting period.

This information is required by GEF Secretariat in GEF Portal

Are there any changes in the geographic coverage of the project activities since the last PIR report?

No

[illegible]

Annex. Monitoring Area-based GEF Core Indicator Commitments and Progress with FERM

The Framework for Ecosystem Restoration Monitoring (FERM), developed by FAO, is the official monitoring platform for tracking global progress and disseminating good practices for the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration. The FERM can serve as an integrated GIS-based platform, providing GEF staff and all relevant stakeholders the chance to display the progress of committed versus achieved land under restoration or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use, along with clear results such as the percentage of project achievement. Having a common tracking and monitoring platform allows users to comprehensively assess and report on project progress. A user-friendly dashboard showcasing project results gives stakeholders a clear understanding of the extent to which project targets have been achieved. Projects with area-based GEF Core Indicators (GEF Core Indicators 1-5 and LDCF Core Indicator 2) are encouraged to register in the FFERM nlatform.

Useful links:

- [FERM website](#)
- [FERM User Guide \(PDF\)](#)
- [FERM YouTube channel](#)
- [Email Carmen Morales](#)

26 It also supports countries in reporting areas under restoration for the Kunming-Montreal GBF Target 2 (areas under restoration) for which FAO is the custodian agency.