Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

global environment facility
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

FAO-GEF Project Implementation Report

2023 – Revised Template

Period covered: 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

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1. Basic Project Data

General Information

Region:	Latin America and the Caribbean
Country (ies):	Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
Project Title:	Sustainable Forest Lands Management and Conservation under an Ecosocial Approach
FAO Project Symbol:	GCP/VEN/011/GFF
GEF ID:	5410
GEF Focal Area(s):	Biodiversity, Climate Change, Land Degradation, Sustainable Forest Management/REDD+
Project Executing Partners:	Ministry of People's Power for Ecosocialism (MINEC)
Initial project duration (years):	5 Years
Project coordinates: *This section should be completed ONLY by:* a) *Projects with 1st PIR;* *b) In case the geographic coverage of project activities has changed since last reporting period.*	*[Projects in a) and b) categories should indicate YES here and provide the geocoded data in Annex 2]*

Project Dates

GEF CEO Endorsement Date:	July 14, 2015
Project Implementation Start Date/EOD :	October 31, 2016
Project Implementation End Date/NTE[1]:	April 30, 2023
Revised project implementation End date (if approved) [2]	June 16, 2023

Funding

GEF Grant Amount (USD):	8,249,316
Total Co-financing amount (USD)[3]:	25,730,000
Total GEF grant delivery (as of June 30, 2023 (USD):	8,189,622
Total GEF grant actual expenditures (excluding commitments) as of June 30, 2023 (USD)[4]:	7,840,663
Total estimated co-financing materialized as of June 30, 2023[5]	33,646,484.66

[1] As per 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] The amount should show the values included in the financial statements generated by IMIS.

[5] Please refer to the Section 13 of this report where updated co-financing estimates are requested and indicate the total co-financing amount materialized.

M&E Milestones

Date of Last Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting:	April 10, 2023
Expected Mid-term Review date[6]:	N/A
Actual Mid-term review date (if already completed):	February 05, 2020 – April 30, 2020
Expected Terminal Evaluation Date[7]:	December, 2022- June 2023
Tracking tools (TT)/Core indicators (CI) updated before MTR or TE stage (provide as Annex)	*YES*

Overall ratings

Overall rating of progress towards achieving objectives/ outcomes (cumulative):	*Highly Satisfactory*
Overall implementation progress rating:	*Satisfactory*
Overall risk rating:	*Low*

ESS risk classification

Current ESS Risk classification:	Low

Status

Implementation Status ***(1st PIR, 2nd PIR, etc. Final PIR):***	Final PIR

Project Contacts

Contact	Name, Title, Division/Institution	E-mail
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[6] 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.

[7] The Terminal Evaluation date should be discussed with OED 6 months before the project's NTE date.

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

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

Project or Development Objective	Outcomes	Outcome indicators[8]	Baseline	Mid-term Target	End-of-project Target	Cumulative progress[9] since project start Level (and %) at 30 June 2023	Progress rating[10]
To support government institutions and community organizations in applying innovations in information management, incentive schemes, participative governance, empowerment of forest-dependent peoples, and multiple mechanisms for restoration of areas under degradation processes in key representative forest ecosystems in Venezuela.	**Component 1: National Integrated Forestry Information System (SINIIF)**						
	Outcome 1.1. Improved capacity for national forest monitoring and evaluation within the framework of the National Forest Inventory (NFI)	Indicator BD-2. II.1: Direct and Indirect Coverage Indicator SFM/REDD+ 2.1 Improved capacities for emissions reduction and increase in carbon stocks	Under the NFI, 1,748 temporary measurement plots (0.5 ha) have been defined at the design level at the national level, with progress in the field on 8% of plots. In the Imataca Forest Reserve (IFR) is estimated forest mass, biodiversity indices, species lists and aboveground biomass carbon for a sub-block of 10,000 ha."	0 ha	4,465,909 ha of forest ecosystems monitored and assessed through protocols that facilitate the collection and analysis of high quality data, including the generation of thematic biodiversity maps, assessment of GHG fluxes and stocks, identification of critical carbon areas and development of national MRV standards	The execution of six (6) products and twenty-seven (27) activities outlined for this Outcome allowed for the strengthening of technical and institutional capacities for national forest evaluation and monitoring within the framework of SDG 15 and its indicators 15.1.1 and 15.2.1. This achieved the development of monitoring protocols for forest coverage, enabling the monitoring of deforestation and forest degradation processes resulting from land use changes. This forms the essential foundation for implementing the proposed National Forest Coverage Monitoring System to be applied in the country, as submitted to MINEC. The execution of these protocols enabled, within the project, the monitoring and evaluation of **4,610,764 hectares of forest ecosystems** (IFR, arid zones, and mangroves), surpassing the expected target of 4,465,909 hectares. This led to the creation of biodiversity thematic maps, evaluation of greenhouse gas emissions and stocks, identification of critical carbon areas, and the establishment of national Monitoring/Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) standards. These will serve as a basis for future REDD+ projects under the scope of SDGs 13 and 15.	HS
	Outcome 1.2. Knowledge and valuation of forest related biodiversity and carbon hotspots integrated in an improved forest management at local forest management unit scale as a strategy to mainstream measures for forest biodiversity conservation in	Number of hectares (area) under a sustainable management plan ***Indicator BD-2. II.1:*** *Direct and Indirect Cover* ***Indicator SFM/REDD+ 1.2*** *Best management practices applied in existing forests* ***Indicator LD. I.5.2:*** *Protected habitat*	The Forest Management Plan (FMP) are elaborated and implemented without considering the ecological characteristics of the exploited forests. ENAFOR, in Unit-V, as of 2012, considers the principle of multiple use of the forest and forest management planning is carried out according to Blocks or	0	The Forest Management Plan (FMP) of Unit V of the IFR integrates data and information on coverage, changes in use of forest types, deforestation, degraded areas, carbon stocks and forest biodiversity conservation measures covering an area of 167,320 ha.	The implementation of 3 products and 10 activities outlined for this Outcome allowed for the strengthening of technical and institutional capacities to promote strategic actions for the planning and management of the country's forests from an eco-social perspective. For the update of the **FMP of Unit V**, the strategic application of Geographic Information System (GIS) and remote sensing tools was crucial. This allowed for the updating and generation of information, such as verifying that the initial area of 163,320 hectares established in the 2015 baseline actually corresponds to **179,462 ha**. The FMP was redesigned within the framework of SDGs 15, 13, and 8, covering an area of 179,462 hectares which adds to the FMP Units C2 (20,775 ha) and C3 (7,153 ha),	HS

[8] This is taken from the approved results framework of the project.
[9] Please report on results obtained in terms of Global Environmental Benefits and Socio-economic co-benefits as well.
[10] Use GEF Secretariat required six-point scale system: **Highly Satisfactory** (HS), **Satisfactory** (S), **Moderately Satisfactory** (MS), **Moderately Unsatisfactory** (MU), **Unsatisfactory** (U), and **Highly Unsatisfactory** (HU). Refer to Annex 1.

	forest management plans.		Watersheds, Production Units or Sub-watersheds; and locally zoned according to the physiography through the slope component.			encompassing a **total area of 207,390 hectares under management plans.** The guidelines and criteria used in the formulation of the FMP will serve as a national reference, incorporating innovative elements such as forest potential, biodiversity, and carbon capture. These are integrated into the current national forest policy, which recognizes forests as ecosystems whose composition and functioning constitute a heritage of multiple uses. A database is available for the assessment of flora and fauna diversity in the IFR, using protocols for evaluating the risk of identified species. This forms the floristic and faunistic database with their corresponding attributes, which are being systematized and integrated into SINIIF within the ESPECIES module. This outcome breaks paradigms of the traditional view of the forestry sector and enhances the development of diversified or multiple-use management, representing a significant opportunity for forest management to ensure the maintenance of biological diversity, forest ecosystem functions, social and economic values of the forest. Additionally, it integrates strategies that take into account the effects of climate change and improve carbon sequestration rates.	
	Componente 2: Capacity building and innovative tools for SFM.						
	Outcome 2.1. Community stakeholders, national and local governments involved in sustainable forest management through new participatory management tools, covering at least 167,320 ha of forest in the Imataca V Management Unit of the IFR	*1)***SFM/REDD+:** Area (number of hectares) under application of good management practices and sustainable forest co-management in forests of the IFR.[11]	The ENF prepared Operational Forest Plans for the harvesting of the Santa María I (2013-2014) and Santa María II (2014-2015) Units for a total of 6,486.61 ha, in which good forest management practices are applied; however, aspects related to forest co-management have not been addressed.		1) 167,320 ha in Unit V of the IFR, under sustainable forest management / co-management plans.	The implementation of 3 products and 6 activities outlined for this Outcome allowed for the strengthening of capacities among community stakeholders, the national government, and local governments involved in sustainable forest management through new participatory tools, enabling the project to: **A total of 207,390 hectares in Units V, C2, and C3, as well as the IFR, are under Forest Management/Co-Management** plans with environmental and social sustainability criteria. In these plans, inclusive forest governance is promoted by incorporating innovative aspects such as carbon monitoring and evaluation, as well as biodiversity of flora and fauna.	HS

[11] Indicators and targets adjusted based on the findings of the MTR and with the approval of the VII Project Steering Committee, held on August 18, 2021, in order to better respond to the measurement of progress in achieving the objectives of the Outcomes and their associated Outputs. See Section 7 for more details on the settings made.
* In order to compute the indicators for institutions and participants, a database of participants was consolidated for the period from November 2016 to April 2023, filtering the information in the field called name of the institution where the participant is registered and grouping it by sector (communities, public institutions linked to the forest sector, MINEC and its attached entities, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, private sector "companies or personal firms linked to the forestry sector" and university and scientific research institutions) to facilitate the statistics. It should be noted that the incorporation of communities and institutions that exceed the goal originally set in PRODOC was possible due to the opening of the SFM Learning Community in the framework of the implementation of the Capacity Building Program through the FAO-IFLA letter of agreement, where institutions and communities directly and indirectly linked to the forestry sector were invited, and as a result of other strategic alliances with FUNDAMBIENTE, ABAE, UNEG and the incorporation of the training product in national consultancies.

		2) **SFM / REDD + 2.1: Enhanced capacities to reduce emissions and increase carbon stocks.** Number of institutions, indigenous communities and people with strengthened technical capacities for the implementation of Sustainable Forest Co-management and other participatory forest governance tools*	The DGB and the ENF have professional and technical staff trained in various topics related to the forestry sector (25 and 15, respectively); there is no information on other forestry-related institutions. The indigenous communities do not have technical capacities in forest management. Sustainable forest co-management has not been addressed at either the institutional or community level		2) Five (5) institutions, ten (10) indigenous communities and at least five hundred (500) people, representatives of institutions and communities (at least 40% women) with developed and strengthened capacities for forest management and co-management of the IFR. *	**88 institutions, 12 indigenous communities,** and a meeting place called "Casa Kariña," located in the IFR, were included in the training processes*. **3,396 participants (47% women),** with developed and strengthened capacities in subjects such as forest monitoring and inventory TFP and (NTFP), carbon flows and stocks, environmental assessment, geopositioning equipment and SIG management, tree selection and handling of forest seeds, collection of exudates (latex and resins), forest restoration, nursery plant production, basic carpentry, meliponiculture, among others. These capacities have enabled the promotion and implementation of forest management and co-management (CF) in the IFR and other forested lands at the national level.. Building upon the successful experience of implementing CF in the IFR, involving the Venezuelan state and the organized Kariña community, a proposal was developed within the project framework for the establishment of the National Forest Co-Management System (SINACOF). This proposal was presented to MINEC for its consideration as a national public policy.	HS
	Outcome 2.2. Development and initial implementation of a National Program for the application of environmental and social sustainability standards for the production of wood and non-wood forest goods.	1) Demonstration area (number of hectares) of the IRF´s Unit V, under application of a pilot scheme of national standards of environmental and social sustainability in balance with the provision of forest goods and services. [12] *	There are no national standards for the production of timber and non-timber forest products in native forests. The Forestry Law contains provisions for the development of sustainability standards for certification by the competent body (Article 112); not yet developed. There are forest management instruments: Management Plan and Operational Forest Plan, but there are no mechanisms for participatory forest monitoring.		1) A demonstration area within the Unit V covering 15,000 ha, managed under environmental and social sustainability standards for the production of timber and non-timber forest products, applying participatory monitoring mechanisms. *	A **demonstration area** was established within the IFR, covering part of Unit V and the Tukupu 1 co-management unit, encompassing **22,154 ha**. This area is managed under environmental and social sustainability standards for the production of timber and non-timber forest products developed within the project. These products were submitted to MINEC for consideration under a Ministerial Decree (draft), and monitoring mechanisms and participatory guidelines developed under the project were applied.	HS
		2)SFM/REDD+: Direct and indirect avoided emissions. **Indicator CCM-5. LULUCF**	Estimated loss of 453,135.81 tCO2eq/year due to the use of conventional forest		2.a) Direct avoided emissions: 1,136,759.35tC O2eq for the 5 years of the project on 25,000 ha	Through the forest utilization carried out on 1,668 hectares in 2017, in collaboration with ENAFOR, **direct emissions avoided were estimated at 100,776.06 tCO2eq**. Between February and June 2023, reduced-impact utilization was initiated by the direct communal social property company (EPSDC, in spanish) Tukupu on	S

12 Indicators and targets adjusted based on the findings of the MTR and with the approval of the VII Project Steering Committee, held on August 18, 2021, in order to better respond to the measurement of progress in achieving the objectives of the Outcomes and their associated Outputs. See Section 7 for more details on the settings made.

			practices over an area of 5,000 ha under forest use.		(227,351.87 tCO2eq for 5,000 ha/year). 2.b) Indirect avoided emissions: 18,188,149.06 tCO2eq for the 5 years of the project (3,637,629.92 CO2eq per year on 80,000 ha).	the first 1,000 hectares. As the project is currently in the closing phase, it was not possible to estimate the corresponding direct emissions avoided for this utilized area during this last semester. Indirect emissions avoided were estimated at **34,054,940.6 tCO2eq for the 149,832 hectares conserved during 5 years of project implementation**, significantly surpassing the target.	
	Outcome 2.3. Intersectoral dialogue on SFM strengthened.	Number of actors (national and local government institutions, indigenous communities, community-based organizations, companies, NGOs, etc.) with strengthened capacities and participating in a platform for dialogue and intersectoral coordination for the forest governance in Venezuela. [13] *	There are numerous actors in the forestry sector, without a defined plan to strengthen technical capacities. The country has a legal basis (Decree No. 2083 of November 02, 2002) that regulates institutional coordination, but there are no formal coordination mechanisms in the forestry sector.		At least fifteen (15) actors with strengthened technical capacities and actively participating in a platform for dialogue and intersectoral coordination for forest governance. *	The political and institutional actions and collaborations carried out within the framework of the 2 products and 3 activities of this outcome allowed the project to encourage the organization and operation of an intersectoral dialogue and coordination platform for forest governance, referred to as the **"Gabinete Forestal" by MINEC**. This platform involves the **active participation of 16 actors (5 of them permanent)**, with strengthened technical capacities for the SFM. Ten partnerships were formed to drive and strengthen the SFM and CF in the IFR and the country, with support from the Forest Cabinet established by MINEC. The most significant ones include the collaboration between EPSDC Tukupu and MINEC, resulting in the allocation of approximately 55,000 ha of IFR forests for Co-Management. Notably, the implementation of the Seed Network and the mobilization of additional resources from the UK and IOM also stand out.	S
	Component 3: Restoration, Conservation and SFM/SLM of Forests in Areas Affected by Degradation Processes						
	Outcome 3.1. Technical and institutional capacities for forest and forest land restoration through SFM/SLM practices strengthened.	1) **SFM / REDD + 1.2: Good management practices applied in existing forests.** Number of institutions, indigenous communities and people representing government institutions, NGOs, community-based organizations, Indigenous and local communities with installed and strengthened technical capacities on SFM/SLM topics. *	The Forestry Law establishes the legal basis for a strategy for the restoration and recovery of forest cover with an eco-social approach; however, there is no training program in SFM/SLM. The ENF involved and trained some members of three (3) indigenous communities present in the Unit V of the IFR.		1) Five (5) national institutions, ten (10) indigenous communities of the IFR and at least two hundred (200) people (at least 40% women) with installed and strengthened technical capacities on SFM/SLM topics. *	In the execution of the 3 products and 13 activities outlined for this outcome, relationships were established with **42 national institutions**, 12 indigenous communities, and a community meeting place called "Casa Kariña" located in the IFR. The Kariña communities actively participated in training and forest and land restoration processes. The implementation followed a hands-on learning approach. In their family and community nurseries, over 150,000 forest and fruit seedlings were produced, used for the restoration of degraded areas. Capacities were strengthened and developed for **799 indigenous individuals (45% women),** enabling them to undertake restoration, conservation, and SFM/SLMof forests in areas affected by degradation processes.	HS
	Outcome 3.2. Restoration and regeneration of 1,440 ha of forests through SFM/SWM strategies within the framework of an ecosystem	1) **BD-2. III.4:** Management practices that integrate biodiversity.	An estimated loss of 453,135.81 ton/year CO2eq from the use of conventional forestry techniques for an area of forest		1) Sequestration of 512,985.68 tCO2eq in 1,440 ha: - Reforestation (748 ha): 262,348.88 tCO2eq	The project successfully restored and regenerated **1,559 ha of forests and forested lands** (529.5 ha with agroforestry, 520 ha with analog forestry, and 509.5 ha with reforested areas). This contributed to the **sequestration of 571,903 tCO_2eq** at the end of the 7-year project implementation (analog forestry 120,692 tCO_2eq; reforested areas 191,242 tCO_2eq; agroforestry areas	HS

[13] Indicators and targets adjusted based on the findings of the MTR and with the approval of the VII Project Steering Committee, held on August 18, 2021, in order to better respond to the measurement of progress in achieving the objectives of the Outcomes and their associated Outputs. See Section 7 for more details on the settings made.

	approach and prioritizing the multi-functionality of forests.		harvesting of 5,000 ha per year.		- Analog Forestry (342 ha): 122,976 tCO2eq - Agroforestry (350 ha): 127,660.08 tCO2eq	205,443 tCO_2eq), promoting forest connectivity and biodiversity conservation, and surpassing the target. Another noteworthy outcome of the restoration was the adoption of agroforestry practices by the Kariña communities. They view it as a strategy to enhance food security, family nutrition, and local and family economies. This approach is being replicated in other families' fields, indicating its sustainability.	
		2) Area (number of hectares) of restored and regenerated forest and forest land. [14] *	For 2000-2013, a forest loss of 827 ha is reported for FMU V, with an average annual deforestation rate of 0.018%, mainly due to mining activity and the opening of roads. The area restored by the ENF until 2015 covered 20 ha of reforestation in the Unit V of the IFR.		2) 1,440 ha of restored and regenerated forest and forest land. *	The project implemented restoration strategies with the involvement of public institutions, rural communities, and Kariña indigenous communities, which led to surpassing the initially established target (1,440 ha). This achievement was made possible through the training process, selection of areas, and restoration strategies decided in consensus with participants. As a result, **1,559 hectares of forests and forested lands** were restored and regenerated (529.5 ha with agroforestry, 520 ha with analog forestry, and 509.5 ha with reforested areas), promoting forest connectivity and biodiversity conservation.	HS
	Component 4: Project M&E and Information Dissemination.						
	Outcome 4.1. Project implemented based on "Results Based Management" and facilitating the application of lessons learned and good practices in future actions	Project results achieved and demonstrating sustainability.		62% progress in achieving results.	Project results 100% achieved and demonstrating sustainability.	The project was successfully implemented, based on results-oriented management, significantly surpassing the majority of expected targets across various outcome indicators, products, and activities. It promptly identified lessons learned and good practices that will be carried forward for the formulation and implementation of new GEF-FAO-MINEC projects. The situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant delays in achieving the expected results. However, thanks to the resilience of the technical team and the support from FAO authorities, MINEC, GEF, and the approval of 4 successive extensions until June 16, 2023, most activities and products were successfully completed, meeting the expected outcomes. Regarding the project's outcomes,to the ongoing Final Evaluation estimated that out of a total of 50 goals to be achieved, 22 were fully met, 17 goals were exceeded, 9 were partially met, and 2 goals were not evaluated (one from Outcome 2.2 and one from Product 2.2.2). Component 1: 14 goals, 10 fully met, 3 exceeded, and 1 partially met. Component 2: 18 goals, 3 fully met, 9 exceeded, 4 partially met, and 2 not evaluated.	S

14 Indicators and targets adjusted based on the findings of the MTR and with the approval of the VII Project Steering Committee, held on August 18, 2021, in order to better respond to the measurement of progress in achieving the objectives of the Outcomes and their associated Outputs. See Section 7 for more details on the settings made.

						Component 3: 18 goals, 9 fully met, 5 exceeded, and 4 partially met. Component 4: 5 goals fully met and 2 partially achieved.	

Measures taken to address MS, MU, U and HU ratings on Section 2

Outcome	Action(s) to be taken	By whom?	By when?

3. Implementation Progress (IP)

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

Outcomes and Outputs[15]	Indicators (as per the Logical Framework)	Annual Target (as per the annual Work Plan)	Main achievements[16] (please avoid repeating results reported in previous year PIR)	Describe any variance[17] in delivering outputs
Outcome 1.1 Improved capacity for national forest monitoring and evaluation within the framework of the National Forest Inventory (NFI)	**Indicator BD-2. II.1:** Direct and Indirect Coverage Indicator SFM/REDD+ 2.1 Improved capacities for emissions reduction and increase in carbon stocks (Surface area of monitored and evaluated forest areas)	644,009 hectares (429,700 ha of xerophytic lands, and 214,309 hectares of mangrove forests.)	During this past year of implementation, the monitoring and evaluation of forest lands were completed in 574,555 ha of xerophytic forests in arid and semi-arid areas of the country (133% of the target), as well as 214,309 hectares of mangrove forests. This resulted in a total of 788,864 ha being completed, exceeding the annual target by more than 122%, and completing the monitoring and evaluation of 4,610,764 hectares of forests in the Forest Reserve Imataca (IFR) on a national level. It's important to additionally highlight that Monitoring/Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) standards were developed for the country, which will serve as a foundation for future REDD+ projects. Furthermore, protocols for monitoring forest coverage were established, enabling the monitoring of deforestation and forest degradation processes due to land use change. These protocols will be crucial for implementing the proposed National Forest Coverage Monitoring System to the Ministry of Economy and Mines (MINEC) for its development. Fourteen workshops were conducted, involving 324 participants (34% of whom were women) representing MINEC and its affiliated entities, along with other public and private institutions linked to the forestry sector. The workshops also included students, university professors, and researchers, aimed at strengthening capacities for forest monitoring and reporting of carbon stocks.	
Output 1.1.1 Information system that integrates data on carbon stocks and flows, biodiversity, physical-natural, sociocultural and economic environment, and status and characterization of forest	Percentage of progress	25%	Technicians and officials from MINEC, its territorial state units for eco-socialism (UTEC), and its affiliated entities (IFLA, CONARE, INPARQUES, Mission Arbol, ENAFOR, Fundambiente) were trained in the use, management, and utilization of SINIIF. Specialists in the areas of forest heritage, soils, ecosystems, environmental management, and informatics were included in the training. Multimedia materials were developed, including an instructional guide for data entry and retrieval for SINIIF's end users.	The developed system was handed over to MINEC for integration into their institutional web platform and for eventual full

[15] Outputs as described in the project Logframe or in any approved project revision.

[16] Please use the same unit of measurement of the project indicators as per the approved Implementation Plan or Annual Workplan. Please be concise (max one or two short sentence with main achievements)

[17] Variance refers to the difference between the expected and actual progress at the time of reporting.

ecosystems, providing high quality information for decision making			The structure and layout of cartographic data on the main map module (geonode platform) were improved to enhance user experience and provide organized data at both scale and thematic levels. Over 100 digital cartographic data collected by IFLA during project execution and cartographic products generated by ABAE were added to the SINIIF map module. Regarding the software's development, progress was made with the support of national experts contracted by the project, FAO RLC and HQ specialists, and MINEC's IT personnel on version 2.0 of SINIIF. This version included server stabilization, a new frontend design, and backend improvements. In the backend, relationships between the species module's (taxonomy) databases and all databases of different thematic modules were enhanced. Calculations for forest indicators in the tree and forest module were improved, adjusted, and validated. Seeders were created for automated data integration in the tree and species fauna modules. CRUD operations were enhanced. On the frontend, user experience was improved through the design and development of new screens for accessing different thematic modules. Access to forest and environmental indicators in the monitoring and evaluation module was replaced. A dashboard for accessing indicators by theme (Species, Tree, Forest, and SCEE) was created on the main screen. Graph presentations, titles, sizes, and colors were improved. SINIIF wasn't fully implemented as planned in the PRODOC, but its successful development and testing are considered to have achieved at least 90% of the expected goal. It was formally delivered and installed on MINEC's equipment and servers. The General Directorate of Information and Communication Technologies of MINEC was responsible for making final adjustments to align it with the ministerial platform and subsequently deploying it openly on the ministry's website.	public operation. However, this integration and full operation hadn't been successfully achieved by the project's closure.
Output 1.1.2 Protocols for updating and processing geospatial information for sustainable forest management (planning, monitoring, control and research) and multi-temporal analysis of forest cover at the national level.	Protocol for updating and processing geospatial information (planning, monitoring, control, and research, designed and implemented)	Goals exceeded in previous periods	Completed and reported in previous years.	
	Protocol for multitemporal analysis of forest coverage at the national level, designed and implemented			
	Percentage of Protocol Design Adjustments and Corrections	15%	Two (02) review and adjustment workshops were conducted with 22 participants, including key actors from MINEC and its affiliated entities, the university and research sector, and public institutions related to the forestry sector (41% women). Based on the results of these workshops, the protocol for monitoring national forest degradation through remote sensing was updated. This update incorporated aspects of forest degradation resulting from selective logging, forest fires, local use of wood for fuel, and livestock grazing. These adjustments and corrections completed the percentage of pending protocol updates	
Output 1.1.3 Protocols for the gathering of socio-cultural-economic information of communities and indigenous peoples associated and / or dependent on forests.	Protocol designed and implemented	Goals exceeded in previous periods	The socio-cultural, ethnic, and economic information was successfully collected from 10 Kariña indigenous communities in the IFR, and it was loaded into the SCEE module of the SiNIIF system. The socio-cultural, ethnic, and economic information was successfully collected from 10 Kariña indigenous communities in the IFR, and it was loaded into the SCEE module of the SiNIIF	

	Percentage of Adjustment and Corrections of the protocol	15%	In synergy with the workshops conducted for the review and adjustments of protocol product 1.1.2, an opportunity was also taken to promote the review of the protocol regarding SCEE aspects of indigenous communities. Spatial variables were incorporated into the original protocol for the characterization of communities, family units, and conucos. Additionally, the psychosocial dimension, which integrates individual aspects (thoughts, emotions, behaviors) with group, communal, or social aspects (social practices, customs, roles, shared meanings, norms, culture, etc.), all of the above combined results in a management and decision-making strategy focused on what we call social cartography. This innovative and highly interesting aspect was contributed during the conceptualization of the SCEE module of the SINIIF.	
Output 1.1.4 Study of greenhouse gas (GHG) flows and stocks in 3 types of forest, identification of critical carbon areas and national MRV standards established for the GHG reduction benefits of deforestation and forest degradation (REDD +).	Study of flows and stocks of greenhouse gases (GHG) in 3 types of forest	Goal exceeded in previous periods	During the second half of 2022, 9 permanent plots were established for carbon monitoring using the multipurpose plot protocol in the Unit V. On the other hand, the remeasurement of the 9 permanent plots already established in previous years continued. At the national level, the protocol for studies of GHG flows and stocks and the identification of critical carbon areas of Forest ecosystems: Tropical Humid, Xerophytic and Mangroves was applied and validated, incorporating specific aspects for the determination of carbon in Mangroves. Critical carbon areas were spatially determined by crossing the 2000 and 2020 maps, in which deforested areas were considered as critical carbon areas. The MMVR standards were established based on the results and products generated during the implementation of the project. In addition, the "Methodological Guide for Carbon Estimation in the Imataca Forest Reserve" was designed. The design of MRV standards was a relevant contribution of the project to the country, as it allows having a tool to evaluate the performance of future projects that consider the establishment of adaptation and mitigation measures, as well as projects that consider carrying out national GHG inventories, specifically in the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Uses (AFOLU) Sector, as well as to fulfill commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and SDG 13.	
Output 1.1.5 Thematic maps of biodiversity that include information on the distribution of flora species, their abundance, frequency, dominance and phyto-geographical relationships	Number of thematic maps produced	**35**	In the framework of the 3rd LoA with IFLA, 36 new thematic maps of biodiversity were developed at a scale of 1:250,000 covering 630,568 Km² that complete the entire continental surface of the country, except for the area claimed by Guyana (916,455 Km²). In these thematic maps, 332 new works (451 in total) were reviewed that generated 249,922 reports or records (317,969 in total) in which another 11,106 species (17,501 total) belonging to 1,320 genera (2,891 total) and 140 families (374 total) were identified. It is important to highlight that with these results the last report from 2008 is being updated where it was reported that Venezuela had 15,820 species, since this is exceeded by 110.6% (Hokche, Berry and Huber, 2008). The descriptive memories of each of the maps and the flora species database (BDEF) were the main input of the SPECIES module, as it determined the presence of reported flora species for the 64 ecoregions of the country.	

Output 1.1.6 Participatory mechanism for monitoring forest coverage and status and GHG fluxes in deforested and degraded forests	Percentage of Participatory Monitoring Mechanism Designed and Implemented	10%	During this reporting period, 23 new hands-on training workshops were conducted, following the experiential learning approach. This facilitated the implementation of Participatory Forest Monitoring (PFM) through the establishment and collection of information from 105 multipurpose monitoring plots. This effort involved the participation of 177 individuals from the Kariña indigenous communities and 11 members of the Tukupu EPSDC (with 38% being women). By collecting information from both permanent and temporary multipurpose plots and in the design of the second Operational Forest Plan (OFP) for Tukupu in the designated V and C2 areas, an additional 2,419.92 hectares were surveyed. When combined with the 1,002 hectares surveyed in the first half of 2022, this surpasses the 3,000 hectares under PFM, exceeding the PRODOC's expectations by over 114%.	
	Percentage of women's participation	30%		
Outcome 1.2 Knowledge and valuation of forest related biodiversity and carbon hotspots integrated in an improved forest management at local forest management unit scale as a strategy to mainstream measures for forest biodiversity conservation in forest management plans	Amount of hectares (area) under a sustainable management plan **Indicator BD-2. II.1:** Direct and indirect coverage Indicator **SFM/REDD+ 1.2**: Good management practices applied in existing forests **Indicator LD. I.5.2:** Protected habitat.	Goal exceeded in previous periods	During this period, the preparation and approval of the Forest Management and Planning Plan (FMP) for the Tukupu II area were reported. This area was assigned to the indigenous forestry company in 2022, covering an area of 47,916 hectares from units V and C2. This addition supplements the existing FMP the Tukupu I area in unit C3, as well as the updated general POMF forFMPt N5 in 2022. This achievement surpasses the PRODOC's goal of 167,320 hectares by 124%, resulting in a total of 207,390 hectares under sustainable forest management and planning plans within the Imataca Forest Reserve (IFR).	
Output 1.2.1 Lists of forest species, flora and fauna (endemism, threatened, exotic) of the IFR and critical carbon areas in Unit V.	Species at Risk Assessment Protocol (e.g., Red List Index (RLI) of IUCN and CITES)	Reported in previous PIR	N/A	
	Percentage of development in the SPECIES Module for incorporating Conservation Status attribute information into SINIIF.	10%	The conceptualization of the species module within SINIIF was strengthened by completing the data in the TAXA database, which forms a central axis of the system. This database holds all taxonomic information related to the species, serving as an index for allocating specific information attributes that are unique to each particular species. The information generated in Product 1.1.5. was integrated into the Species Module of SINIIF. As a result, the list of forest species, flora, and fauna, along with their updated conservation status, was consolidated during this period.	
	Updated list of forest species, flora, and fauna along with their conservation status.	Reported in previous PIR	N/A	
Output 1.2.2 Guidelines for the study and definition of the zoning of management units, in accordance with the status and conservation needs of biodiversity and forest	Guidelines Document for the Study and Definition of Management Unit Zoning Prepared	Goal exceeded in previous periods	N/A.	

ecosystems, using the information generated by SINIIF.	Number of reports with the incorporation of guidelines in operational forest plans and FMP.	1	The guidelines were applied for the third time, this time in the FMP and the operational forestry plan (OFP) of the Tukupu II area, assigned by MINEC to the indigenous forestry company in 2022. This demonstrates that the use of SIG and remote sensing tools included in these guidelines is essential for forest management, planning, and governance.	
Output 1.2.3 Database of goods and services of biodiversity and forest ecosystems, considering timber and non-timber products and their multiple use by local communities	Percentage of the database designed and implemented.	Goal exceeded in previous periods	In order to strengthen the outcomes of this product, it was decided to carry out new activities within the framework of the 3rd FAO-IFLA Agreement. This decision was driven by the scattered nature of information at the national level and the lack of record-keeping for the multiple uses of forests and traceability of timber and non-timber forest products in the country. For this reason, the product was approached with the design of a database for biodiversity and forest ecosystem goods and products. The focus was on two global aspects: the use of timber and non-timber forest products for craftsmanship in the states of Anzoátegui, Amazonas, Lara, and Mérida, as well as at the local level within the IFR from an ethnobotanical perspective. Both aspects intersect between components 3 and 1, particularly in the latter to consolidate the database within SINIIF. The execution of these activities led to: 1) Understanding the current and potential use of timber and non-timber forest products for craftsmanship in the states of Anzoátegui, Amazonas, Lara, and Mérida. 2) The field data collection and knowledge exchange in the IFR enabled the reporting of 228 species from an ethnobotanical perspective. These species were represented by 194 genera and 74 families. The family Fabaceae (Leguminosae) had the highest number of species, with uses distributed across many analyzed categories. The categories with the highest number of reported species are medicinal (primarily for treating digestive disorders and unspecified diseases like fever and headaches), followed by edible species. Additionally, the uses of construction and tools were documented. 3) Ethnobotanical information (usage and description) for 372 species of flora was collected and integrated into the species module of SINIIF. 4) The aforementioned efforts resulted in a consolidated ethnobotanical database for 600 flora species integrated into SINIIF.	
Outcome 2.1: Community stakeholders, national and local governments involved in sustainable forest management through new participatory management tools, covering at least 167,320 ha of forest in the Imataca V Management Unit of the IFR.	SFM/REDD+ 1.2. Area (number of hectares) under the application of good practices for sustainable forest management and co-management in forests of the IFR.	102.654,04 ha	During this period, thanks to the strategic application of SIG and remote sensing tools, it was possible to verify that the initial area of 163,320 hectares established in the 2015 baseline as an extension of Unit V actually corresponds to 179,462 ha. The FMP of this unit was updated, covering the total area of 179,462 hectares. This added to the POMFFMPthe area assigned in 2022 for Co-management with the Tukupu EPSDC in Unit C2 (20,775 ha). Although most of the 64,665.96 hectares reported in previous periods were already within Unit V and are not counted again, the addition of 135,571.04 ha newly included in the updated FMP of that unit and C2, significantly exceeds the annual target. Together with the 7,153 ha from Unit C3 that were previously reported, there is now a total of 207,390 hectares under the application of good practices in SFM and Co-management in the IFR. This represents 124% of the final goal for this result.	
	SFM/REDD+ 2.1 Enhanced capacities for emissions	Goals exceeded in previous periods	During this reporting period, 27 workshops were conducted, training a total of 467 individuals (32.5% of whom were women).	

	reduction and increased carbon stocks. Number of institutions, indigenous communities, and individuals with strengthened technical capacities for the implementation of Sustainable Forest Co-management and other participatory forest governance tools.		Advocacy efforts continued with MINEC for the consideration of the Presidential Decree proposal to establish the National Forest Co-management System (SINACOF) as a public policy. This proposal is currently under review by MINEC's legal consultancy.	
Output 2.1.1 Technical-legal strengthening program for HH.RR implemented to promote and sustain innovations in SFM using information generated by the SINIIF.	Training program designed Number of conducted training workshops Number of trained individuals Percentage of women's participation (40%)	Goals exceeded in previous periods	During the reporting period, 27 workshops from the Technical-Legal Capacity Strengthening program were executed, training a total of 467 individuals (32.5% women).	
Output 2.1.2 Operational forest plans based on information generated by SINIIF for livelihoods-based forest planning and management developed with local governments and community organizations.	Number of designed and implemented Operational Forest Plans	1	During this reporting period, the second Operational Forest Plan (PFO) for EPSDC Tukupu was prepared. This PFO was developed for the area known as Tukupu II, which was assigned in the second half of 2022 and covers a total area of 47,916 hectares from units V and C2. This approved PFO by MINEC covers a utilization area of 2,419.92. In the first quarter of 2023, the implementation of the first PFO with the AIR began in the initial 1,002.09 ha of the Tukupu I area. The harvested timber is being commercialized by the indigenous forestry company through commercial agreements with various local and national companies. The project concluded with the starting point for the implementation of the second PFO yet to be marked.	
Output 2.1.3 Pilot scheme for forest co-management with communes or other types of social organizations	Pilot scheme designed and implemented.	10%	The implementation of the forest co-management pilot scheme was completed with the conclusion of the third phase. This involved the preparation of the second PFO for EPSDC Tukupu and the implementation of the first PFO under the principle of Reduced Impact Logging (AIR).	
Outcome 2.2 Development and initial implementation of a National Program for the application of environmental and social sustainability standards for the production of timber and non-timber forest products.	Demonstration area (number of hectares) of Unit V in the IFR, under the implementation of a pilot scheme for national standards of environmental and social sustainability in balance with the provision of forest goods and services.	15.000 ha	A demonstration area was established within the IFR for the pilot application of sustainability and environmental criteria and indicators proposed in the technical standard that would establish the national program of standards for the SFM. This area included permanent demonstration plots and the areas assigned to EPSDC Tukupu in units V, C2, and C3 of the IFR, covering 22,154 hectares (including 1,002.09 hectares for timber production in the Tukupu I area of unit C3). Participatory forest monitoring mechanisms were applied within this area.	
	SFM/REDD+. Avoided direct and indirect emissions: Indicator CCM-5. LULUCF	a) Avoided direct emissions (SFM/REDD+): 1,136,759.35 tCO2eq for the 5 years of the project on 25,000 ha. b) Avoided indirect emissions (SFM/REDD+): 18,188,149.06 tCO2eq for the 5 years of the project on 80,000 ha.	a) During this period, it was determined that the goal was partially achieved (9%), as out of the expected 25,000 hectares, only 1,668 ha were utilized by ENAFOR in 2017, resulting in avoided direct emissions of 100,776.06 tCO2eq. Additionally, only 5 years of project implementation starting from 2017 were considered to ensure the evaluation criterion related to the baseline, which is why the previously reported result is adjusted. b) For this goal, the previously reported data is adjusted, considering only 5 years of project implementation since 2017. Additionally, the avoided indirect emissions are summed, as the full area of 25,000 hectares was not utilized, including the conservation area within the reserve that remained untouched. Previously, these were accounted for in the sub-indicator as the total of direct and indirect emissions.	

			Specifically, since 23,332 ha were not utilized and remained intact, 5,294,929.15 tCO2eq of indirect emissions were indirectly avoided. Additionally, 28,760,011.56 tCO2eq corresponds to the indirect emissions avoided due to the conservation of 126,500 ha of the IFR. Following the recommendation of the consulting team of the Final Evaluation, a total of 34,054,940.6 tCO2eq of avoided indirect emissions are accounted for (187% of the total goal).	
Output 2.2.1 Criteria and indicators for environmental and social sustainability of SFM defined based on information generated by the SINIIF.	Technical standard with criteria and indicators for environmental and social sustainability of the SFM based on information generated by SINIIF, designed and implemented.	Goal exceeded and reported in previous periods.	The project submitted to MINEC through the General Directorate of Forest Heritage, the proposal for a ministerial resolution for the technical standard of criteria and indicators for Sustainable Forest Management. It is expected that this innovative instrument will serve as the basis for the design of the national program of Certification Forest Standards as envisaged in the current Forest Law. At the end of the project, the draft resolution is still pending approval in the General Directorate of Legal Consultancy of MINEC for its subsequent publication in the Official Gazette of the country.	
Output 2.2.2 Mechanism for participatory monitoring of forests managed under environmental and social standards for multiple use, in balance with the provision of forest ecosystem goods and services.	Participatory monitoring implemented	20%	During this period, 10 workshops were conducted on the following topics: Fauna assessment tools management, Techniques for collecting and establishing saplings of different forest species, Key aspects of forest census planning and execution, Geopositioning techniques (GPS - Compass), Establishment of plots and sub-plots for forest monitoring and inventory, Field identification of commercial species and seedling trees, Basic dasometric measurements for forest monitoring and inventory, Techniques for remeasuring biomass in forest ecosystems, Key hydrographic and hydrological aspects to consider for forest road layout and execution, Protocols for forest and indigenous community data collection. A total of 125 Kariña indigenous people residing in the IFR were trained in these workshops (33% women).	
Outcome 2.3 Strengthened intersectoral dialogue in SFM	Number of actors (national and local government institutions, indigenous communities, grassroots community organizations, companies, NGOs, etc.) with strengthened capacities and participating in a platform for intersectoral dialogue and coordination for forest governance in Venezuela.	At least fifteen (15) actors with strengthened technical capacities actively participating in a platform for intersectoral dialogue and coordination for forest governance.	During this period, the intersectoral dialogue platform for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) continued to be strengthened within the framework of the Forest Cabinet promoted by the MINEC. This platform includes 5 institutions that have formal agreements for SFM and also involves 11 other actors associated with the project through the National Network of Forest Seed Suppliers, Universities, Research Centers, and private companies, who participate in a consultative capacity.	
Output 2.3.1 Human talent training program and dialogues for the exchange of local knowledge related to the use of information generated by SINIIF for better forest planning and management, and SFM practices implemented	Number of trained community members	Goal exceeded and reported in previous periods.	During this period, 11 workshops associated with this product were held, in which 129 Kariña indigenous people (38% women) were trained in aspects related to best practices in planning, management, and sustainable forest management.	
	Percentage of women's participation	30%		
Output 2.3.2 Inter-institutional agreements for the inter-institutional coordination of forest management governance in Venezuela and the adaptation of the SINIIF to respond to the information needs of forest different sectors stakeholders established	Number of inter-institutional coordination and consultation agreements or agreements for the governance of forest management and the adaptation of SINIIF	1	During this period, an Interinstitutional Agreement was signed between the EPSDC Tukupu and the National Experimental University of Guayana (UNEG) through which the School of Forest Industries of that university committed to support the strengthening of technical-operational and managerial capacities of the indigenous personnel of the EPSDC Tukupu.	

Outcome 3.1 Technical and institutional capacities for forest and forestland restoration through SFM / SLM practices strengthened	**1) SFM/REDD+ 1.2 Good management practices applied in existing forests.** Number of institutions, indigenous communities and representatives of government institutions, NGOs, community organizations, indigenous and local communities with developed and strengthened technical capacities in SFM/SLM issues.	Goals exceeded in previous periods	N/A	
Output 3.1.1 General standards and indicators to prioritize areas for forest restoration based on information generated by SINIIF.	Technical document with designed and implemented Standards and Indicators	Goals exceeded in previous periods	N/A	
Output 3.1.2 Strategy for the restoration, rehabilitation and recovery of forest cover in the IFR with an ecosocial approach designed and implemented	Strategy designed and implemented	Goal exceeded in previous periods	During this period, two experiences were systematized concerning SFM practices in the restoration and recovery of forest areas in the country. Two manuals for the restoration of Tropical Wet Forests and Mangroves were developed and disseminated. Additionally, a study was conducted on the autecological characterization, silvicultural behavior in plantations, and the status of populations in natural and managed forests of threatened species such as algarrobo (Hymenaea courbaril), puy (Handroanthus impetiginosus), zapatero (Peltogyne floribunda), and mureillo (Erisma uncinatum) due to selective forest extraction in the IFR and other forested areas adjacent to the IFR For each species, detailed autoecological aspects are described, including distribution, habitat, phenology, germination, seedling development, natural regeneration, and pests affecting them, among others. This information was gathered through an extensive review of studies and research, consultations with specialists and field technicians, as well as checks in the herbarium and wood laboratory of the Faculty of Forest and Environmental Sciences at ULA.	
Output 3.1.3 National network of forest seed suppliers established.	Established and working national network of forest seed suppliers	5%	A report was presented on the functioning, scope, and projection of the National Network of Forest Seed Suppliers, integrating results 1, 2, and 3. This report describes the extensive experience in the country regarding forest seed management and genetic improvement, as well as the significant potential of operational areas and selected trees (stands and seed orchards, arboreta, seed-bearing trees) for immediate and mass seed production. Various regulations related to forest seeds were reviewed, concluding that the main legal basis of the Network is the Forestry Law, which promotes the formation of socio-productive networks at the national level, integrating initiatives and projects for forest management, extraction, and commercialization of forest-derived products. As part of the organizational structure of the NNFSS, the following Regional Centers were evaluated: Forest Genetics and Seeds Laboratory, INDEFOR-ULA (Mérida); Forest Seeds Laboratory, ENAFOR (Upata, Bolívar state); El IREL-ULA Experimental Station (Barrancas, Barinas state); Forest Seeds Laboratory, MINEC (Bum-Bum, Barinas state); National Center for Conservation of Genetic Resources, MINEC (Maracay, Aragua state); DANAC Foundation (San Felipe, Yaracuy state); Seed Nursery, MAVETUR (Santa Cruz de Bucaral, Falcón state); Forest Developments San Carlos II, DEFORSA (San Carlos, Cojedes state); Academy of Agricultural Sciences of Venezuela (Quebrada Negra, Barinas state). In general, these Centers have limitations in terms of trained personnel and equipment, but they possess extensive experience in managing forest	
	Number of communities from the IFR participating in the local component of the national network of forest seed suppliers	3		
	Number of technical documents on good community practices for tree selection in nurseries and seed management, and guidelines for seed certification designed, validated, and disseminated	1		

			species, seed-producing areas, and plant production, all of which will contribute to the functioning of the NNFSS. Community participation is emphasized as a cross-cutting element of the Network. Sixteen social organizations (communal councils, ecological groups, producer cooperatives, and worker associations, among others) coordinated with the Regional Centers engaged in the maintenance of seed areas, seed collection, and processing, the establishment of nurseries, and restoration activities. All these organizations expressed their interest in participating in the Network. The establishment of the Local Network of the NNFSS in the Imataca Forest Reserve is highlighted. It consists of 10 communities with the participation of over 80 Kariñas, led by women. They select seed-bearing trees, collect seeds and seedlings, produce plants in communal and family nurseries, and carry out reforestation and agroforestry in degraded areas. Strategies were implemented for the consolidation of the NNFSS, enabling its visibility, collaboration with member institutions, and the inclusion of new members. An initial census was conducted, confirming membership of 25 institutions (15 public, 3 private, 4 academic, and 3 NGOs) and 130 individuals (34% women). To project the Network's image, collaborate with members, and disseminate information related to the NNFSS, a Blog (redsemillasforestales.blogspot.com) was created, and Instagram (red_semillas_forestales_rnpsf) was utilized. A Guide to Good Community Practices for the Selection of Seed Trees and Handling of Forest Seeds was designed and published. Thirty Technical Information Booklets on Forest Species were designed and disseminated. Furthermore, a Technical Guide for Forest Seed Certification was designed and published. Six Technical Information Booklets on Seed Certification were also designed and disseminated.	
Outcome 3.2 Restoration and regeneration of 1,440 ha of forests through SFM/SLM strategies within the framework of an ecosystem approach and prioritizing the multi-functionality of forests	BD-2. III.4 Management practices that integrate biodiversity Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO2e) sequestered in metric tons	297.785,68 tCO2eq	During this period, a total of 356,703 tCO_2eq was sequestered in 590 restored hectares, disaggregated as follows: 106,338 tCO_2eq through agroforestry, 104,427 tCO_2eq through reforestation, and 91,412 tCO_2eq through analog forestry.	
	Area (number of hectares) of forests and forested lands restored and regenerated	744 ha		
Output 3.2.1 Model for Forest Restoration through SFM/SLM field-tested with the participation of local governments and communities.	Surface area (number of hectares) under implementation of the strategy designed in product 3.1.2	471ha	Through the restoration driven by the third LoA with the EPSDC Tukupu , 496 ha of forests were restored in the IFR using techniques of analog forestry, agroforestry, and reforestation in the final year of project implementation. .	
	Number of demonstrative sites (mining) SFM/SLM implemented	2	There were no new developments in this product due to the difficulties of access and security in working in the mining areas of the IFR. This was confirmed by LTO Pieter Van Lierop during his visit in November 2022, as special military operations have been ongoing since then to control the issue of illegal mining in the area.	
Output 3.2.2 Systematized experiences and lessons learned in marketing timber and non-timber products	Number of Systematizations of Experiences and Lessons Learned	4	Four experiences in the commercialization of TFPs and NTFPs were conducted, focusing on the utilization of forest products, particularly wood and plant fibers for artisanal purposes, in the Andean (Mérida state), Central (Lara state), Eastern (Anzoátegui state), and Southern (Bolívar state) regions of Venezuela. Additionally, a study on the current and potential use of NTFP in the country was carried out. This study covers conceptual aspects, regional background in the Amazon, importance, usage categories, ethnobotanical aspects, institutional support, obstacles to development, and strategies and actions for promoting NTFP a contribution to local	
	Analysis document of current and potential use of NTFPs	1		

			and national sustainable development. The document includes 12 strategies and 70 actions aimed at relevant state institutions involved in the subject matter. The field data collection and knowledge exchange carried out by the project in the IFR enabled the project to learn about and report on ethnobotanical uses of 228 plant species, belonging to 194 genera and 74 families. The main uses of these species are as follows: 1) medicinal (for treating digestive disorders, fever, and headaches), 2) as food sources through the consumption of fruits from a wide variety of trees and palm species in the forest, and 3) for construction and crafting purposes.	
Output 3.2.3 Market and value chains analysis of the main forest products demanded and that affect the forest, and recommendations for market adjustments and the design of strategies to reduce pressures on forests	Number of Market Analysis and Value Chain Documents	1	Three market analysis and value chain studies of forest products were conducted: 1. Value chain analysis of timber and non-timber forest products from Unit V of the Imataca Forest Reserve, including key aspects characterizing the value chain and its main links. 2. Analysis of the timber production situation in Venezuela and international market trends for timber and non-timber forest products. 3. Characterization of the forest products market in Venezuela, with an emphasis on timber production. This analysis includes the national production, geographic distribution of the processing industry, and its installed capacity. Trends in the market for forest products in Venezuela were assessed, and strategies were developed to reduce pressures on forests. The last document includes an analysis of the national and international markets, national timber production, and market size (sales volume, potential competition level, most demanded products). In addition, with the support of the EPSDC Tukupu, an indigenous market was organized and established in Tumeremo, providing a space for Kariña families to exchange and offer products from their cultivation, forest harvesting, and crafts.	
<u>Output 3.2.4</u> Community marketing plans for timber and non-timber products implemented according to the multiple use principle	Analysis of the potential of TFPs and NTFPs	Goal exceeded in previous periods	The project fulfilled the provisions of the PRODOC by conducting an analysis of the potential of TFP and NTFPs. Based on this analysis, 4 community marketing plans were designed and implemented for TFPs, NTFPs, and agricultural products, following the principle of multiple use. This allowed for: • Conducting production and commercialization trials for andiroba oil (Carapa guianensis), clavellino oil (Pentaclethra macroloba), and annatto oil (Bixa orellana), contributing to the initiation of small-scale artisanal production and commercialization of carapa oil. • Implementing production plans for honey, oils from seeds of forest species, and annatto. • Strengthening the capacities of the Kariña communities for the direct marketing of agricultural products from family plots, where 40 Kariña producers (53% women) market 24 agricultural products and 9 processed goods. • Strengthening the Kariña family production system for three agricultural products and one processed good, reaching a total of 35 products and 9 processed goods. In this context, the project facilitated the establishment of the Kariña Market for the direct marketing of agricultural products and their goods in the town of Tumeremo, with an annual average of 3,049.60 kilograms, contributing to the improvement of local and family economies. • Enhancing the capacities of the Kariña communities to conduct guided ecotourism visits in the IFR for bird and mammal observation.	
	Number of Community Marketing Plans developed	1		
	Implemented Community Marketing Plans	25%		

			• Constructing, equipping, and launching a semi-industrial carpentry workshop for processing wood extracted from the co-management forest area, representing a milestone for project sustainability. • Building capacities among Kariña indigenous individuals in carpentry work, allowing them to develop skills and expertise to initiate small-scale production of kitchen utensils, urns, and furniture for family use, with prospects for growth in local production and marketing. • Strengthening the capacities for the transportation of products and individuals in the project's influence area, with the MINEC providing two platform trucks with a loading capacity of 17 tons each and the purchase of 10 motorcycles through the EPSDC Tukupu. These contributions substantially contribute to local economic development.	
Output 3.2.5 Financing schemes for SFM, SLM and NTFP commercialization support and implementation of the national SFM standards program established under outcome 2.2.	Design of financing fund	1	A proposal was made to create the Imataca Environmental Fund (FAI) as a long-term strategy to support the activities of various community organizations in the Sifontes municipality of Bolívar state, including the EPSDC Tukupu. The fund was designed as a mixed entity with decentralized administration, legal personality as a "Non-Profit Civil Association," autonomous management, and regulatory capacity. Its main purpose is to obtain and manage financial resources aimed at supporting projects and activities related to conservation, sustainable utilization, and responsible use of the IFR required by enterprises. It also aims to provide support for productive and social activities within indigenous communities. The FAI will have the capacity for scalability, meaning it can extend its financing and support activities to other reserves of renewable natural resources across the country that are entrusted to it. This document is currently under review by MINEC for approval and implementation. The pilot implementation of financing schemes was initiated through the strengthening of the technical capacities of communities and the EPSDC Tukupu in financial aspects. This included the activation of the microfinance fund of EPSDC Tukupu aimed at financing economic, productive, social, and environmental conservation activities. For this purpose, the creation of regulations for the 3 funds outlined in the EPSDC Tukupu's Constitutive Act was carried out: ✓ Regulations for the Productive Maintenance and Credit Fund (RFPC) ✓ Regulations for the Community Social Reinvestment Fund (FCRS) ✓ Regulations for the Indigenous Population Assistance Fund (FAPI) The methodology employed included: i) drafting formats for each regulation; ii) developing a regulation in each of the communities, with a focus on 3 communities; iii) providing training to Tukupu personnel on the implementation methodology; iv) involving bilingual personnel fluent in the Kariña language to facilitate communication and enhance understanding of their values. The drafting of these regulations involved the participation of 72 individuals, with 61% being women.	
	Implementation of financing fund	10%		
Outcome 4.1 Project implementation based on results-based management and facilitating the application of lessons learned and good practices in future operations.	Achieved project outcomes demonstrating sustainability	10%	During this period, the majority of the remaining goals in the project were achieved through the efforts of the technical team comprising the PMU, specialized national consultants, and through Agreements with strategic partners such as IFLA, FUNDAMBIENTE, EPSDC Tukupu, and FUNDAUNEG	

			The Final Evaluation of the project was conducted, which overall rated it as Highly Satisfactory	
Output 4.1.1 Project M&E system operational, providing constant information on project progress in achieving outcomes and outputs.	Semiannual and annual reports	Goal exceeded in previous periods	During this period, the 2023 Annual Work Plan (POA), the July-December 2022 Project Progress Report (PPR), and this July 2022-June 2023 Project Implementation Report (PIR) were prepared and submitted. Additionally, the 9th Steering Committee Meeting and 2 semi-annual Task Force meetings were conducted. Ongoing monitoring of the Results Framework and various Agreements was carried out, with the FPMIS system kept up-to-date.	
Output 4.1.2 Mid-term and final evaluations conducted, and implementation and sustainability strategies adjusted and recommendations made	Mid-Term Review	Completed and reported in previous periods	N/A.	
	Final Evaluation	1 Final Evaluation	The process of the Final Evaluation (FE) began 6 months before the project's End Date (NTE) and constituted an engaging review of the achieved results, as well as the good practices and lessons learned from the project to generate insights that can benefit partners in the preparation and implementation of new initiatives. As of the preparation date of this report, the final FE report is still in the process of being developed and adjusted. Based on this report, the corresponding Management Response (AR) will be prepared to leverage the sustainability of the actions carried out by the project.	
Output 4.1.3 Good practices and project lessons published	Number of informative bulletins produced and published	1 Newsletter	During this period, the project prepared and published 6 informative newsletters; 1 through the FAO Publication Workflow System (PWS), and another 5 thematic newsletters prepared within the framework of the LoA with Fundambiente that were published on the project's website. Additionally, 8 other documents were published through PWS (manuals, protocols, studies, technical guides, case studies), and 2 more are in the final stages of preparation for publication through the same system. Furthermore, there is a repository of 66 other technical documents, brochures, videos, life stories, and scientific articles, published on the project's website and the SINIIF platform.	
	Number of systematization of good practices and lessons learned produced and published	3 Systematizations of Good Practices and Lessons Learned	During this period, the project produced the following systematizations: 1. "Sustainable Forest Management and Forest Conservation in the Ecosocial Perspective" (GCP/VEN/011/GFF), Experience in Forest Co-management with Kariña Indigenous Communities in the Imataca Forest Reserve, Venezuela." 2. "Participatory Forest Monitoring with the Kariña in the Imataca Forest Reserve, Bolívar State." 3. "Forest Restoration in the Tropical Rainforest with Kariña People. Imataca Forest Reserve, Bolívar State."	
Output 4.1.4 Web page for dissemination of information and exchange of experiences.	Website 100% designed and implemented for information dissemination and exchange of experiences	Exceeded and reported in previous periods	The website was continuously updated during this period, and before the technical-administrative closure of the project, it was officially handed over to the Minec for its final adaptation to the institutional platform, to be utilized by other projects within the GEF-FAO-Minec portfolio.	

4. Summary on Progress and Ratings

Please provide a summary paragraph on progress, challenges and outcomes of project implementation consistent with the information reported in sections 2 and 3 of the PIR (max 400 words)
Most of the expected goals were achieved after 6.5 years of implementation, including 2 years during the pandemic. Technical (human) and technological capacities were strengthened in implementers, beneficiaries, and external actors (universities, NGOs, and research centers) for sustainable forest management and forest conservation from an ecosocial perspective in Venezuela. The National Integrated Forest Information System (SINIIF) and its protocols enable forest M&E for the study, analysis, and informed decision-making by the country's authorities. This includes the formulation and development of Forest Co-management between the State and indigenous communities (consolidation of public policy), the development of Participatory Forest Monitoring mechanisms, intersectoral coordination, and the generation of alliances for Participatory Forest Governance. Mechanisms for the restoration, regeneration, and conservation of forest ecosystems, biodiversity, and forest lands, as well as sustainable use of timber (AIR-Carpentry) and non-timber forest products such as fibers, seeds, and oils from forest species, contribute to the potential for sustainability, scalability, and replicability of the implemented actions. The Kariña communities that have ancestrally inhabited and depended on the Imataca forests have become protagonists and beneficiaries of this initiative. They have transitioned from being spectators of Selective Forest Management conducted by private corporations in their habitat to being active participants and builders of the new Sustainable Forest Management model based on co-responsibility expressed in Forest Co-management by indigenous communities. The creation of EPSDC-Tukupu, the allocation of 54,403.12 hectares of forests for sustainable utilization under low-impact strategies (AIR), driving the improvement of livelihoods through the comprehensive and sustainable utilization of forest resources (TFP and NTFP) in semi-industrial carpentry, and promoting agroforestry and the Kariña indigenous market in the municipal capital, showcases the project's impact. Furthermore, the strong commitment of the Venezuelan government and institutions from the academic and private sectors, as well as UN agencies, is evident. Preliminary findings from the ongoing terminal evaluation indicates that the project has contributed to strengthening environmental cooperation between GEF, FAO, and MINEC in Venezuela. However, there are still significant challenges to overcome, including sustainability and the comprehensive utilization of developed tools (SINIIF), technical standards for establishing environmental criteria and indicators, participatory monitoring, and artisanal carpentry, which are in a continuous improvement process. The good practices, lessons learned, and pending challenges are taken into account in the formulation and implementation of new GEF-FAO-MINEC projects.

Development Objective (DO) Ratings, Implementation Progress (IP) Ratings and Overall Assessment

Please note that the overall DO and IP ratings should be substantiated by evidence and progress reported in the Section 2 and Section 3 of the PIR. For DO, the ratings and comments should reflect the overall progress of project results.

	FY2023 Development Objective rating[18]	FY2023 Implementation Progress rating[19]	Comments/reasons[20] justifying the ratings for FY2023 and any changes (positive or negative) in the ratings since the previous reporting period
Project Manager / Coordinator	**S**	**S**	*In the last year of project implementation, the efforts made by the technical team and strategic partners have made it possible to successfully meet most of the goals set out in PRODOC and even surpass many of the expected results. The sustainability of the project has been strengthened during this final year of implementation, with solid institutional and community support, which represents a great strength for the improvement of the livelihoods of the Kariña indigenous communities, based on the sustainable management and harvesting of timber and non-timber forest products. Particularly in this first semester of 2023, forest logging operations began with more than 5,200 cubic meters of logs and more than 1,600 cubic meters of branches logged in the first alliance zone assigned to Epsdc-Tukupu in the C3 unit of the IFR, committed in the first operational forestry plan generated in the project and approved by MINEC. The company also continued to strengthen the production, processing and marketing of non-timber forest products such as cassava, honey from melipona bees, oils from forest species, onoto and other agricultural products.* *The production of plants in the communal and family nurseries for the restoration of degraded areas within the IFR and the diversification of food sources in agroforestry systems has been strengthened. The members of the Kariña indigenous communities and their forestry company Tukupu, are committed to maintaining the restorations carried out and to continue restoring the areas affected by the reduced impact logging implemented under the co-management forestry model promoted by the project and rooted in its beneficiaries.* *Additionally, FAO, MINEC, and especially EPSDC Tukupu (with its own resources) have carried out health and infrastructure actions to the communities, establishing a group of trained and equipped indigenous people with a motorcycle permanently assigned to attend to the malaria outbreaks that are recurrent in the area. In addition, a 17-meter deep water well with a submersible pump was built, which is powered by solar panels and provides drinking water for the entire Matupo II community. The above has been possible thanks to the empowerment achieved by the members of the indigenous communities as a result of the combination of ancestral knowledge and technical knowledge generated in the project, all in function of the permanent improvement of the livelihoods of the communities as a concrete expression of the commitment and Ecosocial character of the project.*

[18] **Development Objectives Rating** – A rating of the extent to which a project is expected to achieve or exceed its major objectives. For more information on ratings and definitions, please refer to Annex 1.

[19] **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. For more information on ratings and definitions, please refer to Annex 1.

[20] Please ensure that the ratings are based on evidence

	FY2023 Development Objective rating	FY2023 Implementation Progress rating	Comments/reasons justifying the ratings for FY2023 and any changes (positive or negative) in the ratings since the previous reporting period
Budget Holder	**S**	**S**	*During the reference period, important activities were carried out, including the handover of the National Integrated Forest Information System (SINIIF) to the authorities of MINEC, the completion of the Tukupu company's carpentry workshop, and the Final Project Evaluation.* *It is noteworthy that the evaluation results highlighted the project's high relevance to the Venezuelan government due to its contribution to the forest-based economic sector. This contribution was recognized for encompassing biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest utilization, and the involvement of indigenous peoples.* *Furthermore, the evaluation determined that the project made a significant contribution in terms of generating and systematizing information. It developed methodologies for estimating carbon emissions, reservoirs, and sequestration, and compiled data to feed into the newly established SINIIF. The project also strengthened institutional and community capacities and implemented Sustainable Forest Management practices under a co-management framework.* *During the reference period, important activities were carried out, including the handover of the National Integrated Forest Information System (SINIIF) to the authorities of MINEC, the completion of the Tukupu company's carpentry workshop, and the Final Project Evaluation.* *It is noteworthy that the evaluation results highlighted the project's high relevance to the Venezuelan government due to its contribution to the forest-based economic sector. This contribution was recognized for encompassing biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest utilization, and the involvement of indigenous peoples.* *Furthermore, the evaluation determined that the project made a significant contribution in terms of generating and systematizing information. It developed methodologies for estimating carbon emissions, reservoirs, and sequestration, and compiled data to feed into the newly established SINIIF. The project also strengthened institutional and community capacities and implemented Sustainable Forest Management practices under a co-management framework.*

GEF Operational Focal Point[21]	**S**	**S**	*MINEC positively highlights the significant contributions made by the project in strengthening the capacities of Venezuelan state institutions, their professional technicians, and especially the indigenous communities residing in the IFR.* *In this final year of implementation, most of the pending indicators in the Results Framework were successfully achieved, with the notable exception of goals such as mine area restoration or the establishment of the Environmental Fund. The challenges faced in achieving these goals were primarily due to circumstances stemming from the country and the IFR, and were therefore not attributable to the project itself, as emphasized by the Final Evaluation.* *Currently, a stable version of SINIIF is available, and after a testing period, it is undergoing adjustments to be integrated into MINEC's technological platform for final adjustments and public access. The project has also produced numerous protocols, methodologies, technical guides, pilot schemes, and other technical documents, which contribute valuable technical and scientific knowledge about sustainable forest management, conservation, and planning in the country.* *The improvements in mechanisms for forest management, conservation, restoration, and sustainable land use have had a significant impact on avoiding and sequestering CO_2 emissions.* *The experience gained from the Forest Co-management with the indigenous forestry company Tukupu has inspired the inclusion of this participatory governance model in other forest projects in the country. Intersectoral alliances under the Forest Cabinet, driven by MINEC, will ensure the sustainability of the lessons learned in sustainable forest management and monitoring, as well as participatory forest restoration, estimation of CO_2 emissions and greenhouse gas stocks, among other crucial technical areas.* *MINEC will continue to work alongside FAO to ensure the sustainability of project results, particularly those associated with Forest Co-management. This involves ongoing coordination to ensure the success of EPSDC Tukupu's operations, as detailed in the Administration's Response to the Final Evaluation of the project.* *The experiences, good practices, and lessons learned serve as a framework for formulating and implementing new projects within the technical cooperation portfolio in environmental and forestry matters between MINEC, FAO, and GEF.*

[21] In case the GEF OFP didn't provide his/her comments, please explain the reason.

Lead Technical Officer[22]	**S**	**S**	*The project achieved a broad characterization of the biodiversity in the reserve and the assessment of ecosystem services such as carbon flows and stocks. It launched, together with the institutional actors and the community, processes of ecological and productive restoration of degraded areas, with tangible environmental and socioeconomic results. The implementation of forest co-management, the participation and empowerment of indigenous communities were notable milestones of the project; institutionalization and scaling up of co-management already show concrete steps, such as co-management policy drafted, legal and political procedure to its approval advancing, incorporation of co-management schemes in other GEF projects in formulation. Guaranteeing the sustainability and scaling of the project results requires short and medium-term post-project permanent attention to measures such as: advancing in the approval of the co-management policy, creating and starting up the fund to support its implementation, guaranteeing the permanent technical support to the actors involved, investing in strengthening the SINIIF, mainly through national forest inventories.* *Despite the challenges and delays faced during implementation, as COVID-19 and lack of fuel, with adaptative management and planning adjustments, most of the products and indicators were accomplished. It was key to focus, during the last period, in key results and products that were still facing some difficulties: the finalization of the SINIIF, the implementation of the co-management plan, the restoration and monitoring actions. It was key to count on the adaptability and dynamism of the project team, the solid relationships established at various levels, the collaboration of the different actors and the alliances with other institutions.*
GEF Technical Officer, GTO (ex Technical FLO)	**HS**	**S**	*In its last year of implementation, the project made significant progress towards achieving the expected results, to which the additional extension period at no cost also contributed. Despite the difficulties that the project encountered during its implementation, the project finally achieved most of the expected goals, surpassing several of them and the expected global environmental benefits in terms of forest area under sustainable management, restoration, avoidance of greenhouse gas emissions and knowledge of the country's biodiversity. Some pending issues are the definitive adoption by the ministry of the information and monitoring system and technology created by the project, while ensuring its future sustainability. An important co-benefit achievement was the support and training that the project provided to the Kariña indigenous community, who were able to establish the first indigenous company in charge of co-managing part of the Imataca forest reserve in the country. It will be important for the community to continue receiving support from the government and participating institutions to ensure its maintenance, scaling up and replication of the successful experience to other communities and localities in the country, making this a good practice than can be considered a model for future interventions.*

[22] The LTO will consult the HQ technical officer and all other supporting technical Units.

5. Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS)

This section is under the responsibility of the LTO (PMU to draft)

Please describe the progress made to comply with the approved ESM plan. Note that only projects with **moderate** or **high** Environmental and Social Risk, approved from June 2015 should have submitted an ESM plan/table at CEO endorsement. This does not apply to **low** risk projects. Please indicate if new risks have emerged during this FY.

Social & Environmental Risk Impacts identified at CEO Endorsement	Expected mitigation measures	Actions taken during this FY	Remaining measures to be taken	Responsibility
ESS 1: Natural Resource Management				
ESS 2: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Natural Habitats				
ESS 3: Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture				
ESS 4: Animal - Livestock and Aquatic - Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture				
ESS 5: Pest and Pesticide Management				
ESS 6: Involuntary Resettlement and Displacement				
ESS 7: Decent Work				
ESS 8: Gender Equality				
ESS 9: Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage				
New ESS risks that have emerged during this FY				

In case the project did not include an ESM Plan **at CEO endorsement stage, please indicate:**

Initial ESS Risk classification (At project submission)	**Current ESS risk classification** Please indicate if the Environmental and Social Risk classification is still valid[23]. If not, what is the new classification and explain.
Moderate	**Low.** The initial Environmental and Social Risk classification is not valid now. The preventive actions and mitigation measures adopted by the project during its implementation in the field have allowed reducing the environmental and social risks identified during the formulation and presentation of the project. The current global risk classification is "Low" because: • Regarding adverse impacts on traditional practices or agricultural systems in the area: Special care has been taken in the process of training the Kariña indigenous communities, considering the internalization of the principles of planning and sustainability of economic and productive activities. This, in line with the Kariña's people vision of protecting and respecting nature, which means taking only what is necessary for their subsistence and ensuring the cycles of renewal of natural resources that provide them with timber and non-timber forest products. In addition, non-timber products that are marketed will privilege their indigenous identity and their cultural-traditional relevance. For instance, the appreciation of the cultural and traditional identity of the products of the Kariña people (yuca, hot sauce, honey from meliponas bees, annatto, cachire, among others) has been part of the talks initiated by EPSDC Tukupu with the marketing company Makro (part of the international consortium SHV) The idea is establishing a strategic partnership to strengthen capacities for the production and marketing of traditional Kariña products, especially those of non-timber forest origin. • Regarding the workload of local communities or subgroups within communities: As indicated in the PRODOC mitigation measures, efforts have been made to optimize the process of participation and involvement of indigenous communities, through two concurrent actions. On the one hand, capacity building and technical-intellectual tools such as the planning and technification of agricultural and forestry production for the benefit of communities under the learning-by-doing method. This has allowed progress in the establishment of planned and technified agroforestry systems in traditional conucos. On the other hand, the promotion of the economic and productive diversification of the Kariña activities, maintaining the principle of identity and cultural relevance, and the inclusion of women's participation in the use of timber and non-timber forest products. This has been possible thanks to the concessions granted by the Venezuelan State to the EPSDC Tukupu for the forest co-management of more than 50,000 hectares of forests in the IFR, which results in better management and use of time. • Concerning the development of the abilities of the people or organizations affected or involved in the project, as well as the review and updating of policies, laws, regulations, or the development of partnerships: The project has promoted the participation, involvement, and training of communities as a fundamental aspect, to generate the expected environmental, social and economic benefits. Protocols, methodologies, and pilot schemes have been developed to generate information and systematize experiences and knowledge related to the promotion of forest conservation and management. As well as strengthening abilities and innovative tools for sustainable forest management, participative forest monitoring, and restoration of damaged or degraded forest ecosystems, with special attention to the participation of local indigenous peoples. Criteria and indicators for SFM were also defined and a proposal for a technical standard for the sustainability of forest management in Venezuela was prepared. A technical and regulatory proposal for the creation of the National System of Forest Co-management (SINACOF) was also presented to MINEC to replicate the experience developed by the project in the IFR together with the Kariña communities and their indigenous forestry company Tukupu in other areas destined for the permanent forest production of the country where indigenous communities lives. In addition, important partnerships have been established (and continue to be established) with public, private, academic, community and other actors who are also interested in engaging in the development and strengthening of forest co-management and participatory monitoring.

[23] **Important:** please note that if the Environmental and Social Risk classification has changed, the ESM Unit (Esm-unit@fao.org) should be contacted. The project shall prepare or amend an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) or other ESS instruments and management tools based on the new risk classification (please refer to page 13 https://www.fao.org/3/cb9870en/cb9870en.pdf)

Please report if any grievance was received as per FAO and GEF ESS policies. If yes, please indicate how it is being/has been addressed.
N/A

6. Risks

The following table summarizes risks identified in the Project Document and reflects also any new risks identified during the project implementation (including COVID-19 related risks). The last column should be used to provide additional details concerning manifestation of the risk in the project, as relevant.

	Type of risk	Risk rating[24]	Identified in the ProDoc Y/N	Mitigation Actions	Progress on mitigation actions	Notes from the Budget Holder in consultation with Project Management Unit
1	**Political and institutional risk:** Biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest and land management are not prioritized at the regional level.	**Low**	Y	The project will contribute to the promotion and strengthening of forest policy at a national, regional, and local scales. The improvement and increased availability of information and knowledge will help raise awareness among authorities and civil society. This also will give greater value to biodiversity conservation and the need for sustainable forest and land management.	• SINIIF is providing valuable information: Thematic maps of biodiversity, listing of forest species (endemic, threatened, exotic) with their respective conservation states. A database of biodiversity goods and products and forest ecosystems has been established, considering multi-use timber forest products (TFP) and non-timber forest products (NTFP). • Technical and community capacities have been strengthened through training schemes. • Favorable meetings were held with regional and municipal authorities on the importance of SFM and the need to conserve forest biodiversity in IFR and the rest of the country. These meetings have been well received, especially by the government of Bolivar State, as well as in Sifontes and Piar municipalities, which is where the actions of the project are focused on the IFR.	There is evidence of a fundamental contribution to the strengthening of national, regional, and local institutions of the Venezuelan State. In addition, the private sector and Kariña communities associated with the initiative that prioritize the need to preserve biodiversity and promote SFM/SLM are also contributing to ensure the sustainability of forests from the IFR and the country.

[24] Risk ratings means a rating of accesses 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. For more information on ratings and definitions please refer to Annex 1.

2	**Political and institutional risk:** Political and institutional consensus cannot be achieved to shape and finance investment funds for SFM / SLM, support for forest product marketing and application of SFM sustainability standards	**Moderate**	Y	The project will carry out the detailed design to confirm the technical and financial feasibility of forming investment funds (Component 3). Through high-level ministerial meetings, the need to create funds for the development of SFM and SLM activities will be reported. This seeks to generate the political dialogue necessary to reach agreements for the creation and operation of a fund of this nature in the face of the new reality that exists in the management of forest resources.	• Forest governance actions have been achieved. This has encouraged the participation of indigenous communities living in the area in decision-making and social, economic, and environmental benefits. As a result, the conformation of a strategic partnership for the forest control and co-management has been stablished between the Venezuelan government and the EPSDC TUKUPU. • At the third LoA FAO-IFLA a technical and financial proposal is being developed. The idea is to promote the formation and sustainability of the special funding fund to help develop SFM/ SLM actions and support the marketing of forest products, and the application of standards sustainability of the SFM. • The project developed a proposal for a Decree for the institutionalization of Forest Comanagement as a public policy to be implemented in the country's forest areas destined for permanent production where indigenous communities live.	The MINEC and other partner institutions show a high adherence and commitment to the objectives and activities of the project. This reality has led to the establishment of cooperation networks between FAO and public institutions, which in turn has facilitated access, dialogue, and joint work with the various interested parties. Thanks to the improvement of the country's economic conditions and productive reactivation, new opportunities have been created to develop the investment fund proposal.
3	**Administrative risk:** Low project management capacity.	**Moderate**	Y	One of the Steering Committee functions will be supporting the timely implementation of the project. This will be done by promoting political dialogue, coordination, and collaboration among the participating institutions, and the timely contribution of co-financing.	• The Project Steering Committee (PSC) facilitates the participation of government, other partners, and stakeholders in the implementation of the project. Much of the project management has been implemented through letters of agreement with partner institutions, which has proved efficient in accelerating the technical and budgetary execution of the project. • The PSC has prioritized taking advantage of the savings made in the administrative management of the project to finance actions framed in an exit, sustainability, and scaling plan to ensure the permanence and replicability of the results achieved in the implementation.	The project designed and implemented a monitoring system that complies with the standards, requirements, and tools provided by FAO. This allows it to improve the project management, based on continuous risk analysis, and early warnings, including the and the timely contribution of co-financing. A strategy of exit, sustainability and scaling of the project has been designed with the support of the stakeholders involved.
4	**Socio-economic risk:** Communities and forest sector stakeholders resist adopting sustainable forest and land management practices.	**Low**	Y	Local populations may be unwilling to develop the proposal, due to the economic benefits they derive from other activities such as illegal mining.	• In coordination with MINEC and the participation of the Kariña communities, the first Indigenous Forestry Company was created and registered. This company will be responsible for the management of an area under forest co-management, which implies the administration and usufruct of the forest resources present. This company will also work under strict criteria of long-term sustainability, but with preponderant participation of the Kariña ethnic group. • The indigenous communities participate in the Seed Network. 12 nurseries were established in their communities. A LoA supports the restoration activities of 500 ha (approx.) of forests in the IFR.	The experience of Tukupu has been successful and in recognition of the commitment of the Kariña communities to develop SFM practices, the Venezuelan Government decided to grant a new concession in an area more than 7 times higher than the initial, exceeding 55,000 ha under co-management. In addition, it is planned to replicate this experience in other areas of the country.

5	**Environmental risk:** Impact of climate change on key ecosystems in the IFR and their ecosystem services	**Low**	Y	Protocols will be developed to enable the collection of data on land use and changes in use. The SFM will be promoted and the development of policies that contribute to the implementation of appropriate measures of exploitation and to a minimum impact of them, contributing to the mitigation of possible effects of climate variability.	• The project presents progress in developing criteria and indicators for selecting priority forest restoration areas. Progress has also been made in developing a specific strategy for the rehabilitation and recovery of forest cover in IFR with an eco-social approach. The operational plans under implementation and the co-management scheme within the framework of the indigenous company TUKUPU are accompanied by a multidisciplinary approach.	The technical work of the project team has allowed the development of protocols and methodologies to collect field information on land use and land use changes. Also, these protocols and methodologies allow the determination of volumes of carbon emissions and sequestration and the determination of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and co-management, representing a valuable contribution to Venezuelan environmental authorities.
6	**Public health risk:** Nationwide mobilization limitation due to COVID-19 pandemic.	**Moderate**	N	The project adjusts its work plan in response to containment measures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Telework is adopted to advance programmed activities and as restrictions are relaxed, field work is resumed.	• Intervention strategies have been identified and implemented that allow progress in the field tasks of the project. This has been done following health security measures and minimizing risks for personnel performing field activities. • With the decrease in the incidence of positive cases in the country and the increase in vaccination rates, the authorities have authorized greater flexibility that has allowed the resumption of field activities with the necessary safeguards and health security measures to avoid possible contagions of both staff and implementing and beneficiary partners.	The health security measures adopted by the project team have been effective. Despite the impact of the cessation of field activities for more than a year and a half caused in the achievement of the expected results, provisions have been made for that by extension of the project time (without extra costs). This shows that the project targets can be reached and exceeded.

Project overall risk rating (Low, Moderate, Substantial or High):

FY2022 rating	FY2023 rating	Comments/reason for the rating for FY2023 and any changes (positive or negative) in the rating since the previous reporting period
Low	Low	

7. Follow-up on Mid-term review or supervision mission (only for projects that have conducted an MTR)

If the project had an MTR or a supervision mission, 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: Carry out a realistic analysis of the possibility of achieving the pending outputs and targets, in order to propose a prioritization of the most essential ones. **Suggestion 1: To achieve the project's objectives, it will be necessary to prioritize the implementation of the SINIIF (with the existing information), the web site and the communication plan, the restoration manuals and the missing monitoring plots (with on-site training and adaptation of the methodology to a more feasible one), in addition to the space for inter-institutional articulation.** **Suggestion 2: Accelerate the installation of the servers, ensuring that the minimum conditions of infrastructure, security and maintenance capacity of the equipment are met.** **Suggestion 3: It would be advisable to approve the requested extension, even, if it is possible in budgetary terms, to evaluate the possibility of extending the project between 8 and 12 months. This would allow additional time to approach the project targets and improve the chances of sustainability of the initiative.**	In response to the implementation of the work plan, the following achievements were made under suggestion 1: • Version 1.0 of the plan was successfully launched and is currently in the process of being transferred to the MINEC institutional web platform; • Management and periodic updating of the website by the project's dissemination team.; • A robust communication and dissemination team was in place, responsible for communicating, editing, and designing communication materials to showcase the project's achievements. A communication plan and graphic identity manual were also developed to provide guidance on the direction to follow in this area. • The three planned manuals (Tropical Rainforests, Xerophytic Forests, and Mangrove Forests) were developed, and two of them (Xerophytic and Tropical Rainforest) have already been published through FAO's PWS. The third manual (Mangrove) is currently under review and is expected to be published soon; • An inventory of the spatial location of temporary and permanent monitoring plots established during the period 2016-2021 was conducted. This inventory was analyzed and represented cartographically to generate actions within the framework of the Greater Line of Synergy and Transversality (GLST), focusing on multipurpose plots. • Interinstitutional collaboration between MINEC and EPSDC Tukupu was strengthened through the implementation of joint management in the over 54,000 hectares encompassed by the two assigned areas in units N5, C2, and C3 of the IFR. • Regarding the review of indicators and targets for Components 2 and 3, with the adjustments made to the indicators and targets of Results 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, and 3.2, approved in the 7th Project Steering Committee held on August 18, 2021, and with the approval of the project's Task Force (BH, LTO, and FLO), actual progress has been accurately demonstrated for each of the specified results. Suggestion 2 was resolved immediately after the MTR. Suggestion 3 was addressed, and the extension was approved. However, in order to facilitate an optimal technical, administrative, and financial closure, the project was extended until April 30, 2023.

Recommendation 2: Develop mechanisms to improve the fluidity of internal and external communication (general public and consultants) of the project, as well as facilitate access to relevant information from project partners. Suggestion: Systematize, edit and publish the material generated (scientific research, social, economic and cultural benefits of the approach, the experience with the TUKUPU company, methodologies, manuals, etc.) by the project.	• A strengthened Communication and Dissemination team was in place, which facilitated an agile and flexible approach to share project information. A prioritized list of documents, research papers, manuals, and protocols was compiled for review, editing, and subsequent publication through established mechanisms. More than 60 technical-scientific documents generated by the project were reviewed and published across various platforms (PWS, project website, and SINIIF). The following documents are currently under review on PWS: The Mangrove Restoration Manual and the Experience Systematization in Forest Co-management. • The Co-publication Agreement between FAO and MINEC was signed, along with a Letter of Agreement with FUNDAMBIENTE for the preparation, editing, publication, and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned from the project. Many of these were presented at the International Book Fair of Venezuela at the end of 2022. • Three experience systematizations were prepared on Forest Co-management, Participatory Forest Monitoring, and Forest Restoration, as well as three Manuals for the Restoration of Mangrove, Xerophytic, and Tropical Humid Forests.
Recommendation 3: Implement a comprehensive training program for leaders of TUKUPU, with a focus on gender, inclusion of young people and emphasis on the development of management skills. **Suggestion: Take advantage of the space to level expectations regarding the economic and social benefits that the company will have in the participating communities.**	• With the project's guidance, the Indigenous Forest Enterprise Tukupu joined the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) in companies supported by UN Women and the Global Compact. They continue to actively participate in the WEPs business community in Venezuela, as well as in the Venezuelan Business Sustainability Forum, where they strengthen relationships with other significant companies in the country committed to sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). • Building on the relationships established in the aforementioned instances, partnerships were strengthened with private sector companies such as Makro and KPMG, the International Organization for Migration (OIM), UN Women, and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Venezuela. Additionally, collaborations were formed with the Universidad Nacional Experimental de Guayana (UNEG) to enhance the management capacities of the Indigenous Forest Enterprise Tukupu with a focus on gender and intersectionality.
Recommendation 4: Enrich the team structure with profiles from the social sciences (e.g. anthropology or sociology with experience in gender) and communications, to provide cross-cutting support to the 4 project components	To address the areas of Monitoring and Dissemination, a team was formed consisting of a Bachelor's degree holder in International Studies and a Bachelor's in Administration, both with training in project planning and monitoring; a Bachelor's degree holder in Literature, a Graphic Designer, and a Forestry Engineer, providing comprehensive support to the project. The team was also supplemented for a period by an anthropologist/communicator with gender expertise, a journalist, and a linguist, among other professionals, who enriched the multidisciplinary composition of the project team.
Recommendation 5: Strengthen technical support in the management of the GEF project cycle and in the inclusion of cross-cutting perspectives.	During this reporting period, the FAO country office facilitated online workshops to strengthen the project team's capacity in project cycle management and the integration of cross-cutting perspectives, particularly gender and indigenous considerations.

	As part of the project's exit strategy, the strategic partnership between EPSDC Tukupu and MINEC was further strengthened, focusing on the co-management of over 54,000 hectares allocated to the indigenous forest enterprise. MINEC approved the first two Operational Forest Plans (OFPs) of Tukupu. The execution of the low-impact harvesting specified in the first OFP was completed, and the implementation of the second OFP for the Tukupu II area, assigned to the enterprise in 2022, is in progress.
Recommendation 6: Design and implement an exit strategy aimed at ensuring the sustainability of the effects and processes promoted by the project. This should include at least the following lines of action: • **Advocacy oriented to institutional anchoring of the effects and processes promoted by the project through decrees, norms, regulations, public programs, etc.** • **Inter-institutional articulation (working groups, coordination spaces, among others).** • **Agreements for the maintenance and permanent updating of the SINIIF and other project outputs.** • **Subsequent financing alternatives.**	In this context, the project, along with FAO Venezuela and MINEC, provided technical support to EPSDC Tukupu in the process of establishing a semi-industrial artisanal carpentry workshop, set to be inaugurated at the end of July 2023. A partnership was established between the School of Industrial Forestry Engineering at UNEG and EPSDC Tukupu to train indigenous personnel in various operational, logistical, and administrative roles within the forest industry business. This enables effective development within their Semi-Industrial Artisanal Carpentry venture. Building on this experience, a proposal for a public policy was developed to establish a National Co-Management System with indigenous communities in areas of permanent forest production, fostering economic and social inclusion. This innovative model contributes to transforming food systems and empowering communities, while respecting rights and promoting traditional knowledge within policies, plans, and programs. Furthermore, the project formulated the Technical Standard on Environmental and Social Sustainability Criteria and Indicators, which is to be endorsed by MINEC through a ministerial resolution and incorporated into the National Standards Program. MINEC continues to implement the National Reforestation Plan, which includes the ambitious goal of planting 10 million forest and fruit trees across the country. Additionally, a National Mangrove Restoration Plan has been formulated and is being implemented, ensuring the sustainability and scaling-up of the restoration strategies driven by the project.
Suggestion: Maintain the active accompaniment of the FAO representation in Venezuela in the processes of support to the design of public policies.	Efforts were made to establish a physical space and equip it for satellite image processing and the operation of SINIIF on the 11th floor of MINEC headquarters. The General Directorates of Information and Communication Technologies and Forest Heritage of MINEC were responsible for the final adaptation of SINIIF for integration into MINEC's institutional web platform, along with continuous updates and improvements based on operation and development manuals provided by the project team. Training was also provided to MINEC, FUNDAMBIENTE, and IFLA officials on comprehensive SINIIF management, from data input to maintenance and operation, with relevant training workshops conducted by the project team responsible for SINIIF development and implementation. Additionally, progress was made in the institutional formalization of the Intersectoral Dialogue and Coordination Platform for Forest

	Management within the framework of the Forest Cabinet created by MINEC. With support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the country aims to replicate the co-management model and establishment of enterprises for natural resource management in other projects being formulated for sustainable development in the southern state of Bolívar and the Amazonas state, with significant participation from indigenous communities in those areas. The project also provided assistance to MINEC in formulating project proposals for submission to the Green Climate Fund and the Climate Change Adaptation Fund, as well as in preparing national communications on nationally determined contributions.
Recommendation 7: Compile or generate information that allows for a potential economic, environmental and social valuation of the Imataca Forest Reserve and develop a proposal for financing mechanisms that are aligned with the country's strategic interests, while maintaining the national principle of non-participation in the Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM).	• This recommendation was addressed, and a study on the economic, environmental, and social valuation of the IFR has been conducted.
Recommendation 8: Develop an internal training plan aimed at promoting the development of institutional capacities on the inclusion of the gender dimension during the cycle of projects under implementation and to be implemented	• This recommendation was addressed by the gender focal point of the country office, and workshops related to capacity building on including the gender dimension in the project cycle were developed.
Has the project developed an Exit Strategy? If yes, please summarize	Yes, the project has formulated an exit, sustainability, and scaling strategy (see recommendation 6, where it is described in broad terms).

8. Minor project amendments

Minor amendments are changes to the project 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[25]. 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.

Category of change	Provide a description of the change	Indicate the timing of the change	Approved by
Results framework	Reported in PIR 2021	2021-2023	Steering Committee, Project Task Force
Components and cost			
Institutional and implementation arrangements			
Financial management			
Implementation schedule	The Project Steering Committee approved the extension of the project, without increasing the budget, until April 30, 2023. Subsequently, for administrative purposes related to the closure workshop, at the request of the MINEC, the end date was Project Implementation Letter (NTE) was extended in the FPMIS until June 16, 2023.	April-June 2023	Steering Committee and GEF-FAO Unit
Executing Entity			
Executing Entity Category			
Minor project objective change			
Safeguards			
Risk analysis			
Increase of GEF project financing up to 5%			
Co-financing	Approved co-financing from partners not initially included was added: INPARQUES (USD 996,875.40), Fundambiente (USD 4,430), UK Embassy in Caracas (USD 60,000.00).		
Location of project activity			
Other minor project amendment (define)			

[25] Source: https://www.thegef.org/council-meeting-documents/guidelines-project-and-program-cycle-policy-2020-update

9. Stakeholders' Engagement

Please report on progress and results and challenges on stakeholder engagement (based on the description of the Stakeholder engagement plan) included at CEO Endorsement/Approval during this reporting period.

Stakeholder name	Role in project execution	Progress and results on Stakeholders' Engagement	Challenges on stakeholder engagement
Government Institutions			
Ministry for the People's Power for Ecosocialism (MINEC)	Governing body of environmental and forestry policy in Venezuela. Governs the management and conservation of forest ecosystems, the recognition of multiple uses and functions of the forest, and the valuation of these as an important part of the national economy. Implementation partner and co-financier of components 1, 2, 4, and project management.	The Ministry of Ecosocialism (Minec) continued to exercise its leadership role in the project implementation. During this final period, there was a final change in the National Project Directorate, led by Dr. Zoraima Echenique in her capacity as the General Director of Forest Heritage at Minec. Coordination was established with the National Reforestation Plan driven by the ministry as a public policy initiative. Approvals were granted for the Forest Operation Plans (PFOs) submitted by EPSDC Tukupu. Joint reviews of protocols, technical guidelines, and other proposed technical documents developed by the project were conducted. Minec played a prominent role in coordinating activities related to the project's Final Evaluation.	The constant changes in ministerial authorities and especially in the National Project Directorate resulted in delays in operational and logistical implementation processes, as transitions and adaptations were being carried out.
ENAFOR (National Forest Enterprise)	Member of the Project Steering Committee. Manages the project intervention area under concession. Provides support in the community engagement process. Strategic partner, co-financier of components 1, 2, 4	It continued implementing the pilot scheme of Forest Co-management with EPSDC Tukupu and actively participated in the Project's Steering Committee. It took part in the Final Evaluation process of the project.	The operational capacity of ENAFOR for field activities significantly diminished in recent years, preventing it from playing a more prominent role in the implementation as anticipated in the PRODOC.
CONARE (National Reforestation Company)	Member of the project's Steering Committee. Possesses expertise and a mandate in forest recovery and restoration. Strategic partner and co-financier of Component 3.	During this final period of implementation, CONARE coordinated with the project for the restoration of degraded areas within the framework of the National Reforestation Plan. CONARE's management and technical staff actively participated in the Final Evaluation process.	
Fundación IFLA (Latin American Forest Institute)	Member of the Project Steering Committee. Provides support in terms of research and academic consultation. Strategic partner and co-financier of components 2 and 3.	Implemented the 3rd Letter of Agreement within the project framework, supporting the development and implementation of the SINIIF, review and updating of protocols, capacity strengthening, experience systematization, development of the financing fund, among others. Participated in the Final Evaluation of the project remotely since they are located in Mérida and the on-site mission did not visit that state.	
Fundación Misión Árbol	Implemented the 3rd Letter of Agreement within the project framework, supporting the development and implementation of the SINIIF, review and updating of protocols, capacity strengthening, experience systematization, development	During this period, only the participation of the President and General Manager of Misión Arbol is reported in the project's Final Evaluation process.	

	of the financing fund, among others. Participated in the Final Evaluation of the project remotely since they are located in Mérida and the on-site mission did not visit that state.		
Bolivarian Agency for Space Activities (ABAE)	Executing partner through letters of agreement. Provides high-resolution satellite images for monitored forest ecosystems under Component 1.	During this period, the second Letter of Agreement with ABAE was implemented as part of the project's implementation, achieving the production of highly relevant cartographic material for forest monitoring in Venezuela within the framework of SINIIF.	
Non-Government organizations (NGOs)			
Kariña Communities	Project beneficiaries. Involved in the implementation of activities under Components 1, 2, and 3.	The indigenous people living in the IFR who benefited from the project continued to actively participate in capacity-building activities for sustainable forest co-management, participatory forest monitoring, and the restoration of intervened/degraded forest areas, as well as in the production, transformation, and commercialization of NTFPs and TFPs under the principle of multiple use and diversified and sustainable utilization of natural resources, following the "learn by doing" approach.	
Private sector entities			
[26]Others[1]			
New stakeholders identified/engaged			
Direct Communal Social Ownership Company(EPSDC) Tukupu	Socio-productive organization of beneficiary communities. Responsible for the pilot implementation of forest co-management in the IFR. Executing partner through memorandum of agreement.	Implemented its third Letter of Agreement within the project framework, successfully restoring over 600 hectares of forests through analog forestry techniques, reforestation, and agroforestry. Constructed a semi-industrial artisan carpentry workshop that will be used for transforming wood extracted through reduced-impact logging and utilizing secondary products (branches), thereby adding more value to the wood produced by enabling both dimensioned sales and finished furniture. Continued to enhance its production and commercialization capacities of NTFPs and TFP.	
National Parks Institute (INPARQUES)	Socio-productive organization of beneficiary communities. Responsible for the pilot implementation of forest co-management in the IFR. Executing partner through letter of agreement.	During this final implementation period, coordination with the project for the restoration of degraded areas in Areas under Special Administration Regime (ABRAE) continued as part of the National Reforestation Plan. Technical and managerial staff from INPARQUES actively participated in the Final Evaluation process.	

[26][1] They can include, among others, community-based organizations (CBOs), Indigenous Peoples organizations, women's groups, private sector companies, farmers, universities, research institutions, and all major groups as identified, for example, in Agenda 21 of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and many times again since then.

National Center for Development and Research in Technologies Foundation (CENDITEL)	Executing partner through Agreements to develop the SINIIF and the project's website.	No joint activities were reported with this institution during the project's closing period.	
National Environmental Education Foundation (FUNDAMBIENTE)	Potential executing partner through Letters of Agreement for capacity building and communication and dissemination of project results	A Letter of Agreement was implemented with this entity under the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development, which facilitated capacity building in project publications, including thematic newsletters and documents published under the FAO-Minec co-publication agreement. The Fundambiente management joined the Steering Committee and participated in the project's Final Evaluation process.	
Sifontes Municipality Mayor's Office	Local Government. Indirect beneficiary of the project. Strategic allies in the project's area of influence.	They granted a lease of the land and facilities where the headquarters of EPSDC Tukupu, Casa Kariña, and the Semi-Industrial Artisan Carpentry are located. Additionally, through the Municipal Directorate of Indigenous Peoples, they supported indigenous communities in the IFR with various cultural and socio-productive activities.	
Piar Municipality Mayor’s Office	Local government. Indirect beneficiary of the project. Strategic allies in the project's area of influence.	No outreach activities during the period.	
Universities and research centers: University of Los Andes (ULA), Experimental University of Guayana (UNEG), Center for Postgraduate Studies ULA (CEFAP), Central University of Venezuela (UCV), Venezuelan Institute for Scientific Research (IVIC), Institute for Forest Development Research of ULA (INDEFOR).	Academic and scientific contributions in the formulation and design of protocols outlined in the project components. They have participated in the execution of various project deliverables.	During this period, an Agreement was executed with the National Experimental University of Guayana (UNEG) to strengthen the capacities of Kariña indigenous individuals in topics related to the operation and management of the semi-industrial artisanal carpentry, based on the same model used by the university in its School of Forest Industries. UNEG, UCV, UBV, and ULA participated in the Final Evaluation of the project.	
Maderas Bosco	Private company engaged in commercial forest utilization operations within the project's area of influence.	An Agreement was signed with EPSDC Tukupu for the dimensioning of the extracted wood in the forest management units managed by EPSDC Tukupu for its subsequent commercialization, either fully processed or semi-processed, while Tukupu's carpentry is being activated.	
International Organization for Migration(OIM)	The organization responsible for assisting people in situations of human mobility	The joint interagency support process with FAO was completed, involving the provision of seeds, equipment, and tools to strengthen the capacities of 65 Kariña families to establish family and community seed banks, which in turn allowed for the diversification of food production in agroforestry systems established in traditional Kariña gardens. Additionally, machinery and equipment were provided to enhance the capacity of casaberas (artisanal yucca processors for casabe production). They participated in the project's Final Evaluation.	
Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Venezuela(SNU)	Responsible for coordinating the agencies, funds, and programs of the UN System in Venezuela.	Continued to promote the participation of EPSDC Tukupu in the Forum for Business Sustainability in Venezuela and the adoption of the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), as well as the formation of partnerships with other private companies in the country.	
UN Women Venezuela	Responsible for United Nations programs aimed at women	With the opening of the UN Women office in Venezuela, they took over the leadership of the WEPs initiative. Additionally, they committed to continue supporting EPSDC Tukupu and the gender mainstreaming experiences of the project.	

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.

Category	Yes/No	Briefly describe progress and results achieved during this reporting period
Gender analysis or an equivalent socio-economic assessment made at formulation or during execution stages.	No	During the project formulation phase, a gender diagnosis was not conducted; instead, it began with a socioeconomic assessment that provided disaggregated information on the proportion of men and women. In the implementation phase, specific actions were carried out that generated gender-related information useful for the implementation of project products and outcomes. During this implementation period, a compilation of documents was conducted, detailing the gender-related activities undertaken by the project.
Any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women's empowerment?	Yes	During this period, efforts continued to promote the participation of the indigenous forest company Tukupu in the Sustainability Business Forum of Venezuela and in the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) established by UN Women and the Global Compact. It became the first company of its kind to join this global initiative (see: https://www.weps.org/company/empresa-propiedad-social-directa-comunal-tukupu). Throughout this period, coordinated work was maintained with indigenous women from EPSDC Tukupu and the communities of the IFR. Their empowerment was supported through socio-productive activities such as food production in family gardens ("conucos"), the semi-industrial transformation of cassava into casabe in artisanal casaberas supported by the project and IOM, as well as the artisanal production and commercialization of aesthetic and personal hygiene products in the Kariña Indigenous Market of Tumeremo. These products were made from sustainable management of natural resources by indigenous women. Captain General Cecilia Rivas was reelected to that position in April 2023, serving until 2027. Additionally, 5 communities now have indigenous women elected as community captains or vice-captains during this period, representing 40% of the communities served by the project with female leadership. Thanks to the empowerment driven by the project, indigenous women have taken on roles that were previously unfamiliar in their communities. There is now a majority of women serving as intercultural teachers, as well as women responsible for malaria detection and treatment, along with other diseases.
Indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality (as identified at the project design stage):		
a) closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources	Yes	The EPSDC Tukupu continues to be a national and regional example of natural resource management by indigenous women. Captain General Cecilia Rivas was reelected as the main spokesperson (president) of EPSDC Tukupu, and key managerial positions within the company (vice presidency, administration, legal consultancy, field engineering, indigenous community relations) remained in the hands of women.
b) improving women's participation and decision making	Yes	During this reporting period, new women captains were elected for the indigenous communities of Pozo Oscuro, La Iguana, and Macayama, while the communities of Los Waicas and Cafetal elected vice-captains. Additionally, on April 19, 2023, elections were held for the renewal of authorities of the General Captaincy of the indigenous communities of

		the Imataca Forest Reserve, and Captain Cecilia Rivas was re-elected for the 2023-2027 period.
c) generating socio-economic benefits or services for women	Yes	During this period, a consultancy was hired for the development of community plans for the production and commercialization of products such as soaps, lotions, essential oils, flours, and other derivatives from the use of TFPs and NTFPs, which are mainly produced by indigenous women and marketed by them in the Kariña indigenous market of Tumeremo. The infrastructure of the semi-industrial artisan carpentry was built, and the installation of its equipment and machinery was in the final phase. This carpentry, which is about to be inaugurated and put into operation, will be operated and managed 50% by women, considering that the initial training for the operators was given by the National Experimental University of Guayana (UNEG) to 7 women and 8 men (young people) from different indigenous communities of the IFR. The spaces of the Kariña House, which serves as temporary shelter for indigenous women in situations of socio-economic vulnerability, including sick women, elderly women, victims of human trafficking, among others, were also rehabilitated.
M&E system with gender-disaggregated data?	Yes	The gender disaggregation was maintained in the project data, both in the measurement of Results Framework indicators and in the different reports and project-generated reports.
Staff with gender expertise	No	The project did not have a gender specialist per se, but it relied on the capacities of the Gender Focal Point of the FAO representation in Venezuela, as well as the responsible persons in this matter from the FAO Regional Office. The project team participated in specific trainings organized by FAOVE and FAO RLC on mainstreaming gender in projects.
Any other good practices on gender	No	

11. Knowledge Management Activities

Does the project have a knowledge management strategy? If not, how does the project collect and document good practices? Please list relevant good practices that can be learned and shared from the project thus far.	**Yes.** **1.** Work with Kariña indigenous communities under the framework of prior Informed Consent **2.** Work with Kariña indigenous communities with a Gender Equality approach **3.** Participatory Forest Monitoring **4.** Establishment of the first Indigenous Forest Enterprise **5.** Formulation and consolidation of the National Network of Forest Seed Suppliers **6.** Establishment of the Forest Co-Management System for the Imataca Forest Reserve **7.** Enhancement of Productive Capacities **8.** Implementation of Agroforestry Systems **9.** Improvement of livelihoods for involved Kariña indigenous communities **10.** Methodology for CO_2 measurement in the Imataca Forest Reserve **11.** Capacity strengthening for long-term sustainability The good practices carried out through the project have been compiled and showcased through the project's Newsletter, Volumes 1, 2, and 3. In addition to the other publications already reported in the 2022 PIR, a work titled "**Systematization of the experience of forest co-management in the Imataca Forest Reserve, Bolivar State, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**" is currently in the FAO-PWS Publication System, in the process of being effectively published. Record ID: 306479. Two (2) systematizations of experiences on Participatory Forest Monitoring and Tropical Forest Restoration with indigenous Kariña people are also pending review and publication. Furthermore, the project's good practices have been made visible through communication channels such as social media, the project's website, national press, etc. Additionally, strategies to manage knowledge include participating in conferences, webinars, workshops, knowledge exchange, courses, and meetings to formulate proposals and promote important research and findings generated by the project.
Does the project have a communication strategy? Please provide a brief overview of the communications successes and challenges **this year**.	**Yes.** The project's communication and dissemination plan is described in detail in the following link: https://unfao-my.sharepoint.com/personal/rosa_betancourt_fao_org/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Frosa%5Fbetancourt%5Ffao%5Forg%2FDocuments%2FPLAN%20DE%20COMUNICACI%C3%93N%20Y%20DISEMINACI%C3%93N%20%2Epdf&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Frosa%5Fbetancourt%5Ffao%5Forg%2FDocuments&wdLOR=cAADC1BD8%2D3B50%2D4506%2DAB2D%2DFDFF11C802A6&ct=1693927303364&or=Outlook%2DBody&cid=80C6030C%2DC999%2D49E8%2DB7FA%2D72AE8C85B916&ga=1 During the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of communication through various technological platforms became evident. Addressing the challenge of communicating and informing the communities involved in the Imataca Forest Reserve project was crucial. The activation and strengthening of the radio served as a foundational tool for disseminating and sharing information in this area. Additionally, while adhering to basic protective measures, various knowledge exchange sessions, workshops, courses, meetings, and gatherings were conducted to enhance the capacities of the indigenous Kariña communities involved. These efforts were supplemented by the smooth flow of information in the field, including interviews, documentation, and audiovisual resources, which were essential for effective communication through established channels in the communication strategy. These channels include the organization's Twitter account: @FAO_Venezuela, and the organization's website: https://www.fao.org/venezuela/noticias/detail-events/fr/c/1538217/.

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.	**Huellas en Imataca (II): "The Sustainable Forest Management Project Reached the Kariña Community to Improve Our Lives" - Cecilia Rivas** I was elected as the Kariña Captain in 2013, the only and first indigenous Kariña woman for that position at the time. This was a significant step in opening the door for women's participation in the Kariña People. Being a 'Capitana' means being the elected leader of the community. The Kariña group was always dominated by men, and we had no voice or vote before. Right when the project arrived, it provided support and training. We have our own knowledge, but we also needed assistance in other areas. Gradually, this support became the seed to organize and form what is now our indigenous forest company – the first of its kind in Venezuela – Tukupu. https://www.fao.org/venezuela/noticias/detail-events/es/c/1637462/  Photo 1: Cecilia Rivas. Kariña captain and president of Tukupu. @José Negrón  Photo 2: Plant management in Tukupu's forestry nursery. @ Harrison Ruíz

	 Photo 3: Tukupu forest nursery management.. @Ernesto Navarro
Please provide links to related website, social media account	• https://bosquesdevenezuela.com/ • https://siniif.com • https://tukupudotcom.wordpress.com/ • http://www.minec.gob.ve/ • https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela • https://twitter.com/MinecOficial • https://twitter.com/tukupu_ve • https://twitter.com/bosquesdevzla • https://www.instagram.com/tukupu_ve/ • https://www.instagram.com/bosquesdevzla/ • https://www.instagram.com/red_semillas_forestales_rnpsf/
Please provide a list of publications, leaflets, video materials, newsletters, or other communications assets published on the web.	• **1er. Boletín informativo del proyecto "Ordenación forestal sustentable y conservación de bosques en la perspectiva ecosocial http://www.fao.org/documents/card/es/c/CB2832ES/** • **2do. Boletín informativo del proyecto https://www.fao.org/documents/card/es/c/cc0872es** • **3er. Boletín informativo del proyecto https://www.fao.org/documents/card/es/c/cc4961es** • **HUELLAS EN IMATACA (I) FAO, Minec y GEF impulsaron el desarrollo de la Reserva Forestal de Imataca https://www.fao.org/venezuela/noticias/detail-events/es/c/1637172/** • **COP15: FAO apoya a países en la restauración y conservación de la biodiversidad en América Latina y el Caribe** https://www.fao.org/venezuela/noticias/detail-events/es/c/1626995/ • **Cerró proyecto de FAO, MINEC, comunidad indígena y GEF con buenas prácticas a replicar** https://www.fao.org/venezuela/noticias/detail-events/es/c/1643347/ • https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1638218645850431496 • **https://twitter.com/FAOenEspanol/status/1505896905271922693** • **https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1649052010375946245** • **https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1638919489759637504** • **https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1638274303924883481** • **https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1649793934095433729** • **https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1674143446284550145** • **https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1669765747755700224** • **https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1669765754835566593** • **https://twitter.com/FAO_Venezuela/status/1669765760560820226**
Please indicate the Communication and/or knowledge management focal point's name and contact details	Rosa Elena Betancourt Dirección electrónica: rosa.betancourt@fao.org/ suprambiental@gmail.com Número de teléfono: +58 4241700804

12.Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities 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.

Before initiating the project implementation, the indigenous communities located in the IFR area were consulted about their interest in participating in the project. They provided their free, prior, and informed consent. The participation of the Kariña indigenous people in decision-making has been active, with equal representation of men and women.

To obtain Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, a community approach was undertaken in the IFR from December 12th to 16th, 2016, led by the Technical Coordinator of the project. On December 13th, 2016, a meeting was held in the Botanamo community with the Indigenous Captains of the Bochinche Sector, along the Tumeremo - Bochinche road axis of the Imataca Forest Reserve. The meeting was attended by the General Captain of the Sector, Mrs. Cecilia Rivas, the Captain of the La Esperanza Community, Mr. Alejandro Fernández, the Captain of the Matupo I Community, Mr. Juanillo Figuera, as well as Vice Captains and a representative from the La Iguana community.

After the Technical Coordinator presented the project, consultations were carried out with the different Captains. They expressed their agreement with the project's execution in their areas of influence, as it would bring significant environmental and socioeconomic benefits to all residents. They showed interest in integrating and participating in various activities to be carried out during the project's implementation.

Subsequently, a participatory community diagnosis was conducted, prioritizing key needs: (i) a vehicle for transporting people and products within the IFR, (ii) a medical facility (clinic), and (iii) materials and supplies for preparing conucos (agricultural plots). Additionally, a participatory diagnosis was conducted specifically to determine training needs. The participants expressed their primary needs, leading to the identification of three thematic areas: (i) productive development, (ii) sustainable forest management, and (iii) environment.

Activities that involved continuous consultation with the Kariña indigenous communities during the project implementation included: selecting participants for various courses/workshops in the communities, choosing the area for the development of the first operational forest plan, selecting areas for setting up nurseries (community/family), selecting fruit species for production, choosing areas for plantation establishment (agroforestry systems in fallow areas), and engaging in dialogues with women to educate them about their individual and collective rights within the context of the reserve.

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

Yes.

Through the process of developing and strengthening capacities of the Kariña communities by the project (as per participatory diagnosis), organized participation in sustainable forest management was promoted. For this purpose, a pilot scheme was designed to implement the sustainable forest co-management model. This led to the establishment of the Community-Owned Direct Social Company Tukupu, the first indigenous forest company in Venezuela. Thus, it became a grassroots indigenous organization that is both community-based and gender-balanced (50% men and 50% women), with its own legal identity. It was authorized by the Ministry of Popular Power for Eco-socialism to be allocated a 6,487.12 ha forest area in Unit C3 of the IFR for the pilot implementation of the forest co-management model. In 2022, this was expanded with the allocation of an additional 47,916 ha of forest in Units V and C2 to continue implementing the Forest Co-Management strategies.

13. Co-Financing Table

Sources of Co-financing[27]	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Amount Confirmed at CEO endorsement / approval	Actual Amount Materialized at 30 June 2023	Actual Amount Materialized at Midterm or closure (confirmed by the review/evaluation team) al 31/12/2022	Expected total disbursement by the end of the project
GEF Agency	FAO	IN KIND	230,000.00	256,435.16	256,435.16	256,435.16
National Government	MINEC	IN KIND	3,000,000.00	3,267,321.00	2,969,999,08	3,267,321.00
National Government	ENAFOR	IN KIND	10,000,000.00	12,725,620.00	10,257,283.03	12,725,620.00
National Government	CONARE	IN KIND	8,000,000.00	9,526,733.12	8,395,355.32	9,526,733.12
National Government	MISIÓN ÁRBOL	IN KIND	3,000,000.00	3,387,615.26	3,003,002.32	3,387,615.26
National Government	IFLA	IN KIND	1,500,000.00	2,325,336.00	1,500,000	2,325,336.00
National Government	ABAE	IN KIND	0	1,096,218.72	1,096,218.72	1,096,218.72
National Government	FUNDAMBIENTE	IN KIND	0	4,330	4,330	4,330
National Government	INPARQUES	IN KIND	0	996,875.40	0	996,875.40
International Cooperation	UK Embassy	GRANT	0	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00
		TOTAL	**25,730,000.00**	**33,646,484.66**	**27,542,623.63**	**33,646,484.66**

[27] Sources of Co-financing may include: Bilateral Aid Agency(ies), Foundation, GEF Agency, Local Government, National Government, Civil Society Organization, Other Multi-lateral Agency(ies), Private Sector, Beneficiaries, Other.

Please explain any significant changes in project co-financing since Project Document signature, or differences between the anticipated and actual rates of disbursement?

The co-financing committed in the PRODOC was equal to USD 25,730,000. To determine the actualized co-financing each year, the UGP developed a format that was provided to the co-financiers, and they were given training on how to fill it out.

Thus, the reported co-financing as of December 2022 totaled USD 27,542,623, which corresponds to 107% of the committed co-financing, surpassing the initial commitment. The percentage of fulfillment by the co-financing partners has been met entirely, and new co-financiers have joined during the project's execution. These include ABAE, FUNDAMBIENTE, INPARQUES, and the British Embassy. The support received from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which donated casaberas and seeds to the indigenous communities of the IFR, is yet to be reported. By the project's closure, it is estimated that the co-financing (excluding IOM) would have exceeded 130% of the initially committed amount (USD 33,646,484.66), thanks to the strategy of mobilizing and leveraging additional project resources.

Annex 1. – GEF Performance Ratings Definitions

Development Objectives Rating. A rating of the extent to which a project is expected to achieve or exceed its major objectives.	
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Project is expected to achieve or exceed **all** its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as "good practice"
Satisfactory (S)	Project is expected to achieve **most** of its **major** global environmental objectives, and yield satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Project is expected to achieve **most** of its major **relevant** objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modest overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environment benefits
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Project is expected to achieve its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to **achieve only some** of its major global environmental objectives
Unsatisfactory (U)	Project is expected **not** to achieve **most** of its major global environment objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, **any** of its major global environment objectives with no worthwhile benefits

Implementation Progress Rating. A rating of the extent to which the implementation of a project's components and activities is in compliance with the project's approved implementation plan.	
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of **all** components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised implementation plan for the project. The project can be resented as "good practice"
Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of **most** components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan except for only a few that are subject to remedial action
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of **some** components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with **some** components requiring remedial action
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of **some** components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with **most** components requiring remedial action.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of **most** components is not in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of **none** of the components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan.

Risk rating will assess 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:	
High Risk (H)	There is a probability of greater than **75%** that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face high risks.
Substantial Risk (S)	There is a probability of between **51%** and **75%** that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face substantial risks
Moderate Risk (M)	There is a probability of between **26%** and **50%** that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face only moderate risk
Low Risk (L)	There is a probability of up to **25%** that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face only low risks

Annex 2.

GEO LOCATION INFORMATION

The Location Name, Latitude and Longitude are required fields insofar as an Agency chooses to enter a project location under the set format. The Geo Name ID is required in instances where the location is not exact, such as in the case of a city, as opposed to the exact site of a physical infrastructure. The Location & Activity Description fields are optional. Project longitude and latitude must follow the Decimal Degrees WGS84 format and Agencies are encouraged to use at least four decimal points for greater accuracy. Users may add as many locations as appropriate. Web mapping applications such as OpenStreetMap or GeoNames use this format. Consider using a conversion tool as needed, such as: https://coordinates-converter.com Please see the Geocoding User Guide by clicking here

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	Geo Name ID	Location & Activity Description

Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions is taking place as appropriate.