

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Project ID:	11202
Project Name:	Integrated management and ecological connectivity of a priority landscape in the Ecuadorian Amazon headwaters
Countr(ies):	Ecuador
Implementing Agency:	CI

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I. Overview

A. Description

Project name

Integrated management and ecological connectivity of a priority landscape in the Ecuadorian Amazon headwaters

Country

Ecuador

GEF ID

11202

Implementing Agency

CI

Executing Entity

WWF Ecuador

Trust Fund

GET

Project Type

FSP

PIR Submission

9/7/2026

Fiscal Year , PIR Number

FY 2026 , 1st PIR

Objective

Project Objective: Conserve, restore and promote the adoption of sustainable land management practices across 1,038,377 hectares of tropical montane forest landscapes along the Eastern Ecuadorian Andes, while enhancing Andean-Amazon habitat connectivity CI1: Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management (Target: 577,289 ha) CI3: Area of land and ecosystems under restoration (Target: 400 ha) CI4: Area of landscapes under improved practices (Target: 461,088 ha) CI6: Greenhouse gas emission mitigated (Target: -5,068,290 million tons CO₂e) CI11: People benefiting from GEF-financed investments (Target: 56,177; 27,154 men and 29,023 women)

B. Ratings and Disbursements

Implementation Progress

Moderately Satisfactory

Development Objective

Moderately Satisfactory

Overall risk

Moderate Risk

Project Financing

5,169,833.00

Cumulative Disbursement

474,300.00

C. Key Dates

CEO Endorsement/Approval 1/7/2025	Agency Approval 6/3/2025
Implementation Start 6/3/2025	First Disbursement 6/18/2025
Expected MTR 9/30/2027	Actual MTR
Expected Completion 3/31/2030	Actual Completion

II. PROGRESS STATUS AND ISSUES

A. Progress: Information on progress and outcomes of project implementation activities

The project start-up phase required a significant amount of time. However, several important milestones were achieved. The project focused its efforts on establishing the technical, institutional, and operational capacities necessary to implement its main lines of action. The technical team is fully established, and all delivery partners have subgrants signed. , Extensive negotiations were conducted with the subgrantees to align their responsibilities with the project's objectives while ensuring complementarity among the activities of all executing partners. The first Project Steering Committee meeting was successfully convened, during which the Annual Work Plan (AWP FY26 and FY27) and budget, the Operations Manual, and Communication Protocol were approved. These actions established the enabling conditions for a successful project start-up, ensuring that the project's objectives and targets were translated into a clear operational framework with well-defined roles and responsibilities for all project partners.

The project launch and territorial outreach events were highly successful, effectively communicating the project's objectives and collecting initial feedback and perspectives from local stakeholders. The PMU of the project also participated in the ASL integrated program annual meeting held in Manaus during February

From March 2 to 6, 2026, the ASL Annual Conference, the ASL Steering Committee, and the ASL4 Workshop took place in Manaus, Brazil, attended by all Amazonian governments (the Ecuadorian government participated in some sessions virtually) and, for the first time, Venezuela. A WWF delegation from the Guianas, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and ACU actively participated in the Steering Committee, the annual conference, and the ASL4 (GEF9) planning workshop. WWF, including the ASL3 project management team in Ecuador, contributed to the regional thematic working groups, successfully ensuring that its priorities—connectivity, river dolphins, and the Landscape Finance Approach (LFA)—were included in the groups' conclusions. Ecuador actively participated through its ASL2 and ASL3 projects, with a focus on connectivity corridors, taking part in the marketplace, video screenings, and general discussions, and was able to present the launch of ASL3, its vision and scope, sharing agendas and a project fact sheet.

B. Challenges: Information on challenges of project implementation activities

The project's main challenge stemmed from the need to establish the technical, institutional, and governance conditions required for the effective execution of the planned activities. Executive Decree No. 94 of August 14, 2025, provided for the merger by absorption of the Ministry of the Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition (MAATE) into the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM), giving rise to the current Ministry of the Environment and Energy (MAE). This process led to a temporary halt in several strategic and operational processes of the GEF ASL3 project, as management and technical teams entered a phase of evaluation and realignment within the new ministerial structure. Although the merger took place in August, institutional gaps and uncertainties persist at the strategic and operational levels, which have led to shifting internal dynamics and an unstable environment for project implementation.

As this was a start-up phase, a significant portion of the efforts was devoted to establishing coordination mechanisms with implementing partners, approving management tools, contracting specialized consultants, and defining common methodologies for monitoring, communication, and the implementation of actions in the field. The enabling conditions and the establishment of the subgrant agreements took longer than originally anticipated. As a result, implementation of the initial work plan started approximately three to four months later than planned. The AWP has since been revised to reflect the actual implementation timeline.

Additionally, the implementation confirmed that building participatory processes and territorial governance requires more time for coordination than initially anticipated, due to the diversity of stakeholders involved, their varying levels of institutional capacity, and the need to build consensus to ensure effective and sustainable participation. In response to these challenges, the project prioritized capacity building, the creation of permanent coordination forums, the establishment of thematic working groups, and the development of management, communication, and monitoring tools to enable more coordinated and efficient implementation during the subsequent phases.

One of the biggest challenges the project faced during fiscal year 2026 was the merger of the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition (MAATE) with the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM), which resulted in the current Ministry of Environment and Energy (MAE). This process led to a temporary suspension of several strategic and operational processes of the GEF ASL3 project, as management and technical teams entered a phase of assessment and readjustment within the new ministerial structure. Although the merger took place in August, institutional gaps and uncertainties at the strategic and operational levels persist, leading to shifting internal dynamics and an unstable environment for project implementation.

C. Stakeholder Engagement

First, recognizing that the project partners are local actors in each of the project landscapes, considerable effort was made to align their implementation approaches and perspectives. In addition, during the project start-up phase, three territorial workshops were conducted—one in the Llanganates–Sangay Ecological Corridor (CELS) and two in the Sangay–Podocarpus Connectivity Corridor (CCSP)—to introduce the project, identify key stakeholders, and gather the perspectives, priorities, and recommendations of local actors.

The Project Operations Manual clearly defines the governance structure and the mechanisms for translating strategic decisions into operational actions. This includes the Landscape Advisory Groups, which engage through territorial workshops, and the Project Technical Advisory Group, which met in June to consolidate technical inputs and recommendations. These governance mechanisms serve to inform and support decision-making by the Project Steering Committee, scheduled to meet in July or August.

D. Gender Equality

Capacity-building workshops have been conducted with the project partners. In addition, in response to a request from EcoMinga, a workshop on positive masculinities is being planned to further strengthen gender integration within project implementation.

A rapid gender analysis will be conducted for each of the two project landscapes. WWF Ecuador will lead the analysis for the Llanganates–Sangay Ecological Corridor (CELS), while NCI will lead the analysis for the Sangay–Podocarpus Connectivity Corridor (CCSP).

E. Knowledge Management

During this period, the project made progress in defining the approach and scope of the knowledge management component through technical and methodological coordination with the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL) and NCI. This collaboration made it possible to establish guidelines for organizing information and data architecture criteria applicable to the future digital platform, strengthening the teams' technical capacities and generating relevant methodological inputs.

The experience highlighted the importance of having a solid technical foundation and promoting institutional coherence as a prerequisite for moving toward more integrated knowledge management systems. Among the lessons learned, it is worth noting that working together with specialized partners facilitates the standardization of processes and ensures that the resulting products address national and regional needs for conservation and connectivity.

III: Minor Amendments

CONTEXT	
Result Framework	
Components and Cost	
Institutional And Implementation Arrangements	
Financial Management	
Implementation Schedule	
Executing Entity	
Executing Entity Category	
Minor Project Objective Change	
Safeguards	
Risk Analysis	
Increase of GEF Financing up to 5%	
Co-Financing	
Location of Project Activity	
others	

IV: Geographic Coordinates of Project Activities

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Cerro Candelaria Wildlife Reserv	-1.45300421	-78.31380012	3,658,751

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Rio Zuñag Wildlife Reserve	-1.3646828	-78.15863864	3,649,876

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Machay Wildlife Reserve	-1.37241534	-78.27401876	3,654,522

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Anzu River Reserve (known as OMEC)	-1.42746975	-78.04282063	3,654,247

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Palmonte Farm	-1.42339567	-78.244403	3,652,332

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Hacienda Guamag Protected Forest and Vegetatio	-1.4155694	-78.37052342	10,793,502

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Biopark	-1.47270232	-78.12145965	3,658,629

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Sumak Kawsay In Situ	-1.40356308	-78.06893641	3,654,247

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Marcos Pérez de Castilla	-3.485	-79.12986	10,792,511

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
io Negro Sopladora National Park Gualaceño River	-2.82	-7.85511	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Imbana Parish Nursery	-3.8468	-79.12021	3,654,810

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Jimbilla Parish Nursery	-3.8607	-79.17213	3,655,450

Location Description:

Activity Description:

V. ANNEX

Uploaded Document

Document Category M and E Document	Title 20260828_FY26 PIR_GEFID11202_AS3_CLEAN
Document Category M and E Document	Title 20260717 FY26 Core Indicator Reporting_ GEFID11202 AS3