

GEF-8 REQUEST FOR CEO
ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

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General Project Information

Project Title

Accelerating the Sustainable Transformation of Ecuadorian Banana Industry (Ecuador Green Footprint Project)

Region	GEF Project ID
Latin America and the Caribbean	11923
Country(ies)	Type of Project
Ecuador	MSP
GEF Agency(ies):	GEF Agency Project ID
FAO	755893
Project Executing Entity(s)	Project Executing Type
Ministry of Environment and Energy MAE	Government
GEF Focal Area (s)	Submission Date
Multi Focal Area	2/5/2026
Type of Trust Fund	Project Duration (Months)
GET	36
GEF Project Grant: (a)	GEF Project Non-Grant: (b)
1,776,484.00	0.00
Agency Fee(s) Grant: (c)	Agency Fee(s) Non-Grant (d)
168,766.00	0.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d)	Total Co-financing
1,945,250.00	27,971,319.00
PPG Amount: (e)	PPG Agency Fee(s): (f)
50,000.00	4,750.00
Total GEF Resources: (a+b+c+d+e+f)	
2,000,000.00	

Project Tags

CBIT: No NGI: No SGP: No Innovation: No Competitive Window: No

Project Sector (CCM Only)

AFOLU

Taxonomy

Land Degradation, Focal Areas, Climate Change, Sustainable Land Management, Sustainable Livelihoods, Improved Soil and Water Management Techniques, Integrated and Cross-sectoral approach, Sustainable Agriculture, Land Degradation Neutrality,

Land Productivity, Sustainable Development Goals, Influencing models, Strengthen institutional capacity and decision-making, Transform policy and regulatory environments, Convene multi-stakeholder alliances, Demonstrate innovative approaches, Deploy innovative financial instruments, Stakeholders, Partnership, Type of Engagement, Private Sector, Large corporations, SMEs, Individuals/Entrepreneurs, Local Communities, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organization, Communications, Behavior change, Public Campaigns, Education, Strategic Communications, Awareness Raising, Beneficiaries, Gender Equality, Capacity Development, Gender results areas, Knowledge Generation and Exchange, Sex-disaggregated indicators, Gender Mainstreaming, Knowledge Generation, Capacity, Knowledge and Research, Workshop, Training, Innovation, Learning, Knowledge Exchange, Indicators to measure change, Academia, Consultation, Information Dissemination, Participation, Climate Change Mitigation, Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use, Certification - International Standards, Mainstreaming, Biodiversity, Agriculture and agrobiodiversity, Income Generating Activities

Rio Markers

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Land Degradation
Principal Objective 2	No Contribution 0	No Contribution 0	Principal Objective 2

Project Summary

Provide a brief summary description of the project, including: (i) what is the problem and issues to be addressed? (ii) what are the project objectives, and if the project is intended to be transformative, how will this be achieved? (iii), how will this be achieved (approach to deliver on objectives), and (iv) what are the GEBs and/or adaptation benefits, and other key expected results. The purpose of the summary is to provide a short, coherent summary for readers. (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

Ecuador's banana industry, the largest exporter globally, faces growing sustainability challenges linked to highly input-intensive production systems. Extensive use of agroplastics, agrochemicals, synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and fossil fuels has led to significant land degradation, high carbon and water footprints, and increasing pressure on surrounding ecosystems and communities. These environmental pressures are now compounded by the sector's increased vulnerability to emerging international sustainability requirements, such as the European Commission's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), which demand greater transparency, traceability, and reductions in environmental impacts across global supply chains. Without targeted support, producers, particularly smallholders and family farming producers, risk losing market access and long-term competitiveness. The primary objective of this project is to support the sustainable transformation of Ecuador's banana industry by reducing its environmental footprint and strengthening compliance with international standards. Transformation will be achieved through strengthened governance, improved monitoring systems, and the adoption of climate-smart, resource-efficient practices across the value chain.

The project will: (i) Strengthen institutional and operational frameworks by improving policy coherence and coordination between the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MAE) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAGP), and enhancing systems for environmental monitoring, reporting, and sustainable production; (ii) enhance and integrate carbon and water footprint MRV systems by upgrading FAO's Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool, ensuring compatibility and complementarity with Ecuador's Carbon Zero Program, and enabling future application in other strategic value chains such as plantain, cocoa and coffee; and (iii) build stakeholder capacity across smallholders, medium growers, large producers, and exporting companies through technical assistance and training to adopt sustainable practices, meet EU regulatory requirements, and reduce reliance on agrochemicals, agroplastics, and other environmentally harmful inputs improving soil conservation. These components will establish a foundation for long-term sustainability and inter-sectoral actions in Ecuador's agricultural sector.

Global environmental benefits (GEBs) include an estimated reduction of 18,022,619 tCO₂e, improved water use efficiency and 150,000 hectares (ha) under improved practices, while directly benefitting 80,000 farmers and workers (50% women). Key expected results include improved market access for Ecuadorian bananas, increased compliance with international sustainability standards, increased adoption of climate-resilient and low-emission practices, improved soil

conservation, and replication of successful strategies in other agricultural value chains, contributing to Ecuador’s NDC emission reduction targets and promoting broader agricultural sustainability.

Project Description Overview

Project Objective

Promote the sustainable transformation of Ecuador's banana industry by reducing its environmental footprint and ensuring compliance with international standards.

Project Components

Component 1: Strengthening the Institutional Operational Framework for Sustainable Banana Production

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
257,712.00	5,380,891.00

Outcome:

Outcome 1: Strengthened enabling environment for sustainable banana production and improved sustainable market access

Output:

Output 1.1: PECC Framework and Technical Standard (related to organizations and products) strengthened and updated for Monitoring and Reporting Carbon and Water Footprints in the Banana Value Chain.

Output 1.2: Stakeholder participation (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) in dialogues and decision-making processes strengthened for the review and update of policy frameworks, including the PECC and its compensation scheme (with an intersectional approach).

Output 1.3: Sustainable financing mechanisms and/or monetary and non- monetary incentives with an intersectional approach developed and supported by environmental public policy in coordination with the national and local government; private sector and public banks; academia; and international organisms to ensure effective long-term implementation of sustainable productive actions and carbon and water footprint reporting and measurement

Component 2: Strengthened National Systems for Comprehensive Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of Environmental Indicators related to NDC/LDN, CWF and Ecuador Zero Carbon Program

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
362,828.00	6,911,101.00

Outcome:

Outcome 2:
Improved accuracy and transparency of carbon and water footprint assessments through strengthened institutional systems and instruments for measurement, monitoring, reporting, and verification of environmental indicators

Output:

Output 2.1: Advanced modules developed and integrated into the CWF tool to address upstream and downstream emissions and to include functionalities for new user categories (auditors and traders, exporters and international importers), aligned with the requirements of the national regulatory framework (technical regulation for PECC for organizational and product footprint) and Ecuador's context.

Output 2.2: Automation of the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) System strengthened and enabled interoperability between PECC and MRV systems, including data collection, analysis, reporting and evaluation of the results

Output 2.3: Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) Tool adapted for other value chains (plantain, coffee and cocoa).

Output 2.4: Training program developed and delivered for MAE and MAGP personnel on CWF tool, linkage with PECC and MRV systems and carbon and water footprint reduction practices.

Output 2.5: CWF Tool Integration with the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program, the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025-2034) and MRV systems

Component 3: Capacity development for compliance with national and international standards through the adoption of Sustainable production Practices

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
285,428.00	7,589,429.00

Outcome:

Outcome 3.1: Stakeholders enhance their capacities to comply with EU frameworks and other national and international standards

Output:

Output 3.1.1: Knowledge management, communication, and capacity-building strategy developed and implemented for diverse beneficiaries (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) in the banana value chain on carbon and water footprint measurement and national and international regulatory standards, including training materials and field training and e-learning courses applying a gender, intercultural and intersectional approach

Component 3: Capacity development for compliance with international standards through the implementation of Sustainable Practices

Component Type	Trust Fund
Investment	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
631,122.00	3,200,000.00

Outcome:

Outcome 3.2: Widespread adoption of sustainable alternatives, including Carbon and Water Footprint reduction practices to comply with EU other international regulations and the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program standards and regulations

Output:

Output 3.2.1: Field validation, scaling up of sustainable practices, and cost-benefit analyses of existing practices and sustainable alternatives implemented by family farming, small-, medium- and large-scale producers or other stakeholders (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) in the banana value chain to reduce carbon and water footprints with a gender transformative, intercultural and intersectional approaches.

Output 3.2.2: A portfolio of pilot projects for water and carbon footprint reduction is financed or supported with tailored sustainable finance instruments and incentive mechanisms (monetary and non-monetary) aligned with PECC and regulatory frameworks.

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
84,594.00	1,676,972.00

Outcome:

Outcome 4.1: Project effectively implemented and monitored based on adaptive management and a transformative gender approach.

Output:

Output 4.1.1: Baseline establishment for Project Indicators

Output 4.1.2: Comprehensive and gender transformative Monitoring and Evaluation system established

Output 4.1.3: Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports prepared including an assessment on gender and cultural pertinence of the project

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
Component 1: Strengthening the Institutional Operational Framework for Sustainable Banana Production	257,712.00	5,380,891.00
Component 2: Strengthened National Systems for Comprehensive Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of Environmental Indicators related to NDC/LDN, CWF and Ecuador Zero Carbon Program	362,828.00	6,911,101.00
Component 3: Capacity development for compliance with national and international standards through the adoption of Sustainable production Practices	285,428.00	7,589,429.00
Component 3: Capacity development for compliance with international standards through the implementation of Sustainable Practices	631,122.00	3,200,000.00

M&E	84,594.00	1,676,972.00
Subtotal	1,621,684.00	24,758,393.00
Project Management Cost	154,800.00	3,212,926.00
Total Project Cost (\$)	1,776,484.00	27,971,319.00

Please provide Justification

PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

Describe the current situation: the global environmental problems and/or climate vulnerabilities that the project will address, the key elements of the system, and underlying drivers of environmental change in the project context, such as population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, including conflicts, or technological changes. Describe the objective of the project, and the justification for it. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

Context and Environmental Challenges in Ecuador's Banana Sector

Food systems are a major driver of environmental degradation globally, contributing to deforestation, biodiversity loss, land degradation, freshwater resource depletion, agricultural nutrient pollution, and approximately 35% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions^[1]. In Ecuador, agriculture plays a central socio-economic role, accounting for 42% of national exports, and providing livelihoods for one in three Ecuadorians.^[2] Benefiting from fertile soils and favorable climatic conditions, the country produces a wide range of high-value crops—including cocoa, banana, and broccoli—that support its integration into international markets. At the same time, the agricultural sector generates 18.17% of national GHG emissions and is designated as a priority for action in Ecuador's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement.^[3] This dual importance, both as an economic engine and a major source of environmental pressure, underscores the need for more sustainable production systems, particularly in key export value chains such as bananas.

Ecuador is the world's fifth largest banana producer, and the largest exporter of bananas, with 87% of its production destined for export^[4]. In 2023, banana exports were valued at USD 3.48 billion and remain a cornerstone of the national economy. For example, in 2022 bananas accounted for roughly 17% of agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 39% of agricultural export revenues,^[5] with major destinations including Russia, the United States, Turkey, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Chile, Argentina, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, China, Belgium, and Ukraine. In addition to bananas, plantain (plátano) is a key musaceae crop in Ecuador, playing an important role in domestic food security, rural livelihoods, and smallholder production systems. Unlike bananas, plantain production is predominantly oriented toward domestic consumption and regional markets, with limited participation in long-distance export chains. As a

result, plantain contributes less to export revenues but remains highly relevant from a social, food systems, and resilience perspective, particularly for vulnerable rural populations

Production levels have fluctuated in recent years. After steady growth between 2017 and 2020, both planted area and output declined, but by 2023 production had fully rebounded, reaching the highest harvest volume and the highest yield of the past five years (40.87 tons/ha) despite a smaller cultivated area. Bananas now occupy 12.6% of the country's agricultural land^{[6]6} and contribute 25.4% of agricultural value added, underscoring the sector's central role in Ecuador's economy^{[7]7}.

On the supply side, climate change is intensifying droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events, making banana production increasingly difficult and costly.^{[8]8} The sector is highly sensitive to these climatic shocks, which disrupt the banana plant's growth cycle, reduce yields, and contribute to price volatility.^{[9]9} To remain viable, producers will need to adapt to a growing set of climate-related pressures, as well as heightened risks of pests and diseases.

Banana production is geographically concentrated in the Costa region, where 150,316 hectares are planted, and 94% of the bananas produced in the country are harvested. In 2023, 175,181 hectares of bananas were distributed across 15,461 banana plantations in 19 provinces located in the Costa, Sierra, and Amazonas regions. However, the provinces of Los Ríos, El Oro, and Guayas produce 92.3% of the bananas in the country. Los Ríos is the leading province with 3,049,723 tons of bananas produced, followed by Guayas with 2,227,289 tons and El Oro with 1,484,179 tons.^{[10]10}

The banana industry is also a major employer in Ecuador, employing approximately 115,698 people directly and contributing to 2.5 million direct and indirect jobs^{[11]11} across the production and associated sectors in the country. Of those directly employed, 7% are producers and family members, 38% are casual workers, and 55% are permanent workers.^{[12]12} Smallholders are also significant contributors to the supply chain, and many depend on bananas as their primary income source, making the sustainability of the sector particularly relevant for poverty reduction and climate resilience.

Despite its economic importance, Ecuador's banana production system is associated with significant environmental impacts. The sector is characterized by large-scale, input-intensive monocultures that contribute to landscape simplification, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem fragmentation.^{[13]13} The banana industry in Ecuador, relies heavily on the intensive use of agrochemicals, including fungicides applied through aerial spraying. This heavy chemical dependency, combined with herbicide and insecticide use, has been linked to water contamination, soil degradation, and negative impacts on human health and biodiversity.^{[14]14, [15]15} The heavy reliance on aerial pesticide spraying in Ecuador's banana sector poses documented risks to both human health and ecosystem integrity; a recent study found 97.5% of local residents were exposed to aerial applications, with more than half of residents showing biochemical

indicators of pesticide toxicity (low cholinesterase levels), underscoring the need for safer, climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly production systems.^{[16]16}

A recent life-cycle assessment (LCA) of Ecuadorian export bananas found that fertilizer field emissions and packaging materials—especially cardboard and plastic—are major contributors to environmental impacts. According to a study, the Ecuadorian banana had a carbon footprint of 1.28 tonnes of CO₂ per tonne of banana.^{[17]17} At the farm gate alone, emissions range from 193.94 to 220.37 kg CO₂-eq per ton, making the growing stage the single largest contributor to total emissions. The production and application of synthetic nitrogen-based fertilizers are the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions on the farm. Fuel and lubricant use (for farm machinery like water pumps and sprayers) was the second-highest contributor, representing over 35% of certain impact categories.^{[18]18} Banana production is also one of the largest agricultural sources of plastic waste in the country, due to the extensive use of protective sleeves, twine, straps, and packing materials across the value chain.^{[19]19}

Water use is also a critical concern. Banana cultivation requires significant and continuous water supply throughout its 9–12 month cycle, with annual crop water requirements ranging from 1,200 mm in humid tropics to 2,200 mm in drier regions.^{[20]20} A Water Footprint Assessment of smallholder banana producers in Ecuador found an average water footprint of 576 m³ per ton, with 34% originating from blue water, indicating substantial reliance on irrigation.^{[21]21}

Although Ecuador will likely remain capable of producing bananas in the near term, increasing climate variability will demand proactive risk-management and climate-resilient production strategies. Climate change is expected to gradually reduce the suitability of current banana-growing areas, with significant heat-related impacts emerging in the second half of the century and increasing risks from flooding due to higher rainfall and declining glacial buffers. Adaptation may require shifting production to higher altitudes—at the risk of deforestation—or adopting heat-tolerant varieties, alongside strengthened flood, drainage, and emergency systems to manage more extreme El Niño Southern Oscillation related rainfall.^{[22]22}

At the same time, export markets are imposing more stringent sustainability requirements. The European Union recently approved the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and the draft reporting requirements of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). These regulations will mandate companies operating in Europe to disclose human rights and environmental aspects of their value chains, including Scope 3 emissions^{[23]23, [24]24}. Similar regulatory frameworks are being developed in other significant markets, such as the United Kingdom^{[25]25} and China^{[26]26}. To maintain and expand their market presence, producing countries integrated into global supply chains

must comply with these requirements by establishing Carbon and Water Footprint and traceability systems, and support producers of all scales in meeting new compliance obligations.

To support GHG emission reduction in the country, the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MAE) manages the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program (PECC for its abbreviation in Spanish)^{[27]27}. This program aims to encourage the productive and service sectors to act against climate change by managing their carbon footprint. It facilitates the reporting of their commitments and provides access to environmental and tax incentives. The program promotes the implementation of actions by the productive and service sectors to change towards sustainable production and consumption patterns, and recognizes the quantification, reduction and neutralization (through offsetting) of its greenhouse gas emissions through certifications using internationally validated methodologies and based on principles of environmental integrity, transparency and governance.

Although the project primarily focuses on the export banana value chain, it acknowledges that—from a productive, environmental, and territorial perspective—banana and plantain are part of the country's broader musaceae production systems and share similar agronomic practices, environmental pressures, and sustainability challenges. Accordingly, the project adopts a strategic approach that allows complementary consideration of lessons learned, data, and methodologies applicable to plantain production—particularly with respect to environmental footprint measurement, production practices, and the scalability of results—without expanding the project's operational scope beyond its defined objectives and resources.

Baseline Scenario and Barriers to Behavioral Change and Systemic Transformation

Under the current baseline, production systems remain input-intensive and environmentally degrading. Land-use planning is fragmented, policy instruments are outdated, and institutional coordination between MAE and MAGP is limited. Many producers, especially smallholders, lack the technical and financial capacity to measure their environmental impacts or adopt sustainable practices. Monitoring of carbon and water footprints is inconsistent, largely voluntary, and often based on heterogeneous methodologies that undermine accuracy and comparability. Business-as-usual therefore reinforces GHG emissions, land degradation, deterioration of water resources, and biodiversity loss, while also increasing the risk of losing access to key export markets due to insufficient compliance with evolving sustainability frameworks.

Although Ecuador has made strides with the PECC, the program requires updating, stronger governance arrangements, and broader adoption to effectively guide sustainability transitions in the banana sector and other value chains. Existing incentives and regulatory structures may not be sufficient to drive widespread adoption of sustainable practices. The absence of stringent enforcement mechanisms and financial support hampers the implementation of environmental standards, particularly for smallholders.

The World Banana Forum (WBF)^{[28]28} has developed a standardized, automated Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool used globally by around 400 producers, but it is not yet adapted to Ecuador's national context nor integrated with the PECC framework. Main barriers the project aims to address, are outlined below:

Barrier 1: Limited technical and institutional capacities, together with widespread lack of awareness of national regulations among the different actors along the banana value chain. The enabling environment for sustainable banana production in Ecuador remains constrained by limited institutional capacity and widespread gaps in knowledge of national regulations and sustainability requirements. Government institutions, producer associations, and private sector actors often lack the technical skills and tools necessary to implement integrated environmental management and comply with evolving regulatory frameworks, including PECC and new environmental standards. These weaknesses are compounded by fragmented policy and incentive structures, insufficient enforcement mechanisms, and limited availability of financial products tailored to support sustainability investments.

Barrier 2. Heterogeneity of actors typologies and technical/financial capacities. The banana value chain encompasses actors (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) with diverse technical, financial, and organizational capacities, creating uneven readiness to adopt new standards and technologies. Many producers accustomed to conventional production methods remain hesitant to embrace sustainable practices due to perceived costs, uncertainty about benefits, and existing knowledge gaps. This reluctance has, in some cases, reinforced input-intensive production models and driven the conversion of mixed-use areas into continuous monoculture plantations, exacerbating pressure on water bodies and natural vegetation. Overcoming these behavioral and capacity barriers requires targeted outreach, clearer demonstrations of benefits, and adequate incentives.

Barrier 3. Gaps in technical knowledge and inadequate support systems prevent effective environmental reporting. The integration and operationalization of environmental monitoring and reporting systems in Ecuador remain constrained by fragmented platforms, insufficient interoperability, and limited institutional capacity to manage national MRV requirements. Existing digital tools for carbon and water footprint monitoring are not fully aligned with national regulations or linked to the PECC framework, and do not yet provide functionalities required for effective reporting across the banana value chain. Technical barriers also limit the ability to capture upstream and downstream emissions, incorporate new user categories, and expand the methodology to additional value chains. Furthermore, institutional technical capacities are insufficient to sustain system updates, ensure consistent data quality, or provide long-term national management of environmental indicators, resulting in challenges to comply with national and international reporting commitments. In addition to technical limitations, persistent gender and intercultural gaps affect equitable participation and data quality within MRV systems. These systems do not systematically incorporate sex-, age-, and ethnicity-disaggregated variables, thereby overlooking the roles and contributions of women and family farmers. Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and Montubio peoples face structural barriers such as limited connectivity, digital literacy gaps, language barriers, and insufficient culturally appropriate technical assistance. Limited institutional capacity to apply gender and intercultural approaches in MRV constrains inclusive environmental management and compliance with national and international commitments.

Barrier 4. Fragmented institutional coordination and overlapping mandates hinder policy harmonization and MRV implementation. Institutional responsibilities related to sustainable land management, environmental compliance, climate reporting, and agricultural production in Ecuador are distributed across multiple ministries and agencies, resulting in fragmented coordination, overlapping mandates, and inconsistent interpretation of regulatory frameworks. These governance gaps complicate policy interaction between agriculture and environment authorities, slow down the adoption of sustainability standards, and generate delays in certification and approval processes. At the same time, institutional misalignment undermines the effective implementation of monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems and limits the integration of data platforms such as PECC, CWF, and national MRV mechanisms.

Barrier 5. Inefficient stakeholder engagement mechanisms and resistance to adopting sustainable practices. Sustainable production approaches and MRV requirements are not yet well understood among producers, producer organizations, and value chain actors, resulting in limited awareness of the benefits of improved practices and a reluctance to invest in sustainability measures. Existing communication and extension strategies are insufficient to reach diverse producer profiles—especially smallholders and women—and engagement mechanisms do not consistently promote inclusive participation or co-design of solutions. This reduces willingness to adopt new practices, undermines alignment with national regulations and standards, and slows progress toward certification and low-carbon production objectives. Moreover, stakeholder engagement mechanisms lack gender-transformative and intercultural approaches, limiting inclusive participation in sustainable production and MRV adoption.

Barrier 6. Limited availability of specialized technical personnel to support implementation and reporting processes at the territorial level. The adoption and monitoring of sustainable production practices requires specialized technical assistance, including field support to measure, report, and verify environmental indicators. However, public institutions, producer organizations, and territorial agencies currently face shortages of trained personnel capable of providing advisory services, generating environmental data, or supporting producers in integrating carbon and water footprint methodologies. This lack of specialized

expertise creates implementation gaps and contributes to uneven adoption across producer types and territories, particularly among small, medium-scale, and family farming producers.

Barrier 7. Certification involves higher costs for small-scale and family farming producers, which are not compensated by revenues, and fluctuating market prices disincentivize sustainable production.

Certification processes entail additional operational and compliance costs that are disproportionately high for small-scale and family farming producers and are rarely compensated through improved revenues or premium prices. In addition, fluctuating market prices reduce the financial attractiveness of transitioning toward sustainable production systems, leading to limited uptake of sustainability standards and certification schemes. As a result, many producers—particularly smallholders—lack the financial incentives, risk guarantees, or economic justification to invest in improved practices aligned with national and international sustainability frameworks.

Project justification and alignment with country priorities

The proposed project responds to critical sustainability, competitiveness, and climate-related challenges in Ecuador's banana sector. Current production systems rely heavily on agrochemicals, plastics, synthetic fertilizers, and fossil fuels, generating significant GHG emissions and contributing to land degradation, water pollution, and biodiversity loss. Despite the importance of the sector for national employment and exports, environmental monitoring remains weak. Carbon and water footprint reporting is inconsistent, voluntary, and based on heterogeneous methodologies that limit reliability and comparability. These gaps, combined with fragmented land-use planning and limited institutional coordination, constrain the transition toward sustainable production.

At the same time, international markets, particularly the European Union, are implementing stricter due-diligence, reporting, and traceability requirements (CSDDD and CSRD), heightening the risk that Ecuadorian bananas may lose market access if producers are unable to measure and demonstrate improvements in environmental performance. Strengthening carbon and water footprint MRV systems has therefore become essential for both environmental and economic resilience.

To address these challenges, the project aims to reduce land degradation, GHG emissions, and generate biodiversity benefits through the sustainable transformation of Ecuador's banana industry by strengthening the enabling environment for sustainable banana production, reducing its environmental footprint and ensuring compliance with international sustainability standards. By enhancing the World Banana Forum's CWF tool, adapting it to the national context and integrating it with Ecuador Zero Carbon Program, the project aims to enable accurate measurement, monitoring, and verification of carbon and water footprints. This initiative will empower producers, including smallholders, to identify critical emission areas, adopt improved crop and resource management practices, and implement climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly production strategies that contribute to national NDC and land-degradation neutrality targets.

Additionally, aligning with the European Union's new CSDDD and CSRD will help assure continued market access and export opportunities for Ecuadorian bananas. While initially centered on the banana value chain, the project will also generate lessons and identify opportunities for replication in other productive sectors such as plantain, cocoa and coffee value chains, promoting broader impact within Ecuador's agricultural sector.

And through inclusive stakeholder participation (producers, associations, exporters, government agencies, including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), or other value chain actors will underpin project implementation. Stakeholders will help define priorities, validate MRV improvements, update policy frameworks, and co-design sustainable production strategies, ensuring that interventions are practical, equitable, and widely adopted.

In implementing MRV improvements, the project will strengthen institutional frameworks, improve interagency coordination, and develop financing mechanisms that promote low-carbon, resource-efficient, and biodiversity-supportive practices. Capacity building and technical assistance will equip value chain actors to comply with emerging international regulations and adopt climate-smart, resilient, and nature-positive

approaches. Tools and methodologies will also be transferrable to other value chains, such as plantain, cocoa and coffee, expanding national impact.

se outcomes will directly transform the baseline situation. Updated policy frameworks, with gender and intersectional approaches recognizing that gender inequalities intersect with ethnicity, age, territory, producer typology, and income level. Therefore, the sustainability of interventions are technically sound and socially coherent, strengthened PECC governance, and aligned agricultural strategies will replace the current fragmented landscape. Standardized MRV systems will provide transparency and comparability where inconsistencies now prevail. New financial mechanisms will shift incentives away from environmentally harmful inputs and toward sustainable practices. Structured stakeholder engagement will institutionalize and promote participatory and equitable decision-making and reduce coordination gaps between MAE and MAGP. Together, these changes build a coherent enabling environment that supports long-term sustainability and market resilience.

project will build on existing investment frameworks and lessons learned, including GEF project ID 10184 aimed at reducing and reverting land degradation in the country, and GEF Project ID 10901 which aims to reduce the global use of harmful agrochemicals. The project is also closely aligned with Ecuador's national policies and climate goals, the project leverages past experiences to advance sustainability and resilience in Ecuador's agricultural sector. It also complements non-GEF initiatives from the World Bank, IDB, INIAP, Agrocalidad, and private-sector platforms working on climate-smart agriculture, resource-efficiency technologies, and traceability systems.

initiative is fully aligned with Ecuador's national priorities for climate action, sustainable agriculture, value-chain competitiveness, and market diversification. It supports the implementation of the NDC mitigation targets, the National Climate Change Strategy, the National Restoration Plan (2019–2030), and the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (*"Manos para el Campo 2025–2034"*). Beyond its strong alignment with the UNFCCC, the project is also fully aligned with the objectives of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), particularly Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN). Banana production systems in Ecuador are increasingly affected by declining soil quality, including loss of organic matter, compaction, nutrient imbalances, erosion, and contamination associated with intensive input use and inadequate residue management, which together undermine long-term productivity, ecosystem resilience, and climate adaptation capacity. The project adopts the LDN response hierarchy—avoid, reduce, restore—as an organizing principle for field-level interventions. This approach ensures that investments prioritize the prevention of further soil degradation, reduce ongoing degradation through improved management practices, and restore soil functions in already degraded production areas, thereby contributing directly to global environmental benefits under the UNCCD. In parallel, the project also responds directly to market-driven priorities, including compliance with emerging international environmental standards and sustainability frameworks that are increasingly decisive for market access in Europe and other regions.

project's approach to overcoming these barriers emphasizes collaborative, environmental gender and intersectional mainstreaming throughout the project life cycle, and evidence-based strategies. By fostering strong partnerships among key stakeholders—including women and men producers, smallholders and family farming producers, indigenous, afro descendants and Montubio peoples, private sector actors, traders, research institutions, and governmental bodies—the project integrates diverse knowledge systems and builds institutional capacities across the value chain. Particular attention is given to addressing gender-differentiated roles, constraints, and opportunities to ensure inclusive participation into the development of public policy, financial tools, monetary and non-monetary incentives and equitable access to benefits at all levels. This coordinated effort ensures that both technical and policy solutions are robust and adaptable, effectively addressing current challenges while preparing for future uncertainties. The project focuses not only on immediate technical and regulatory needs but also on promoting gender-informed allocation of public and private investments and strengthening the capacity of stakeholders to continuously adapt and respond to evolving environmental standards and market demands.

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[28] The World Banana Forum is a permanent multi-stakeholder collaboration platform facilitated by FAO that brings together governments, producer organizations, companies including producers, traders and retailers, certification bodies, civil society organizations, and research institutions to promote sustainable practices, responsible trade, fair distribution of value and technical dialogue across the global banana value chain. More information is available at <https://www.fao.org/world-banana-forum/en/>

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section asks for a theory of change as part of a joined-up description of the project as a whole. The project description is expected to cover the key elements of good project design in an integrated way. It is also expected to meet the GEF's policy requirements on gender, stakeholders, private sector, and knowledge management and learning (see section D). This section should be a narrative that reads like a joined-up story and not independent elements that answer the guiding questions contained in the guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

Theory of change and detailed description of project components

The overall project objective is to promote the sustainable transformation of Ecuador's banana industry by reducing its environmental footprint and ensuring compliance with international standards. The theory of change (ToC) clarifies how the project's interventions will address the systemic barriers outlined in Section A and enable long-term transformation of the sector.

Ecuador's banana sector faces interconnected environmental, institutional, social, productive and market challenges, as described above. Without intervention, these trends will intensify, reinforcing unsustainable production systems, accelerating land and water degradation, increasing GHG emissions, and exposing the sector to market-access risks under emerging international regulatory frameworks. The project assumes that meaningful transformation requires simultaneous and inter-sectorial and intersectional public action on governance and policy frameworks, institutional and technical capacities, financial incentives, and producer-level implementation of sustainable practices.

The theory of change therefore focuses on strengthening the enabling environment for sustainability through strengthened and financially viable institutional and inter-institutional frameworks (Component 1), improving national systems for measuring, reporting, and verifying carbon and water footprints to enable accurate environmental monitoring and compliance systems or mechanisms (Component 2), and building the capacities, knowledge systems, and support mechanisms required for producers to adopt climate-smart, low-carbon, water-efficient, and soil conservation production practices that meet domestic and international standards (Component 3). Underpinning this theory of change is a robust monitoring and evaluation system, which will facilitate adaptive management, promote exchanges and continuous learning, ensure that **gender, intercultural and intersectional and inclusive approaches are adopted and socially inclusive outcomes are achieved**, and help results endure under uncertain future conditions such as evolving climate impacts, new market regulations, or fluctuating commodity prices.

Although the project's theory of change is operationally structured around the measurement and reduction of carbon and water footprints, the adopted approach reflects a broader ecological footprint perspective that integrates other relevant environmental pressures associated with banana production. These include the use of agroplastics, waste generation and management, and toxicity risks arising from chemical inputs and their implications for human health and ecosystems. This expanded approach situates carbon and water footprint measurement within a more comprehensive sustainability framework, helping to guide the prioritization of production practices, capacity strengthening, and decision-making toward environmental and social impacts of greatest relevance to the territory and value-chain actors.

together, these interventions are expected to enable a long-term shift toward sustainable and resilient production systems, reduce the environmental footprint of the banana sector, and sustain Ecuador's position in global international markets.

The project is structured around three components that collectively strengthen the institutional and operational foundations for sustainable banana production, enhance national monitoring and reporting systems, and promote adoption of climate-smart, low-emission practices among producers. The Theory of Change (TC) is presented below. [\[CL1\]](#)

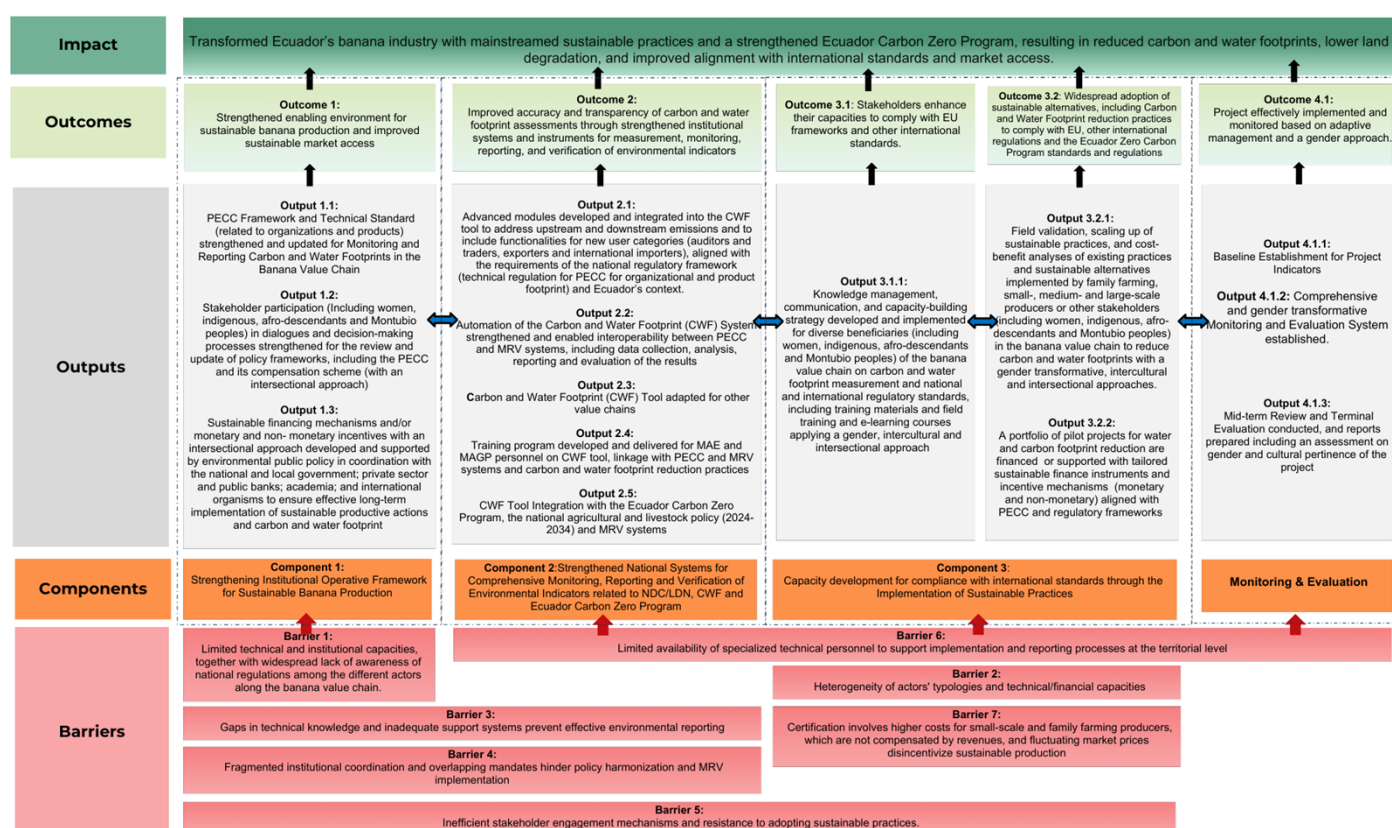


Figure 1 - Project's Theory of Change Diagram (also uploaded into the GEF portal)

Component 1: Strengthening the Institutional Operative Framework for Sustainable Banana Production.

This component focuses on strengthening the institutional, regulatory and financial foundations required to transition towards sustainable banana production by strengthening PECC, enhancing policy coherence,

improving inter institutional coordination mechanisms, and building long-term financial and governance structures to sustain carbon and water footprint monitoring beyond the life of the project. In the context of the project, policy coherence will be addressed through targeted inter-ministerial coordination and multi-stakeholder consultations that facilitate the interaction of the approaches of MAE and MAGP. Moreover, the project will align these technical standards with the National Agriculture and Livestock Policy (2025–2034) and complementary climate and environmental policies, including Ecuador’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Ecuador's National Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2024–2070 (PLANMICC), the National Action Plan to Combat Desertification and Drought (PAND), the forthcoming National LDN Action Plan, and the National Forest Restoration Plan (2019–2030), while also developing a tailored green financing mechanisms to support farmer implementation. Together, these measures will ensure that all policy instruments are mutually reinforcing, contributing to a more sustainable and resilient banana value chain, enhancing the sector’s alignment with NDC, PLANMICC, LDN, and climate strategies, while meeting both domestic and international market requirements.

Outcome 1. Strengthened enabling environment for sustainable banana production and improved sustainable market access.

Output 1.1. PECC Framework and Technical Standard (related to organizations and products) strengthened and updated for Monitoring and Reporting Carbon and Water Footprints in the Banana Value Chain.

This output focuses on strengthening and updating the PECC and Technical Standard to enhance the regulatory and operative instruments within MAE for monitoring and reporting carbon and water footprints. By modernizing institutional monitoring systems and aligning national policies—including the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025–2034)—with international environmental standards, the project ensures that the sector can systematically identify, assess, and mitigate environmental risks, while supporting more efficient decision-making, better planning processes, and continued access to demanding global markets.

The updated PECC Technical Standard will incorporate clear technical guidance on sustainable agricultural practices that directly reduce carbon and water footprints, including soil recarbonization, integrated pest management, optimized fertilizer and nutrient management, efficient irrigation and water stewardship, responsible agrochemical and agroplastic use, improved waste management, and energy-efficient or renewable-energy-based production systems.

A post-project governance model will define long-term institutional mandates, data-sharing protocols, emission factor update procedures, and sustainable operational and financial arrangements to ensure that the updated regulatory framework remains functional and effective beyond the project’s duration.

Activities will include:

1.1.1 Strengthen and update the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program (PECC) Organizational Framework and Technical Standard to enhance its organizational and product-level scope, include the water footprint certification and, aligning it with MAE’s sustainable production and consumption policy instruments mainstreaming gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches through the articulation with CNIG (National Council for gender equality) and SGDPN (National Secretariat for Management and Development of indigenous and nationalities) and the continuous participation of women, indigenous, Afro-descendants and Montubio peoples..

1.1.2 Conduct a comprehensive review of policies, national agricultural strategies and operational frameworks, monitoring systems and instruments related to environmental management and climate risks, with emphasis on water and carbon footprints and NDC/PLANMICC/LDN, within MAE and MAGP to identify areas for improvement mainstreaming gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches. Also, the project

will implement the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes with smallholder associations, including women, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples and other relevant actors across the project life cycle.

1.1.3 Establish inter-ministerial working groups between MAE and MAGP to ensure coordination and alignment of policies, strategies, and technical approaches for monitoring and reducing carbon and water footprints in the banana value chain.

1.1.4 Organize policy development workshops with stakeholders, including including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples, government officials, industry experts and representatives of different typologies of farmers (small, medium size and large holders, family farmers, small holders associations) and private sector, to review and support the validation of regulatory and operative updates aimed at enabling green finance mechanisms and reducing environmental degradation and carbon and water footprints, promoting the participation of small holders, family farming producers, women and youth.

1.1.5 Provide targeted support for MAE and MAGP to refine and update processes, tools, policies, and mechanisms for stakeholder participation (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) and intersectoral coordination, focusing on integrating CWF indicators into PECC.

1.1.6 Facilitate capacity-building workshops and technical training sessions for MAE and MAGP staff emphasizing the application of the updated PECC Technical Standard, effective use of CWF tools, definition of post-project governance model and advanced data analysis to inform decision-making and sustainability planning integrating the participatory, gender and intercultural related issues and PSEAS. As part of institutional strengthening, governance arrangements and operational procedures will be defined to ensure the sustainability of the PECC beyond the project's lifetime, including clear institutional mandates, technical update protocols, and inter-institutional coordination mechanisms.

Output 1.2: Stakeholder participation (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) in dialogues and decision-making processes strengthened for the review and update of policy frameworks including the PECC and its compensation scheme (with an intersectional approach).

This output strengthens structured, inclusive, and evidence-based stakeholder participation in the review and update of policy frameworks relevant to sustainable banana production, including the PECC and its compensation scheme. The project will establish a coordinated consultation architecture that brings together the full spectrum of actors in the banana value chain, including producer associations such as AEBE, ACORBANEC, AGROBAN, ASOEXPLA, ASOCART and the Ecuadorian Cluster of Banana Producers; cooperatives, smallholders and family farming producers (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples); large-scale producers; input suppliers; service providers; private port terminal operators (ASOTEP); maritime logistics actors (CAMAIE); national aviation companies (ADENA); the agricultural innovation and technology industry (Innovagro); and the Agricultural Chamber of Zone II. Public-sector institutions including MAE, MAGP, Agrocalidad, INIAP, and public and private banks, will also play central roles.

Regular technical roundtables and participatory analyses will enable stakeholders with the participation of women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples to jointly review regulatory and normative instruments that directly affect the sustainability of the banana value chain, particularly those under the mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAGP) and the MAE. These include the Law to Promote and Regulate the Production and Commercialization of Bananas, Plantains (Barraganete), and Other Related Musaceae. and other relevant regulations under Agrocalidad and INIAP competences, environmental regulations under the Organic Environmental Code and its implementing rules and the Organic Law on Water Resources, Uses and Exploitation (MAE) and National irrigation Plan 2019-2027 (MAGP). This process will be aligned with, and maintain coherence with, broader national policy such as National Climate Change Strategy, National Climate Change Mitigation Plan, the PECC framework, and the 2025–2034 Agricultural Policy. The academic sector will contribute analysis and updates on trends in policies and actions related to ecological

footprints and climate change. This process will ensure that diverse perspectives across genders, ages, ethnic self-identification categories, and farmer typologies are meaningfully incorporated into national strategies and regulatory updates.

Beyond strengthening dialogue, this output will enhance collective decision-making by supporting stakeholders in defining investment priorities, clarifying institutional roles, and establishing enabling conditions for green finance mechanisms that reduce carbon and water footprints and address land degradation **with a gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches**. Documenting agreements and outcomes will promote transparency, accountability, and effective coordination between MAE and MAGP. The engagement of **value chain actors such as small holders including family farmers, women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples**, private-sector actors including exporters, logistics operators, input suppliers, industry associations, and financial institutions will ensure that updated policies are operationally realistic, aligned with market requirements, and responsive to the needs and constraints of different producer typologies.

Activities will include:

1.2.1 Organize regular technical roundtables and consultations with stakeholders including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples, producer associations, smallholders, family farming producers, women and youth in the banana value chain, traders, large producers, Ecuadorian Cluster of Banana Producers, public and private banks, academy sector and government agencies (MAE, INIAP Agrocalidad and MAGP).

1.2.2 Conduct participatory analysis (with governmental, private sector and civil society, including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) to optimize PECC, the National Climate Change Strategy, and the 2025–2034 Agricultural and Livestock Policy, identifying and addressing gaps in policy and regulatory frameworks to enhance alignment of socio-environmental objectives, sustainability, and coherence in climate action and sustainable agriculture.

1.2.3 Systematically document outcomes, agreements and dissenting perspectives from each roundtable through a gender-transformative, intercultural and intersectional approach, ensuring clarity, accountability, equitable representation and institutional memory.

1.2.4 Develop inclusive, evidence-based policy recommendations and best practices that address structural gender inequalities, intercultural considerations and intersectional barriers identified through stakeholder consultations.

1.2.5 Establish and operationalize transparent, gender and culturally and intersectional appropriate accountability mechanisms to monitor project progress, assess the equitable distribution of benefits, and evaluate the contributions and responsibilities of different actors toward achieving project and national sustainability goals.

Output 1.3: Sustainable financing mechanisms and/or monetary and non-monetary incentives with an intersectional approach developed and supported by environmental public policy in coordination with the national and local government; private sector; private and public banks; academia; and international organisms to ensure effective long-term implementation of sustainable productive actions and carbon and water footprint reporting and measurement

This output aims to develop sustainable financing mechanisms and incentives —both monetary and non-monetary— in close coordination with the government, private sector, public and private banks, academia, NGOs, **Internal Revenue Service of Ecuador (SRI)**, and international financial organizations, to support long-term implementation of strategic productive actions and the measurement and reduction of carbon and water footprints. Building on the diverse typologies of producers and value chain actors in Ecuador’s banana value chain, the project will identify and design financial services that encourage the adoption of climate-smart practices by shifting financial support toward sustainable production. To guide this process, a comprehensive

financial and legal feasibility study will assess opportunities to enable green finance mechanisms, including the potential use of international incentives and the redirection or creation of new financial products tailored to sustainability objectives.

In collaboration with national authorities and financial institutions, the project will support the development of targeted incentives and financial tools such as funds, tax credits, offsets, climate-related insurance schemes, subsidies, low-interest loans, and mechanisms compatible with national compensation scheme make sustainable practices financially attractive and accessible for producers and exporters. Partnerships with public and private banks and other financial entities will facilitate access to green financing for smallholders, family farming producers, associations, and larger producers, ensuring that all typologies can invest in improved production systems and comply with emerging environmental and market requirements. Through this coordinated financing architecture, the output will expand producers' ability to implement sustainable practices, enhance resilience, and ensure continued progress in measuring and reducing carbon and water footprints across the banana sector.

Activities will include:

1.3.1 Conduct a financial and legal feasibility study to assess the potential for enabling green finance mechanisms from international compensation schemes and redirecting existing financial services and products mainstreaming gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches.

1.3.2 Support the development of a suite of financial and non-financial incentives (such as tax credits, dedicated fund, climate related insurances, subsidies, or low-interest loans) and explore the eligibility for compensation under Carbon Equivalent Units in collaboration with government bodies, private banks and other financial organisms to promote sustainable practices among banana producers and to facilitate other kind of non financial incentives including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peopless and exporters mainstreaming gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches.

1.3.3 Establish partnerships with financial institutions to facilitate access to green financing for smallholders, family farming producers women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples and youth in the banana value chain, small holders' associations, and larger producers, according to their diverse capacities and needs.

1.3.4 Promote autonomous certification on PECC across different actors of the banana value chain, including small-, medium- and large-scale producers, by strengthening correct use and technical capacity in the CWF tool.

Component 2: Strengthened National Systems for Comprehensive Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of Environmental Indicators related to NDC/LDN, CWF and Ecuador Zero Carbon Program.

This component focuses on strengthening and complementing national MRV systems as well as updating and adapting the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool for the Ecuadorian context. It integrates the tool with key national platforms—including the Ecuador Zero Carbon Programme and agroclimate databases—to ensure seamless, transparent data exchange and robust monitoring. The enhanced tool will also be expanded to support other value chains, such as plantain, coffee and cocoa, thereby promoting wider environmental sustainability. Furthermore, targeted capacity-building initiatives will empower stakeholders with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively manage and utilize the tool in alignment with Ecuador's regulatory and environmental priorities.

Outcome 2: Improved accuracy and transparency of carbon and water footprint assessments through strengthened institutional systems and instruments for measurement, monitoring, reporting, and verification of environmental indicators

Output 2.1: Advanced modules developed and integrated into the CWF tool to address upstream and downstream emissions and to include functionalities for new user categories (auditors and traders, exporters and international importers), aligned with the requirements of the national regulatory framework (technical regulation for PECC for organizational and product footprint) and Ecuador's context.

This output focuses on upgrading the existing CWF system by integrating new modules developed as a result of recent consultation processes with Ecuadorian producers and strengthening data collection, processing, and reporting capabilities. The goal is to provide a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the environmental impacts across the banana production lifecycle, thereby improving transparency and supporting regulatory compliance. The integration of new features will enable the CWF system to capture detailed data on carbon and water footprints associated with various stages of banana production, including input manufacturing, transport emissions, ripening chambers, and distribution networks also integrate national climate and meteorological datasets to enhance the accuracy of hydric balance, soil degradation, changes in land use and other data that could affect carbon stock. Where applicable, national emission factors and national datasets will be incorporated to ensure alignment with Ecuador's regulatory framework and improve calculation accuracy. By incorporating these additional data points, the system will offer a more holistic view of environmental impacts, facilitating evidence-based decision-making and targeted mitigation measures.

In addition, the CWF system will be enhanced with auditor-specific modules to facilitate certification of emissions and removals data, as well as trader-specific modules that allow companies sourcing bananas from multiple producers to consolidate and report aggregated footprint profiles. Integration with national climate datasets will help refine hydric balance calculations and strengthen water footprint assessments, ensuring that water resource management reflects real-time, location-specific climate conditions. Furthermore, reporting capabilities will be expanded to ensure transparency and accountability in environmental impact assessments in line with EU frameworks and other international standards. These improvements will position the CWF system as a more robust, interoperable, and policy-aligned tool to support Ecuador's banana sector in monitoring environmental performance and meeting sustainability requirements.

Activities will include:

2.1.1 Develop and incorporate auditor, trader, exporter, international importer and other specific and necessary modules identified during project implementation within the CWF system to facilitate accurate certification of emissions and removals data.

2.1.2 Integrate national climate and meteorological datasets to enhance the accuracy of hydric balance calculations and water footprint assessments within the CWF system. This integration will provide real-time, location-specific climate data, supporting precise water resource management and interoperability with PECC and MRV or other national systems integrating data on emissions and removal data on carbon and water footprints from 2.2.1.

2.1.3 Enhance reporting capabilities to ensure transparency and accountability in environmental impact assessments in line with EU frameworks, and other national and international frameworks, especially PECC.

Output 2.2: Automation of the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) System strengthened and enabled interoperability between PECC and MRV systems, including data collection, analysis, reporting and evaluation of the results.

This output emphasizes the automation of data workflows within the CWF system to enhance efficiency, accuracy, and reliability in measuring and reporting carbon and water footprints. The system will incorporate comprehensive national databases—including emission factor datasets, climate datasets, land-use change maps, soil carbon stock information, and agricultural product registries such as those from MAGP, AGROCALIDAD to improve data quality and ensure alignment with national inventory requirements. Where available, national emission factors and climate datasets will be fully integrated, to ensure regular updates, strengthening the precision and consistency of footprint calculations.

The Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems strengthened under the project will be articulated with the sectoral MRV system of the MAGP, enabling carbon and water footprint information to contribute not only to environmental reporting, but also to productive decision-making, territorial planning, and the generation of early-warning alerts for the agricultural sector.

In addition, the CWF tool will explore and establish interoperability with national meteorological and agroclimatic information systems. Data-sharing agreements with INAMHI will allow the integration of precipitation, evapotranspiration, temperature, and drought indices, supporting more accurate hydrological modeling and water footprint assessments. Automated data pipelines will be designed and implemented to streamline the collection, analysis, and reporting of emissions factors in accordance with MRV protocols and national regulatory frameworks. These improvements will reduce manual data entry, minimize errors, and ensure timely, transparent reporting of environmental impacts across the banana value chain, while enabling seamless interoperability between PECC, national MRV systems, and the enhanced CWF platform.

Activities will include:

2.2.1 Incorporate comprehensive emission factor databases, climate datasets, land use changes maps, carbon soil stock, and agricultural product registries (e.g., MAGP; Agrocalidad, INIAP) into the CWF system

2.2.2 Develop institutional capacities and operational autonomy of MAE and MAGP public servants to regularly update, manage and strategically use databases from CWF, PECC, and MRV systems for water and carbon footprint measurement.

2.2.3 Establish data-sharing agreements between MAGP, MAE, and the National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (*Instituto Nacional de Meteorología e Hidrología* - INAMHI) and integrate meteorological and agroclimatic datasets (precipitation, evapotranspiration, temperature, drought indices) into the CWF system.

2.2.4 Design and implement automated data pipelines aligned with national inventory requirements and MRV protocols to streamline the collection of emissions factors for upstream and downstream operations.

Output 2.3: Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) Tool adapted for other value chains.

This output aims to expand the scope of the existing Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool by adapting it for its use in other value chains such as plantain, coffee and cocoa. By extending the tool's applicability beyond the banana industry, the project seeks to promote broader sustainability and environmental management across multiple key agricultural value chains in Ecuador. The adaptation process will involve customizing the CWF tool to address the specific production processes, environmental impacts, and regulatory requirements of the plantain, coffee and cocoa sectors. This will include incorporating modules relevant to these crops, as well as reporting functionalities necessary to comply with EU Regulations on those products. To ensure the adapted tool meets the needs of stakeholders in the plantain, coffee and cocoa industries, the project will engage with producers, industry experts, and relevant governmental bodies throughout the development process.

Activities will include:

2.3.1 Assess current capacities and sustainable low carbon and water footprint practices of plantain, coffee and cocoa value chain actors **including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples** to understand the needs and status and benefits of the CWF tool used for other value chains.

2.3.2 Customize the existing CWF tool to address the specific production processes, environmental impacts, and regulatory requirements of other value chains such as the plantain, coffee and cocoa sectors.

2.3.3 Engage with other value chain sectors (plantain, coffee and cocoa) producers, **including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples**, industry experts, and relevant governmental bodies to ensure the tool meets their needs.

2.3.4 Conduct training and capacity-building sessions for **plantain, coffee and cocoa** or other value chain stakeholders **including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples** on the use of the adapted CWF tool.

2.3.5 Conduct pilot tests, refine and validate the methodology for each value chain based on feedback from stakeholders.

Output 2.4: Training program developed and delivered for MAE and MAGP personnel on CWF tool, linkage with PECC and MRV systems and carbon and water footprint reduction practices.

This output focuses on building the technical capacity of MAE and MAGP to effectively manage the CWF tool at a national level ensuring its proper operation, continuous updating, and integration with PECC and MRV systems. Through targeted training sessions, staff will strengthen their skills in using the tool, updating databases and emission factors, analyzing results and ensuring alignment with national systems and reporting requirements. The training will also reinforce institutional competencies in maintaining interoperability between the CWF tool, PECC, and MRV frameworks, enabling coherent and reliable environmental monitoring across the banana sector. Based on the results generated by the enhanced CWF system, the project will support the identification and tailoring of best practices for reducing carbon and water footprints at different production scales and farmer typologies. These practices will be data-driven and context-specific, covering areas such as soil decarbonization, optimized use or substitution of agroplastics and agrochemicals, improved nutrient management, water stewardship actions, and reductions in fossil fuel use. By equipping MAE and MAGP with the technical knowledge to interpret footprint results and translate them into targeted mitigation measures, this output ensures that national institutions can guide producers toward more sustainable, climate-smart, and resource-efficient production systems.

Activities will include:

2.4.1 Implement targeted training sessions for MAE and MAGP staff on using and managing the CWF tool, with emphasis on national-level application, integration with national systems and analysis of results including gender, **intercultural and inclusion** awareness related issues and PSEAS.

2.4.2 Identify and tailor **the cost – effective** best practices for reducing carbon and water footprints based on the specific results of the CWF and PECC and MRV analysis, ensuring that reduction strategies are data-driven and context-specific.

Output 2.5: CWF Tool Integration with the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program, National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025-2034) and MRV systems.

This output aims to ensure that the enhanced CWF system and associated sustainability practices are fully aligned with Ecuador's regulatory instruments, including the PECC, Ecuador's National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025–2034), and national MRV frameworks. Strengthening this alignment is crucial for

maintaining regulatory compliance, supporting national climate goals, and enhancing the global market competitiveness of Ecuadorian agricultural products.

The project will align the CWF system with the objectives and technical requirements of the PECC and MRV systems, integrating downscaled climate data such as temperature, precipitation, and evapotranspiration from national and FAO sources (CAVA, CRTB, WaPOR) to enable climate-risk-adjusted water footprint modeling. This will support more accurate monitoring, strengthen adaptive planning, and inform evidence-based decision-making across the banana sector. The alignment with the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025–2034) will further ensure that CWF methodologies and assessments reflect national sustainability priorities and long-term sectoral strategies. The alignment with the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025–2034) will further ensure that CWF methodologies and assessments reflect national sustainability priorities and long-term sectoral strategies.

To ensure a transparent and inclusive integration process, the project will facilitate workshops and meetings with key stakeholders, including public institutions, producers, exporters, academia, importers **in the banana, cacao, coffee and plantain value chains** and technical bodies involved in MRV and PECC implementation. These dialogues will inform the development of guidelines and protocols for the use of the CWF system in alignment with the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program and national regulatory requirements. In parallel, the project will explore and establish API connections between the CWF system and Ecuador's MRV system, climate datasets, land-use change datasets, soil organic carbon datasets, and risk assessment information related to water scarcity. These connections will enable data exchange and potential interoperability, ensuring that the CWF tool becomes an integrated and reliable component of national sustainability and climate monitoring architecture.

Activities will include:

2.5.1 Align the CWF system with the objectives and requirements of the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program and sectoral and national MRV frameworks, integrating downscaled climate projections (temperature, rainfall, drought probability) from national and FAO sources (CAVA, CRTB, WAPOR) into MRV and PECC systems to enable climate-risk-adjusted water footprint modeling, strengthen adaptive planning, and inform evidence-based decision-making.

2.5.2 Align the CWF system with the objectives and requirements of the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025-2034)

2.5.3 Facilitate workshops and coordination meetings with stakeholders **including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples**, to ensure the operational feasibility of system integration, identify existing data platforms (including public and private meteorological networks), and validate databases, geospatial datasets, and information systems prior to their integration into the tool, ensuring data consistency and interoperability.

2.5.4 Develop guidelines and protocols for using the CWF system in alignment with the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program.

2.5.5 Explore and establish API connections between the CWF system, Ecuador's MRV system, climate datasets, land-use changes datasets, soil organic carbon datasets and risk assessment (rainfall variability, groundwater recharge trends, drought risk) and the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program to ensure seamless data exchange and potential interoperability.

Component 3: Capacity development for Compliance with International Standards through the Implementation of Sustainable Practices

Outcome 3.1. Stakeholders enhance their capacities to comply with EU frameworks and other national and international standards.

Output 3.1.1: Knowledge management, communication, and capacity-building strategy developed and implemented for diverse beneficiaries (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) of the banana value chain on carbon and water footprint measurement, sustainable soil management and national and international regulatory standards, including training materials, field training and e-learning courses applying a gender, intercultural and intersectional approach.

This output focuses on the development and delivery of comprehensive, practice-oriented capacity-building instruments supporting the transition toward climate-smart, land-degradation-neutral, and biodiversity-positive banana production systems integrating learning exchange with the plantain, cocoa and coffee value chain engaged in the adaptation, adoption of the CWF tool and water and carbon low footprint practices. Training materials and e-learning courses will be developed in close collaboration with key stakeholders such as academia, industry experts, or producers. Content will address carbon and water footprint assessment, the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program, sustainable soil and land management aligned with Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), climate change impacts in banana production, sustainable banana production systems in production landscapes, biodiversity conservation within production landscapes, and compliance with national and EU regulations. The aim is to equip stakeholders with practical tools that address their specific needs. These materials will be designed to be user-friendly and accessible to all stakeholders, including family farming producers, smallholders, medium-scale growers, large producers and workers women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples and youth within the banana value chain. Furthermore, it will support strategic communication with consumers and international markets and other stakeholders about sustainability efforts, enhancing transparency and market appeal. Comprehensive materials for trainers will be developed, providing them with the necessary tools and resources to effectively train others and ensure the continuity of knowledge transfer. A knowledge management platform will be developed and maintained to collect, systematize, and disseminate guidance materials, manuals, case studies, best practices, and training resources, ensuring continuity of learning and institutionalization beyond the project lifetime.

Activities will include:

3.1.1.1 Identify and promote best practices for reducing carbon and water footprints within the banana value chain, including practices from plantain, cocoa and coffee value chains. This includes: (i) sustainable soil management, together with the definition and measurement of indicators aligned with sustainable soil management protocols; (ii) integrated pest management approaches, including alternatives such as biological control and bio-inputs; (iii) assessment and validation of alternatives to conventional plastic use across the value chain; (iv) Improved water efficiency and water management throughout production and post-harvest stages ; (v) integrates land-use planning, including the establishment of biological corridors and soil and productive landscape restoration; and (vi) cost-effective-footprint calculation of technological packages.

3.1.1.2 Conduct capacity-building sessions through in-person cultural pertinent and gender transformative farmer field schools, for producers, including small holders, family farmers, women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples, soil management modules (e.g. soil doctors), and virtual workshops led by expert trainers. These activities will focus on strengthening practical knowledge and skills related to sustainable production practices, intercultural learning exchange and ancestral wisdom exchanges with other value chains' actors (plantain, cocoa and coffee) compliance with national, EU and international regulations; reduction of carbon and water footprints, and the application of MRV methodologies for measuring and mitigating environmental impacts using cost-effective solutions as well as gender (gender awareness, new masculinities, among other issues), PSEAS, and the project redress

grievance mechanism. The project will guarantee the participation of women through care support and didactic materials for kids accompanying women during field training sessions.

3.1.1.3 The project will develop a national curriculum, edu communication strategy and training materials addressing climate change, low-carbon and water practices, PECC and green finance instruments for diverse stakeholders including smallholders, women, indigenous, afro-descendant and Montubio peoples and youth in various formats (manuals, e-learning, interactive modules, case studies, descriptive data sheets) tailored to different farmers, including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples, and user typologies (technicians, producers, auditors).

3.1.1.4 Consolidate a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system, building on FAO's *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in Farmer Field School Programmes: A Framework and Toolkit*,^{[1]29} to systematically track learning outcomes, practice adoption, and performance over time.

3.1.1.5 Develop comprehensive guidance (including training) and support materials for trainers to ensure effective knowledge transfer, consistent application of methodologies, continuous refinement of tools, and robust measurement of adoption and impact and the application of the gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches across training actions.

3.1.1.6 Formulate a strategy for national stakeholder engagement aimed at scaling sustainable practices, based on project results implementing alternative environmental, gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches, and communicating mitigation achievements.

3.1.1.7 Develop a communication plan through participatory methodologies including FPIC, to inform banana value chain stakeholders including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples at the national level of project achievements and abroad for markets actors in importing countries.

3.1.1.8 Develop (or strengthen) an online knowledge management platform to collect, manage, and share information on climate-smart sustainable banana production practices and systems and ensure regular updates so the platform remains accurate and up to date integrated with the MRV national system.

3.1.1.9 Conduct a communication campaign to share knowledge on the climate-soil-banana value chain nexus and promote the use of the platform and climate-smart practices among stakeholders with cultural pertinence and gender approach.

3.1.1.10 Conduct workshops, training sessions and recognition events to raise awareness, share lessons learned, and formally recognize stakeholders who have transitioned toward reduced-footprint, soil-restorative production practices, while the importance of accurate measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) of carbon and water footprints and the adoption of cost-effective alternatives.

Outcome 3.2. Widespread adoption of sustainable alternatives, including Carbon and Water Footprint reduction practices to comply with EU, other international regulations and the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program standards and regulations

Output 3.2.1: Field validation, scaling up of sustainable practices, and cost-benefit analyses of existing practices and sustainable alternatives implemented by family farming, small-, medium- and large-scale producers or other stakeholders (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) and scaling up of sustainable practices in the banana value chain to reduce carbon and water footprints with a gender transformative, intercultural and intersectional.

This output involves organizing and conducting demonstration plots in farmer fields of smallholder producers, medium-scale growers, and large producers (including women, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples), will be implemented across different producer typologies, to validate and scale sustainable practices within Ecuador's banana sector to evaluate the cost-benefit of alternatives proposed, including carbon and water footprint accounting. These demonstration plots will also serve to validate and promote field-level interventions that improve soil quality and contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), including practices aligned with the avoid-reduce-restore hierarchy. Participatory methodologies will be applied to ensure the meaningful engagement of Montubio and Indigenous producers, facilitating intercultural

dialogue and the integration of traditional and local knowledge systems with scientific and technical approaches to enhance climate resilience and resource-use efficiency. In addition, it will provide participants with hands-on knowledge and skills in CWF accounting and reporting, compliance with EU and other regulations, climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, biodiversity conservation and best practices for reducing carbon and water footprints. Knowledge exchange platforms will be established to document, systematize, and disseminate traditional practices related to soil conservation, agroforestry, water and irrigation management, and biodiversity stewardship that contribute to low-emission and water-efficient banana production systems aligned with the FPIC process. Emphasis will be placed on the intersection between climate change, national sectorial public policy instruments such as NDC/PLANMICC/LDN^{[CL2] [MO3]}, banana production, green financing and responsible trade, detailing methods to accurately measure carbon and water footprints, and implementing targeted, cost-effective field interventions to reduce emissions and environmental pressures. These will also include information related to the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program. The training sessions will be delivered by FAO through in-person workshops and Farmer Field Schools (FFS), complemented by virtual training materials that will be hosted on MAE servers. This dual approach ensures accessibility and continuous learning opportunities for all stakeholders. Special consideration will be given to gender inclusion, ensuring that women's groups and organizations are actively engaged in the project. Intercultural facilitation methods and culturally appropriate communication strategies will be applied to ensure inclusive participation of Montubio and Indigenous communities, recognizing their role as custodians of ancestral agricultural knowledge and sustainable land and water management practices. The outcomes and lessons learned under this output will directly support the activities across the remaining components, ensuring a coherent, transversal, and integrated approach. This output will combine targeted field-level interventions with the mobilization of co-financing to support the implementation, scaling and long-term sustainability of validated adaptation, mitigation and compliance measures, recognizing that project resources are limited and that widespread adoption of low-carbon and water-efficient practices requires active private-sector engagement. Field interventions will be implemented through demonstration plots and FFS established on representative farms of family farming producers and small-, medium-, and large-scale producers, in coordination with producer associations, exporters, and other value-chain actors. Project resources will primarily finance technical assistance, training, carbon and water footprint measurements, field trials, and cost-benefit analyses and will partially cover critical inputs for smallholder producers where necessary to reduce adoption barriers, while implementation by medium- and large-scale producers will be largely supported through co-financing, including private investment, supply-chain contributions, and in-kind support. Continuous technical support will be provided to stakeholders to enable accurate measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV) of their carbon and water footprints. Evidence generated through field validation will be captured through the CWF and MRV systems to inform scaling strategies, private investment decisions, and the development of sustainable finance mechanisms supporting the transition toward sustainable and climate-smart production practices and contributing to the achievement of national NDC/LDN goals.

Activities will include:

3.2.1.1 Conduct an assessment of the knowledge and capacities of stakeholders across the banana value chain to inform the design of a targeted strengthening program adapted to participants' roles, conditions and specific needs. Including the identification and documentation of traditional and Indigenous knowledge relevant to low-carbon and water-efficient practices according the FPIC process and agreements.

3.2.1.2 Field identification and validation of climate-smart and soil-restorative practices and alternatives for reducing carbon and water footprints across the banana value chain, supported by greenhouse gas emissions measurements and field trials conducted through farm field schools and demonstration plots with the participation of small holders, family farmers, women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples.

3.2.1.3 Capacity building field actions at farm level Plan with intercultural, gender and intersectional approach to provide guidance and integration of the inclusive approaches in all field actions and activities performed by trainers, field team and promoters.

3.2.1.4 Conduct thorough cost-benefit analyses of various sustainable innovations considering effective and economically viable systems for family farming producers and small-, medium-, and large-scale producers

and banana-exporting companies considering different production systems and alternatives identified through field validation and technical assessments and taking into account the participation and roles of women, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples.

3.2.1.5 Conduct training, provide technical assistance and one-to-one support to family farming producers, smallholders, medium-scale growers, and large producers (including women, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples) for implementing the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) system and adopting climate-smart and soil-restorative practices considering the participation of women and youth.

3.2.1.6 Collaborate with stakeholders (including women, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples and other actors in the banana value chain) to develop tailored action plans for achieving compliance with EU regulations, international sustainability standards, and the requirements of the PECC (based on 3.1.1.4).

Output 3.2.2: A portfolio of pilot projects for water and carbon footprint reduction is financed or supported with tailored sustainable finance instruments and incentive mechanisms (monetary and non-monetary) aligned with PECC and regulatory frameworks.

By fostering investment in advanced practices and technologies, the project seeks to reduce environmental footprints, enhance productivity, and ensure compliance with international market standards. This approach will help secure international market access and bolster the competitiveness of Ecuador's banana industry.

This output addresses a critical financing gap and the access to monetary and non-monetary incentives for on-the-ground implementation of sustainable practices, which disproportionately affects women, Indigenous peoples, smallholders and other priority attention groups ensuring that capacity development is translated into timely and effective field investments. Focusing on enabling access to climate-smart financing and monetary and non-monetary instruments that support the adoption of low-emission and resource-efficient production systems. By collaborating with local and national financial institutions, the project will promote tailored financial solutions for producers of all typologies and help reduce barriers associated with sustainability certification and compliance with national regulations, emerging international regulations, including EU market requirements. Recognizing the need for timely access to inputs and investments, the project will combine catalytic project support with the development and operationalization of financial mechanisms during the project lifetime. Furthermore, by addressing the financing gap through inclusive design of green finance instruments, simplified eligibility criteria, tailored outreach and participatory validation, this output seeks to ensure equitable access to sustainability investments across different producer typologies with a gender and intersectional approach.

These investments will strengthen climate resilience, reduce environmental footprints, and support the competitiveness of the banana sector in international markets, while prioritizing improved access to finance for smallholders and women, youth, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio producers.

Activities will include:

3.2.2.1 Identify and promote best financing monetary and non-monetary options for reducing carbon and water footprints within the banana value chain or other participant value chains promoting access to women, youth, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples in the value chain including access to PECC. (based on 3.2.1.1)

3.2.2.2 Collaborate with financial institutions to update existing products and financial services and design new ones, including sustainability eligibility criteria, requirements and affirmative actions to improve access for women, youth, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples.

3.2.2.3. Establish partnerships with financial and non-financial institutions to create tailored products supporting sustainable practices and participation in the PECC using affirmative actions promote women's, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples' access to financial tools and monetary and non-monetary incentives.

3.2.2.4 Promote and validate the feasibility of new financial products and non-monetary incentives for different value chain stakeholders (plantain, cocoa, coffee, among others) to support sustainable practices and participation in the PECC using affirmative actions to guarantee inclusion.

3.2.2.5 Provide ongoing support and monitoring to ensure the successful adoption of financial and non-financial options for application of CWF tool and methodologies and better agricultural practices.

3.2.2.6 Develop and distribute user-friendly guides and technical manuals on new CWF financing and non-monetary options tailored to the banana with a gender, intercultural and intersectional approach and adaptable to plantain, coffee and cocoa value chains.

3.2.2.7 Provide guidance and support to family farming producers, small-, medium- and large-scale producers, including women, youth, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples and other relevant stakeholders in the banana value chain on access to financing and incentives aligned with CWF system.

3.2.2.8 Facilitate engagement with international buyers to inform on project results supporting premium pricing for bananas that meet CSDDD and CSRD compliance standards and/or certified under the PECC.

Component 4: Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

Outcome 4.1: Project effectively implemented and monitored based on adaptive management and a gender approach.

Output 4.1.1: Baseline Establishment for Project Indicators.

This output is focused on establishing comprehensive national sustainability standards. The baseline will capture critical environmental, economic, and social and gender indicators, providing benchmarks for tracking progress in the banana sector and enabling adaptive management throughout implementation.

Activities will include:

4.1.1.1. Identify and collect data for baseline indicators related to carbon and water footprints across different producer scales (family farming, small, medium, and large), including data from women, youth, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples', establishing a clear starting point for measuring reductions over time. Baseline data will also be defined for other indicators aligned with the project's result chain, incorporating a gender-transformative approach and differentiation across producer and other stakeholders of banana value chain and other value chains such as coffee, cocoa and plantain.

4.1.1.2 Gather baseline data to assess current levels of sustainable practices, gender inclusion, and smallholder participation in sustainable production within the banana value chain, including means of verification.

4.1.1.3 Establish baseline values for capacity-strengthening indicators for producers and other stakeholders including, women, youth, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples across the banana value chain, including those related to institutional and regulatory frameworks and relevant international standards with particular focus on existing capacities within MAE, MAGP INIAP and Agrocalidad. Baselines will be defined with clear means of verification.

Output 4.1.2: Comprehensive and gender transformative Monitoring and Evaluation System established.

This output focuses on the design and implementation of a robust M&E system. The system will be gender-sensitive, using data disaggregated by sex, age, and ethnicity to ensure inclusive tracking of project impacts. It will develop key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure progress, conduct mid-term and final project reviews to assess progress and identify challenges including gender approaches and cultural pertinence, and collect and analyze feedback from stakeholders to continuously improve project implementation. Regular communication will be established between the Project Coordinating Unit, FAO and major banana importing markets to provide updates on project milestones, support private sector efforts to comply with corporate sustainability requirements, and seek feedback to support continuous improvement.

Activities will include:

4.1.2.1 Design and implement a comprehensive M&E system that includes gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches and in line with FAO and GEF requirements.

4.1.2.2 Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) that are disaggregated by sex, age, and ethnic self-identification to ensure inclusive tracking of project impacts.

4.1.2.3 Implement mid-term and final project reviews to assess progress, identify challenges, and make necessary adjustments as well as assess the adoption of gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches.

4.1.2.4 Establish regular communication with Import markets or authorities and other relevant stakeholders such as smallholders organizations, women, youth, indigenous, afro descendant and Montubio peoples, to provide updates on project milestones and visibility on private sector's efforts to comply with sustainability requirements.

Output 4.1.3: Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports prepared including an assessment on gender and cultural pertinence of the project.

This output focuses on the independent assessment of project performance, results, and sustainability through the implementation of a Mid-term Review (MTR) and a Terminal Evaluation (TE). These evaluations will assess progress toward project objectives, effectiveness of implementation arrangements, efficiency in the use of resources, and the likelihood of sustainability and impact. A specific emphasis will be placed on evaluating the project's gender responsiveness and cultural pertinence, including how activities and results address the needs, roles, and perspectives of women, men, and different cultural and ethnic groups. The findings will generate evidence-based recommendations to inform adaptive management, accountability, and learning, in line with FAO and GEF evaluation requirements.

Activities will include:

4.1.3.1 Conduct the Mid-term Review to assess implementation progress, performance against results chain and indicators, risks and assumptions, and emerging results, including preliminary assessment of gender and cultural dimensions.

4.1.3.2 Conduct the Terminal Evaluation to assess overall project effectiveness, outcomes, sustainability, and impact, with a dedicated analysis of gender equality, social inclusion, and cultural pertinence.

4.1.3.3 Prepare, validate, and disseminate the Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports, including management responses and recommendations to inform future programming and scaling-up.

The project will generate global environmental benefits by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and water footprints across the banana value chain through the adoption of improved production practices, enhanced monitoring and reporting (MRV), and strengthened national systems for carbon and water accounting. In addition, these interventions will contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) objectives under the UNCCD by avoiding further land degradation through practices that prevent soil erosion, nutrient loss, and inefficient input use; reducing ongoing degradation through improved soil and water management; and supporting the restoration of soil functions in cultivated landscapes. These benefits would not occur under a business-as-usual scenario, where existing financial incentives, technical capacity, and institutional frameworks remain insufficient to enable producers—particularly family farming producers and smallholders—to adopt low-emission, resource-efficient production systems.

Parallel, the project will deliver adaptation benefits by promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices and improved water management, thereby reducing climate vulnerability in banana-producing landscapes increasingly exposed to water scarcity, rising temperatures, and climate-related productivity risks. By strengthening national monitoring systems, enhancing producer capacities, and facilitating access to sustainability mechanisms and standards, the project will contribute to improved soil and water management, increased hectares under improved management, long-term resilience and environmental sustainability, supporting national reporting under the UNFCCC and the UNCCD.

Through these interventions, the project is expected to foster sustainable management across 150,000 hectares of agricultural land, contribute to mitigating 18,022,619 tons of CO₂eq, and directly benefit at least 80,000 farmers and value-chain actors, at least 50% of whom are women.

Stakeholder engagement

The project will be implemented through a participatory, multi-actor engagement framework that integrates national institutions, private-sector organizations, financial actors, academia, producer associations, and local governments, exporters and local traders. This approach ensures national ownership, operational

relevance, and long-term sustainability of project outcomes, including reductions in carbon and water footprints, improved climate resilience, and strengthened compliance with international market standards. MAE will provide political and technical coordination to ensure alignment with the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program (PECC), national MRV systems, and national climate commitments (NDC/PLANMICC/LDN) and will serve, together with FAO, on the Project Steering Committee (PSC). MAGP will participate in the project Technical Committee (TC) and will provide policy and technical coordination to ensure alignment with the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025-2034), the agricultural sector MRV system, and sectoral climate commitments. Through the TC, MAGP, Agrocalidad, and INIAP will contribute technical inputs, data, and field-level coordination throughout project design and implementation. This will ensure that regulatory updates, monitoring instruments, and sustainable agricultural practices reflect national priorities and are operationally feasible. These institutions will participate in all consultations and project governance through the PSC and TC.

Private-sector actors including AEBE, ACORBANEC, AGROBAN, ASOEXPLA, ASOCART, ASOTEP, CAMAE, ADENA, Innovagro, and the Banana Cluster will play a central role in support the validation of regulatory updates, enhancing the CWF tool, participating in capacity development, and adopting best practices across the value chain. Exporters, traders, cardboard manufacturers, port operators, and logistics companies will provide operational data, test CWF modules, contribute to policy discussions, and lead the implementation of climate-smart and water-efficient innovations. Their engagement ensures that regulations, financial incentives, and digital tools reflect market requirements and strengthen Ecuador's competitiveness in global markets.

Producer organizations, smallholders, medium- and large-scale farmers, agroecological and organic producers, and non-associated producers, **women, youth, indigenous, afro descendants and Montubio peoples** will participate in field trials, validation of sustainable practices, training programs, and the implementation of the CWF system. Their involvement will ensure that mitigation actions are adapted to local realities, and that environmental and economic benefits accrue directly to producers through improved efficiency, access to green finance, and increased market opportunities.

An engagement strategy with gender, intercultural and intersectional approaches will ensure that women, youth, indigenous, afro descendants, and Montubio peoples, producers, workers, and organizations meaningfully influence project decisions and benefit equitably from capacity-building and incentive mechanisms. Gender, intercultural and intersectional-transformative actions will help address structural barriers, increase women, youth, indigenous, afro descendants, Montubio peoples' agency through participation in the decision making processes for public policy enhancement, development of financial tools and incentives, climate smart agricultural practices, intercultural dialogues, access, use and decision making on technical knowledge and technological resources for low carbon and water footprint agriculture and ensure long-term inclusion in sustainable value chains.

Financial institutions including public banks, cooperatives, and private banks, will collaborate in the development of green credit lines, climate insurance solutions, and monetary and non-monetary incentives linked to verified environmental performance. These mechanisms will enable producers and companies to invest in sustainable technologies and practices and ensure long-term market and environmental benefits beyond project closure.

Academic and research institutions such as INIAP, ESPOL, UTMach, Quevedo Technical University, University of Costa Rica, University of Castilla la Mancha, and others will contribute scientific inputs for updating emission factors, integrating climate datasets, validating the CWF tool, and building national training curricula.

Their participation will strengthen the scientific robustness, transparency, and credibility of the project's tools and methodologies.

Territorial governments including provincial, cantonal, and parish authorities—will support field implementation, local coordination, land-use alignment, gender-based violence prevention routes, and community outreach. Their involvement ensures territorial ownership and sustainability of interventions, especially in the three main banana-producing provinces.

Stakeholder coordination will be institutionalized through a Project Steering Committee (PSC) and a Technical Committee (TC), ensuring continuous dialogue, joint decision-making, technical validation, and knowledge exchange. Through this inclusive and structured engagement model, the project will secure broad-based support, integrate diverse perspectives, and create the institutional and market conditions necessary for long-lasting environmental and economic benefits.

Private sector involvement

The project will mobilize and integrate private-sector actors across the entire banana value chain—exporters, producers, logistics operators, cardboard manufacturers, traders, certifiers, technology providers, and financial institutions—to enable a systemic transformation toward low-carbon and water-efficient production models. Building on the organizational capacity of AEBE, ACORBANEC, AGROBAN, ASOEXPLA, ASOCART, ASOTEP, CAMAE, ADENA, Innovagro, and the Ecuadorian Banana Cluster, the project will leverage existing platforms to coordinate policy dialogue, validate technical updates to the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool, and promote collective adoption of sustainability standards. These associations represent the core of Ecuador’s exporting industry and have been directly engaged during PRODOC formulation, contributing technical inputs on footprint measurement, logistical emissions, and market requirements.

Throughout Component 1, private-sector organizations (including companies, companies[associations, medium, size and smallholders association and other type of private sector organizations such as clusters) will participate in policy development workshops and consultations to strengthen the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program (PECC), shape new regulatory and operational instruments, and articulate the enabling environment needed to scale sustainable production. Exporters, trader companies, cardboard box manufacturers, logistics operators, service providers and port terminals will contribute sector-specific insights to ensure that the updated regulations, compensation schemes, and MRV integrations reflect operational realities and foster compliance with EU and international sustainability frameworks.

Under Component 2, private sector (including companies, companies associations, medium, size and smallholders association and other type of private sector organizations such as clusters) will play a central role in enhancing and strengthening the CWF tool. Exporters, traders sourcing from multiple producers, and technical teams from large banana companies will test the updated modules, including auditor and trader functionalities, verify emission factors, support interoperability with company-level data systems, and ensure the tool meets certification, reporting, and buyer requirements. Their participation will also support the integration of climate datasets, emission factors, and land-use information, resulting in a robust national tool capable of supporting MRV reporting and PECC certification.

Component 3 will engage private actors, family farming producers, smallholders, medium and large producers, women, indigenous, afro descendants and Montubio peoples, cooperatives, and exporting companies in field validation trials, cost–benefit analyses of sustainable innovations, and tailored training on footprint reduction practices. Companies and associations from medium size and smallholders will receive technical assistance to adopt climate-smart and water-efficient practices, prepare compliance strategies for the EU market, and implement action plans that align with PECC, MRV frameworks, and international standards. A dedicated support desk will facilitate private-sector access to CWF services, tools, and guidance throughout the project lifecycle.

Financial institutions including public banks, cooperatives, and private banks—will collaborate under Component 1.3 to design green credit lines, climate-related insurance instruments, and monetary/non-monetary incentives tied to verified environmental performance. These mechanisms will reduce investment barriers, improve credit risk profiles, and stimulate sustained private

investment in climate-smart technologies and inputs. Exporters and producers will also explore participation in national compensation scheme and linked incentives.

Certification bodies (Rainforest Alliance, Global G.A.P., Fairtrade, USDA certifiers, Ecocert, Control Union, CERES, Mayacert, Demeter, Primus, QCS) will be engaged to ensure that the updated CWF system, PECC regulations, and sustainable practices align with certification requirements and facilitate market access. International buyers and retailers engaged through the World Banana Forum will support recognition of verified improvements, helping position Ecuadorian bananas as low-carbon and water-efficient products in global markets.

Through this coordinated engagement combining policy influence, technical validation, digital innovation, green finance, and responsible sourcing the project embeds environmental performance into private-sector decision-making and market logic. This will generate durable incentives for emission reductions, water conservation, and improved compliance across the entire banana value chain, driving a long-term transformation of Ecuador's agricultural sector and contributing to global mitigation and adaptation goals.

Innovation & Transformative Change, Knowledge management, Policy coherence and Capacity development

Innovation & Transformative Change

The project is designed to catalyze a transformative shift in Ecuador's agri-export sector and other actors by embedding environmental accountability and sustainability performance within core business and policy systems. Innovation is achieved through the application and scaling of a digital system that integrates data from producers, exporters, and national databases to measure and monitor environmental performance in real time. This approach enables a transparent, science-based transition from input-intensive practices toward efficient, low-emission, and resource-optimized production models at scale.

The project's innovation lies in linking climate impact measurement, policy, and finance, creating a feedback loop where verified environmental performance supports and sustains access to incentives and markets. By aligning public policy instruments (Ecuador Zero Carbon Program, NDCs) with private-sector sustainability commitments and financial mechanisms, the project establishes the institutional and economic foundations for long-term change and market transformation.

Financial mechanisms developed under the project will also support the transition toward more resource-efficient, productive, and digitally innovative production systems, enabling producers to invest in technologies and practices that simultaneously enhance competitiveness and environmental performance. In doing so, the project ensures that climate mitigation, economic viability, and technological modernization advance in parallel. The project's innovation will be scalable through future expansion of the CWF tool to additional value chains, integration into MRV.

Knowledge Management

The project's knowledge management system builds on existing technical platforms and institutional experience from the World Banana Forum, the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program, and national NDC monitoring frameworks. These provide a foundation for refining methodologies, training materials, and monitoring approaches while ensuring alignment with national strategies and international frameworks.

New knowledge will be generated through the expanded use of the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool across banana, coffee, and cacao value chains. The tool will produce real-time environmental performance data that companies can use to report under PECC, the EU Corporate

Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), while also informing buyers and retailers on verified sustainability performance. At the institutional level, aggregated and anonymized data from the CWF system will feed directly into the national MRV system, supporting evidence-based policymaking, tracking of NDC progress, and formulation of new sustainability programs.

A digital knowledge platform will centralize and store project data, methodological updates, training resources, and case studies, ensuring open access for national institutions, producers, and private actors. Knowledge will be disseminated through structured e-learning courses, technical webinars, and continuous capacity-building programs delivered jointly by FAO, Operational Partner (OP), and national partners. This integrated system will ensure that lessons learned and validated methodologies strengthen institutional capacity, enable transparent corporate reporting, and serve as replicable models for future national and regional sustainability initiatives and GEF-financed initiatives.

Policy Coherence

The project will enhance national policy coherence by aligning environmental, agricultural, trade and financial frameworks under a unified sustainability agenda. Through the strengthening of the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program (PECC) and integration of the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool into the national MRV system, the project will harmonize policies that address climate mitigation, sustainable production, and market competitiveness. In alignment with the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025–2034) the project allows strengthening and dynamizing the agricultural sector by diversifying domestic and foreign markets and improving agricultural productivity by implementing strategies that adapt to climate change. This alignment will ensure that environmental data from producers directly informs public decisions and supports Ecuador's commitments under the NDC /PLANMICC/LDN, and Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

In collaboration with MAE, MAGP, and relevant authorities, the project will promote interministerial coordination to mainstream footprint metrics into agricultural, environmental, and export regulations. It will also support the review and potential reform of existing legal and institutional frameworks, including the exploration of regulatory adjustments that enable participation and long-term integration of sustainability incentives. These reforms aim to unlock new financing streams, such as compensation under Carbon Equivalent Units and green investment mechanisms, ensuring that verified environmental performance can translate into tangible economic benefits for producers and the private sector.

Capacity Development

The project's effectiveness depends on building strong human, institutional, and technical capacities to sustain the measurement and management of carbon and water footprints. At the institutional level, MAE, MAGP, and partner agencies will receive targeted technical training financed through GEF and national co-financing to operate and maintain the CWF tool, integrate it into MRV and PECC systems, and use verified data for policy formulation and reporting. Capacity-building modules will strengthen competencies in sustainability accounting, digital data management, and interministerial coordination, ensuring that institutions can autonomously update systems and methodologies beyond the project's lifetime.

At the field and enterprise level, the project will deliver structured capacity-building programs, e-learning courses, and field demonstrations to producers, exporters, auditors, and financial partners. Implemented through FAO, OP, and academia, these activities will develop technical skills for footprint monitoring, sustainable production, and compliance with EU regulatory frameworks. Continuous support mechanisms including a technical helpdesk will ensure knowledge retention and long-term scaling across value chains.

Gender-transformative capacity development will further ensure that women producers, entrepreneurs, and workers access technical training, participate in monitoring systems, and benefit from climate-smart technologies and green financing solutions.

[1] Van den Berg, H., Phillips, S. & Morales-Abubakar, A.L.C. 2023. Monitoring, evaluation and learning in farmer field school programmes – A framework and toolkit. Rome.

FAO, 2023, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in Farmer Field School Programmes: A Framework and Toolkit <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/83a3da58-4d1c-41a4-969a-190d242c23f0> <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5160en>

[CL1] Favor compartirme este grafico en mejor resolucion, en un archivo aparte

[CL2] No entiendo la oración, se refiere a las políticas sectoriales?

[MO3] Si pero con acrónimos

Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

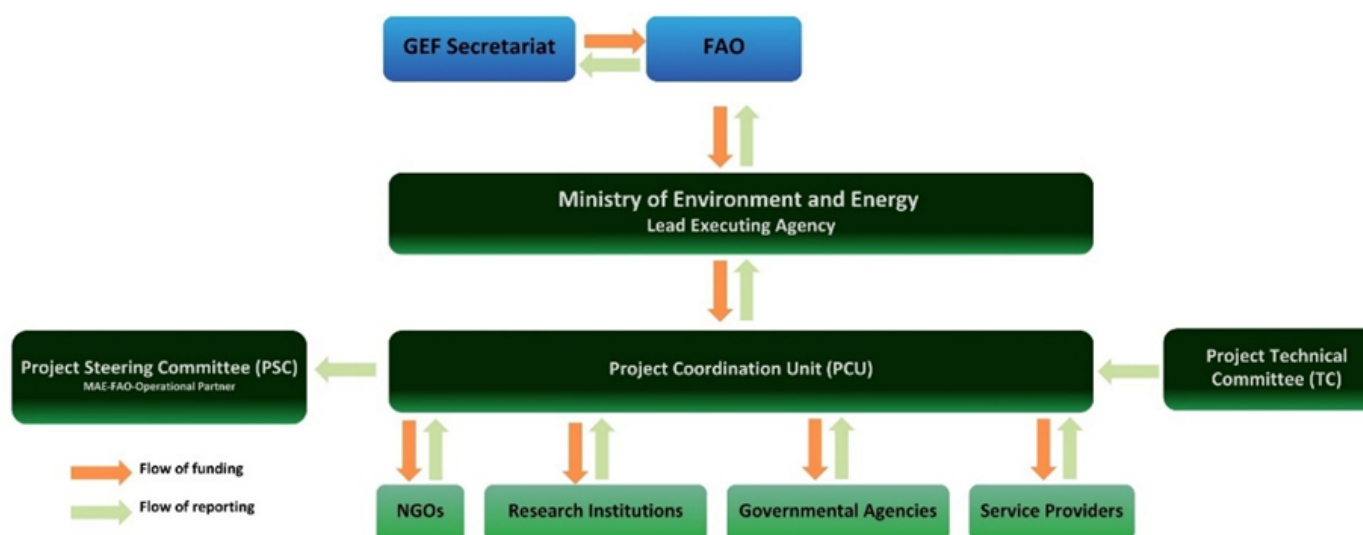
Please describe the Institutional Arrangements for the execution of this project, including financial management and procurement. If possible, please summarize the flow of funds (diagram), accountabilities for project management and financial reporting (organogram), including audit, and staffing plans. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The project implementation will be supported by: (a) national governmental structures that have competence in environmental, rural development planning, social, and productive issues, such as the ones maintained by the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MAE) and MAGP, (b) the private sector, including producers, traders, financial institutions and other key stakeholders in the banana value chain; (c) civil society organizations that contribute to the country's institutional framework, including local NGOs involved in community-level outreach and capacity building; and (d) FAO initiatives associated with land degradation, biodiversity conservation, and climate change mitigation.

To ensure coordination and interaction among these diverse stakeholders, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Technical Committee (TC), will be established. The main tasks of the SC will be to: (a) provide strategic direction to project implementation and approve progress and financial reports; (b) ensure institutional commitments for the operation of the project and the incorporation of resources and results generated by the project (strategies, plans, programs, policy proposals); (c) support the dissemination of project results within all spheres, and (d) facilitate the dissemination of project results to private sector organizations, financial systems, and e) approve the project progress reports submitted by the National Program Director (NPD), in coordination with the PSC, with the support of the BH. The main tasks of the TC will be to: (a) advise about local initiatives, projects under implementation, will provide data, information and tools about their sectors, (b) present to the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and to PSC comments about the main documents that the project will develop and (c) support the process of scaling up the lessons learned, providing advice on priorities and strategies for this purpose. This structure will ensure that all stakeholders are integrated into the strategic decision-making of the project, enhancing its overall impact and sustainability.

The MAE will act as the lead executing agency and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of project results entrusted to it in full compliance with all terms and conditions of the Operational Partnership Agreement signed with FAO³⁰. The MAE is responsible and accountable to FAO for the timely

implementation of the agreed project results, operational oversight of implementation activities, timely reporting, and for effective use of GEF resources for the intended purposes and in line with FAO and GEF policy requirements. The project organization structure is as follows:



The National Project Director (NPD) will be selected by the PSC and hired by the Operational Partner. The NPD will be responsible for coordinating the activities with all the national bodies related to the different project components, as well as with the project partners. He/she will also be responsible for supervising and guiding the Project Coordinator (see below) on Government policies and priorities.

The MAE will chair the Project Steering Committee (PSC) which will be the main governing body of the project. The PSC will approve Annual Work Plans and Budgets on a yearly basis and will provide strategic guidance to the Project Management Team and to all executing partners.

The PSC will be composed of representatives from the MAE and FAO. The members of the PSC will each assume the role of a Focal Point for the project in their respective agencies. Hence, the project will have a Focal Point in each concerned institution. As Focal Points in their agency, the concerned PSC members will: (i) technically oversee activities in their sector; (ii) ensure a fluid two-way exchange of information and knowledge between their agency and the project; (iii) facilitate coordination and links between the project activities and the work plan of their agency; and (iv) facilitate the provision of co-financing to the project.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) will be the GEF Implementing Agency (IA) for the Project, providing project cycle management and support services as established in the GEF Policy. As the GEF IA, FAO holds overall accountability and responsibility to the GEF for delivery of the results. In the IA role, FAO will utilize the GEF fees to deploy three different actors within the organization to support the project (see Annex M for details):

- The Budget Holder, which is usually the most decentralized FAO office, will provide oversight of day-to-day project execution.

- The Lead Technical Officer(s), drawn from across FAO will provide oversight/support to the projects technical work in coordination with government representatives participating in the Project Steering Committee;
- The Funding Liaison Officer(s) and the GEF Technical Officers (GTO) within FAO will monitor and support the project cycle to ensure that the project is being designed and carried out in accordance with FAO and GEF minimum fiduciary and technical standards.

FAO responsibilities, as GEF implementing agency, will include:

- Administrate funds from GEF in accordance with the rules and procedures of FAO;
- Oversee project implementation in accordance with the project document, work plans, budgets, agreements with co-financiers, Operational Partners Agreement(s)and other rules and procedures of FAO;
- Provide technical guidance to ensure that appropriate technical quality is applied to all activities concerned;
- Conduct at least one supervision mission per year; and
- Reporting to the GEF Secretariat and Evaluation Office, through the annual Project Implementation Review, the Mid Term Review, the Terminal Evaluation and the Project Closure Report on project progress;
- Financial reporting to the GEF Trustee.

[1] It should be noted that the identified Operational Partner(s) may change due to FAO internal due diligence and agreement procedures if not yet been concluded at the time of submission of the CEO Endorsement Request

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this project?

If so, please describe that role here and the justification.

N/A

Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The project will be implemented in close coordination with ongoing initiatives led by the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MAE), the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAGP), and OP under the Ecuador Zero Carbon (PECC) framework, national MRV development efforts, and the current modernization of agricultural and climate reporting systems linked to NDC and LDN commitments. Collaboration with these initiatives will ensure methodological coherence, institutional alignment, and coordinated deployment of the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool across producer typologies and geographic areas.

At territorial level, the project will seek co-location with existing sustainable production, extension, and climate adaptation programmes in banana-producing provinces, operationalized through provincial

governments and producer associations. Opportunities for co-location will be examined and may include shared demonstration plots, joint field validation, use of existing training infrastructure, and integration of technical staff into farmer-field and extension activities currently supported by MAGP, Agrocalidad, INIAP, FAO projects, and producing associations.

Within the project's institutional arrangements, the National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIAP) will play a strategic role as the technical and scientific backbone of the Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system. It will contribute to the generation, validation, and updating of technical information related to carbon and water footprint measurement, the characterization of production practices, and the typology of production systems. INIAP will also serve as a reference entity for the methodological validation of the applied approaches, ensuring scientific coherence, data robustness, and adaptation to the country's agroecological conditions.

In coordination with the MAE and the MAGP, INIAP will further facilitate knowledge transfer and the scaling of the approach to other strategic value chains—particularly cocoa and coffee and plantain—thereby strengthening the sustainability and national replicability of the project's results.

Core Indicators

Indicate expected results in each relevant indicator using methodologies indicated in the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Guidelines. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF and SCCF.

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
150000	150000	0	0

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
150,000.00	150,000.00		

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (direct)	14696789	12997581	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (indirect)	0	5025038	0	0

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (direct)	14,696,789	12,997,581		
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (indirect)		5,025,038		
Anticipated start year of accounting	2026	2026		
Duration of accounting	20	20		

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO₂e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				
Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
Target Energy Saved (MJ)				

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)
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Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	40,000	40,000		
Male	40,000	40,000		
Total	80,000	80,000	0	0

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

Core Indicator 4: The project will implement targeted initiatives on 150,000 hectares of banana plantations, aiming to foster sustainable agricultural practices and reduce environmental impacts, representing a conservative yet impactful approach, covering more than 50% of the total banana cultivation area in the country. The farms will be selected based on integration with international markets, prioritizing family farming producers, small and medium-scale growers, and ensuring gender balance. Consultations will be conducted with MAE and MAGP to ensure representativeness and potential scalability.

Core Indicator 6: Estimates have been calculated through the Nationally Determined Contributions Expert Tool (NEXT - uploaded into the GEF portal separately), with a carbon-benefit of 18,022,619 tCO₂e for a total period of 20 years (3 years of implementation and 17 years of capitalization) considering direct benefit of 12,997,581 and an indirect benefit of 5,025,038 tCO₂e. Estimations were considered based on the implementation of improved practices (15% less inputs and increased soil management practices in 150,000 ha).

Core Indicator 11: The project will directly benefit 80,000 farmers, workers, public servants, and value chain stakeholders (40,000 women and 40,000 men) through investments on capacity building and knowledge management activities. This is a conservative figure considering that the project will reach less than 85% of the banana producing areas in the country.

Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
CONTEXT		
Climate	High	The project is classified as high risk because it operates in banana-producing territories with high and increasing climate hazards (floods, extreme rainfall, droughts, heat stress) combined with high exposure and vulnerability of agricultural systems and rural populations, including Indigenous peoples, women, children, and informal workers. Additionally, the project intervenes in a socially and environmentally sensitive value chain characterized by intensive monoculture, water and agrochemical pressures, labor informality (including reported child labour), and ecosystem degradation, where climate change is expected to further amplify social, environmental, and operational risks over time. Mitigation: Climate-smart practices, risk-informed planning, and footprint monitoring strengthen resilience to floods, droughts, and climate variability.
Environmental and Social	Moderate	ESS 1 – Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources Triggered due to the project's interaction with banana production landscapes located near rivers, wetlands, mangroves, and other sensitive ecosystems that require biodiversity-friendly management practices. Mitigation: The project promotes biodiversity-friendly practices, riparian buffers, and avoidance of sensitive habitats within banana production

landscapes. ESS 1.3 – Agroforestry, Forest Plantation, Harvesting, or Management of Forest Resources Triggered by the promotion of agroforestry and regenerative practices within productive systems, which must avoid negative impacts on native species and natural vegetation. Mitigation: Agroforestry and regenerative practices are applied only in degraded or productive areas, avoiding conversion of natural forests or native vegetation.

ESS 2 – Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management Triggered by the need to improve efficiency in the use of water, energy, and agricultural inputs, and to prevent pollution. Mitigation: The project improves efficiency in water, energy, and input use while reducing pollution through technical guidance, training, and monitoring associated with intensive banana production.

ESS 2.2 – Irrigation Activities Triggered because the project operates in territories with high reliance on agricultural irrigation, requiring safeguards to prevent increased water abstraction and to promote sustainable basin-level water management. Mitigation: Standardized water accounting, efficient irrigation practices, and basin-sensitive planning prevent increased water abstraction.

ESS 2.4 – Use or Management of Pesticides Triggered due to the use of agrochemicals in the banana value chain, requiring the promotion of integrated pest management and safe handling practices to protect human health and ecosystems. Mitigation: Integrated pest management and safe handling, storage, and disposal practices are promoted to reduce chemical risks.

ESS 3 – Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Triggered by the high exposure of banana-producing areas to climate variability and extreme events (floods, droughts, ENSO), which can affect production systems and livelihoods. Mitigation: Climate-smart practices, risk-informed planning, and footprint monitoring strengthen resilience to floods, droughts, and climate variability.

ESS 4 – Decent Work Triggered by the prevalence of informal and precarious employment, occupational health and safety risks, limited social protection, and reported cases of child labour in the banana value chain, which require strengthened labour safeguards, monitoring, and preventive measures. Mitigation: Training, monitoring, and grievance mechanisms promote decent work, prevent child labour, and strengthen occupational health and safety.

ESS 6 – Gender Equality and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Triggered due to structural gender inequalities, low participation of women in sector governance, and risks of gender-based violence in rural and labor contexts. Mitigation: Gender-transformative actions, participation quotas, and GBV prevention measures ensure safe and equitable access to project benefits.

ESS 6.1 – Gender Discrimination Triggered by persistent barriers limiting women’s access to land, finance, training, technology, and benefits from sustainable market opportunities. Mitigation: Affirmative actions, gender transformative finance and incentives across the value chain with actors that support the participation of women in banana chain links , improve access to credit and their agency across the value chain and inclusive training to reduce structural barriers faced by women.

ESS 6.2 – Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Triggered by the presence of unsafe working and community environments where harassment, abuse, or violence against women may occur. Mitigation: Prevention protocols, referral pathways, and coordination with protection institutions reduce risks of violence and harassment.

ESS 6.3 – Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Triggered by direct interaction

		between project activities and beneficiaries, requiring preventive measures, codes of conduct, and accessible grievance mechanisms. Mitigation: Codes of conduct, staff training, and confidential grievance channels prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. ESS 8 - Indigenous people The Indigenous Peoples safeguard is triggered due to the potential direct or indirect involvement and impacts on Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities within the project's area of influence, considering risks related to exclusion from decision-making processes, unequal access to project benefits, potential impacts on cultural practices and livelihoods, and existing structural gender, intercultural and intersectional inequalities. Mitigation measures will include the preparation and implementation of an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), the application of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes, the establishment of culturally appropriate participation mechanisms, and the integration of intercultural, gender and intersectional approaches throughout project design and implementation.
Political and Governance	Moderate	Change of authorities at the level of deputy ministers or undersecretaries, which means staff rotation. Mitigation: Annual operating plans will be necessary for project validation. Hold bilateral meetings periodically with stakeholders and authorities. Form technical teams of work to coordinate interinstitutional actions at the level national and sectoral.

INNOVATION

Institutional and Policy	Moderate	The Ministry of Environment and Energy is the result of the fusion of the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition and the Ministry of Energy and Mines. This involves changes in institutional structures, competencies, and technical regulatory frameworks that will be adjusted until 2026. Mitigation: Develop the work within the framework of the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program (PECC) and the National Agricultural and Livestock Public Policy (2025–2034) to ensure robust, long-term instruments that enable the continuity of the project's actions. Form technical teams of work to coordinate actions interinstitutional at the level national and sectoral MAE, MAGP.
Technological	Low	Ensuring the interoperability of MRV systems with CWF tools will require effort and appropriate conditions for access to information and technology. Mitigation: Develop a plan of action and budget to adapt IT systems to ensure the operation and interoperability of project systems and tools. Generate protocols for generation and exchange of institutional and interinstitutional information.
Financial and Business Model	Moderate	The operation of the project may depend mainly on subsidies or external financing, and difficulties in monetizing ecological services. Mitigation: Develop partnerships with financial institutions, the public sector, and academia to build models and plans that ensure financial sustainability and credibility. Take advantage of opportunities in sustainable markets and certifications that promote long-term value and better prices.

EXECUTION

Capacity	Low	The project will be implemented by experienced national institutions with a strong track record in the banana sector, including coordination with smallholder associations, exporters, private-sector actors, and public
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		institutions. Their in-depth knowledge of the value chain, territorial presence, and existing operational capacities, combined with targeted technical support and capacity-strengthening activities under the project, will ensure effective adoption and implementation of project activities across different producer typologies.
Fiduciary	Low	Project execution will be supported by established national fiduciary, procurement, and financial management systems, complemented by FAO's technical oversight and quality assurance mechanisms, ensuring transparent, compliant, and timely use of project funds in line with GEF and national requirements.
Stakeholder	Low	The implementing institutions have proven operational capacity to engage, coordinate, and manage diverse stakeholders across the banana value chain, including smallholders, large producer associations, exporters, and public institutions. Their experience in facilitating multi-stakeholder processes and managing asymmetries in access to resources and decision-making will ensure effective execution, inclusive participation, and sustained stakeholder commitment throughout and beyond the project lifecycle.
Other		
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	Operating in climate-vulnerable, environmentally sensitive, and socially complex banana-producing territories, the project deliberately engages high climate and moderate environmental-social risks, consistent with the GEF's substantial risk appetite for context, while embedding robust safeguards, climate-informed design, and gender-transformative measures to manage residual risks. The project also embraces high innovation risk through regulatory reform, MRV system interoperability, green finance instruments, and new institutional arrangements under the PECC framework, reflecting the GEF's expectation that innovation is necessary to address systemic drivers of environmental degradation. At the same time, the project maintains moderate execution risk through strong institutional arrangements, dedicated safeguards and gender staffing, fiduciary controls, participatory stakeholder engagement, and continuous monitoring and adaptive management, in line with the GEF's zero tolerance for fraud and sexual exploitation and abuse. By explicitly addressing labor informality (including reported child labour), GBV risks, water-use tensions, and climate shocks, the project demonstrates that risks are justified, and responsibly managed, fully consistent with the GEF Risk Appetite Framework and its emphasis on risk-informed, transformative investments.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Explain how the proposed interventions are aligned with GEF- 8 programming strategies and country and regional priorities, including how these country strategies and plans relate to the multilateral environmental agreements.

For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and explain how.

Confirm if any country policies that might contradict with intended outcomes of the project have been identified, and how the project will address this. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The proposed project is aligned with the **LD-1: Avoid and reduce land degradation through sustainable land management (SLM) CCM 1.4: Promote Nature-based Solutions with high mitigation potential**, particularly with Objective 1: Avoid and reduce land degradation through sustainable land management (SLM). In order to achieve a lower environmental footprint of the sector, the proposed project will promote the application and scaling of SLM interventions that improve productivity and maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem services that underpin food production and livelihoods.

Investing in SLM has been shown to be a cost-effective way to deliver multiple GEBs related to agro-ecosystem functions. In particular, by investing in the banana sector under Component 3, the proposed project is expected to produce benefits such as improved soil health and reduced soil erosion, reduced pollution risks, reduced land degradation and fragmentation; reduced emission of greenhouse gases by improving vegetation cover and accumulation of soil organic matter; and increased sustainability and resilience of agro-ecosystem services.

In addition, the project proposes a comprehensive set of interventions that enhance carbon sequestration and reduce emissions through sustainable land use practices in alignment with the **LD-1: Avoid and reduce land degradation through sustainable land management (SLM) and CCM 1.4: Promote Nature-based Solutions with high mitigation potential**. These include integration of the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool into national MRV systems, adoption of climate-smart technologies, replacement of emission-intensive practices, and targeted capacity development to support the uptake of mitigation measures by producers of different typologies.

By linking verified environmental performance with financial incentives, green credit mechanisms, and export market requirements, the project ensures long-term adoption of sustainable land management approaches, reduces climate vulnerabilities, and supports the transition to a low-carbon, resource-efficient agricultural sector in Ecuador.

The project directly supports Ecuador's legal and policy framework for land degradation and LDN through the integration of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices across 150,000 ha, contributing to the objectives of the National Constitution (Art. 409–410), Organic Environmental Code, and the Organic Law on Rural Lands. It will support the operationalization of the updated (PAND – National Action Program to Combat Desertification and Drought) by implementing integrated interventions to address key degradation drivers, while contributing to the National Forest Restoration Plan (2019–2030) targets via afforestation of degraded lands and riparian buffers adjacent to banana production areas. The enhanced MRV system and CWF tool align with MAE's obligations under the PAND and LDN Target Setting Program, enabling consistent monitoring of land productivity, soil organic carbon, and land cover—core UNCCD LDN indicators. The project also contributes to the forthcoming National LDN Action Plan by demonstrating field-level restoration in banana landscapes and scaling SLM incentives for smallholders in line with Articles 12 and 13 of the Rural Lands Law. Through integration into national land-use planning, co-financing mechanisms, and institutional capacity building, the project enables MAE and MAGP to fulfil their mandates as outlined in Acuerdo Ministerial 048 (banana and plantain price national regulation) and Ecuador's commitments under SDG 15.3 and the UNCCD.

The project directly supports Ecuador's NDC/LDN commitments by prioritizing sustainable practices and emissions reduction within the banana industry. It will strengthen MRV systems and data management tools to enhance traceability and transparency, while advancing initiatives to track emissions and resource efficiency. These actions align with Ecuador's objectives to mitigate agricultural emissions and meet the NDC/LDN action line to “strengthen climate change management through research and the development of information systems within the agricultural sector”.

Moreover, the project supports several targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). By implementing alternatives to the intensive use of agroplastics, agrochemicals, synthetic fertilizers, and pesticides, it contributes to Target 7: Reducing Pollution to Levels Not Harmful to Biodiversity. Through the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices and production frameworks, the

project supports Target 10: Enhance Biodiversity and Sustainability in Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry.

By strengthening National MRV systems and providing farmers with impact measurement tools it supports Target 14: Integrate Biodiversity in Decision-Making at Every Level, enabling data-driven, climate-informed decisions. Additionally, by facilitating compliance with international standards like the CSDDD and CSRD, the project enables industry actors to assess, disclose, and mitigate biodiversity-related risks, contributing to Target 15: Businesses Assess, Disclose, and Reduce Biodiversity-Related Risks and Negative Impacts. Finally, by promoting transparency and traceability along the banana supply chain, the project contributes to Target 16: Enable Sustainable Consumption Choices to Reduce Waste and Overconsumption, empowering consumers and stakeholders to make informed, sustainable choices based on detailed environmental impact data.

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the project have been addressed during Project Preparation as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B).

Yes

1) Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive-measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women's empowerment?

Yes

If the project expects to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment, please indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality:

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources;

Improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or

Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

Yes

2) Does the project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during Project Preparation as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to project outcomes has been clearly articulated in the Project Description (Section B) and that a Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed before CEO endorsement.

Yes

Select what role civil society will play in the Project

Consulted only;

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor;

Co-financier;

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body ;

Executor or co-executor;

Other (Please explain) Yes

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the project?

Yes

And if so, has its role been described and justified in section B project description?

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguards

We confirm that we have provided information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed project or program, including risk screenings/ assessments and, if applicable, management plans or other measures to address identified risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex E).

Yes

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
Medium/Moderate	Medium/Moderate		
	Medium/Moderate		

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described during Project Preparation in the Project Description and that these activities have been budgeted and an anticipated timeline for delivery of relevant outputs has been provided.

Yes

Socio-economic Benefits

We confirm that the project design has considered socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and these have been clearly described in the Project Description and will be monitored and reported on during project implementation (at MTR and TER).

The project will generate significant socioeconomic benefits at national and local levels by strengthening the competitiveness, resilience, and sustainability of Ecuador's banana value chain, a major source of employment and export revenue. At the producer level, improved access to climate-smart practices, training, and digital tools (CWF system) will reduce production costs, improve resource efficiency, and increase compliance with national and international market requirements, thereby protecting market access and stabilizing incomes. A central socio-economic benefit of the project is its gender-transformative approach: training and capacity-building activities are expected to reach more than 40,000 women, strengthening their technical skills, participation in decision-making, and access to resources and other economic opportunities within the banana sector. By empowering women workers, producers, and entrepreneurs, the project contributes to more inclusive value chains and supports broader community resilience. Smallholders, who are most vulnerable to climate shocks and price volatility, will benefit from tailored capacity development, access to best practices, and support to meet national and international and EU sustainability standards, reducing barriers to entry and strengthening livelihood security. At the sector level, investments in MRV systems, sustainable production, and water-efficient technologies will improve productivity, reduce risks associated with extreme weather, and strengthen environmental stewardship, contributing to a more resilient rural economy. By enabling producers and exporting companies to demonstrate verified reductions in carbon and water footprints, the project enhances access to premium markets, green financing, and potential incentive schemes under national programs such as PECC.

Project contribution to full and productive employment and decent work in rural areas, aiming at the progressive realization of their right to Decent Rural Employment.

The project contributes directly to full and productive employment and the progressive realization of the right to Decent Rural Employment by strengthening environmental, social, and economic conditions across the banana value chain. Through capacity development, the project equips family farming producers, smallholders, workers, and producer organizations with new skills related to carbon and water footprint measurement, climate-smart production, EU compliance, and sustainable farm management, improving employability and creating higher-quality job opportunities in rural areas. By reducing exposure to hazardous agrochemicals, promoting safer production practices, and supporting the adoption of water- and energy-efficient technologies, the project enhances occupational health and safety for farm workers. The strengthening of National Zero Carbon Program (PECC) and alignment with EU CSDDD/CSRD requirements incentivize buyers to reward responsible production, which can translate into more stable employment conditions, stronger labor-management dialogue, and improved value-chain transparency. Furthermore, by supporting access to green finance and promoting investments in sustainable technologies, the project enables producers to increase productivity and resilience, thereby protecting rural jobs from climate and market volatility. Special attention is given to women and youth through targeted training, inclusive engagement strategies, and the promotion of equitable participation in decision-making spaces, ensuring fair access to opportunities and reducing structural barriers to decent rural employment. Together, these interventions foster a more sustainable, competitive, and socially responsible banana sector where environmental and economic gains translate into improved working conditions and more secure livelihoods.

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non- Grant	GEF Project Grant(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total GEF Financing (\$)
FAO	GET	Ecuador	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	Grant	1,065,890.00	101,260.00	1,167,150.00
FAO	GET	Ecuador	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation: CCM- 1-4	Grant	710,594.00	67,506.00	778,100.00
Total GEF Resources (\$)						1,776,484.00	168,766.00	1,945,250.00

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Was a Project Preparation Grant requested?

true

PPG Amount (\$)

50000

PPG Agency Fee (\$)

4750

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	PPG(\$)	Agency Fee(\$)	Total PPG Funding(\$)
FAO	GET	Ecuador	Land Degradation	LD STAR Allocation: LD-1	30,000.00	2,850.00	32,850.00
FAO	GET	Ecuador	Climate Change	CC STAR Allocation: CCM-1-4	20,000.00	1,900.00	21,900.00
Total PPG Amount (\$)					50,000.00	4,750.00	54,750.00

Please provide Justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total(\$)
FAO	GET	Ecuador	Biodiversity	BD STAR Allocation	2,000,000.00
Total GEF Resources					2,000,000.00

Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing(\$)	Co-financing(\$)
LD-1	GET	1,065,890.00	16782791
CCM-1-4	GET	710,594.00	11188528
Total Project Cost		1,776,484.00	27,971,319.00

Confirmed Co-financing for the project, by name and type

Please include evidence for each co-financing source for this project in the tab of the portal

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount(\$)
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Environment and Energy	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	20196350
Recipient Country Government	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	3087776
GEF Agency	FAO	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	566603
Private Sector	Asociación de Exportadores de Banano del Ecuador (AEBE) / Rey Banano del Pacifico, C.L (Reybanpac)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	600000
Private Sector	AEBE/Reybanpac	Grant	Investment mobilized	3520590
Total Co-financing				27,971,319.00

Please describe the investment mobilized portion of the co-financing

The mobilized investment reflects a strong commitment from the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MAE), together with the private sector and FAO, to co-finance and drive the on-the-ground transformation of the banana value chain toward more sustainable, climate-resilient, and low-emission production systems. A substantial share of the co-financing is provided by MAE through technical, operational, and in-kind contributions that strengthen policy implementation, national monitoring, reporting and verification systems, and institutional capacities. Complementing this public leadership, private-sector initiatives led by producer and exporter organizations—particularly AEBE and Reybanpac—support field-level investments in climate monitoring, biosecurity, water efficiency, soil health, renewable energy, and ecosystem conservation. Together, these coordinated investments ensure durable climate mitigation, adaptation, land-degradation neutrality, and biodiversity co-benefits across the banana value chain.

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENTS

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Type	Date	Project Contact Person	Phone	Email
Project Coordinator	1/29/2026	Lorenzo Campos Aguirre		lorenzo.camposaguirre@fao.org

Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template.

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
Mireille Vásconez	Director of International Cooperation	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition of Ecuador (MAATE)	11/5/2024

ANNEX C: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Please indicate the page number in the Project Document where the project results and M&E frameworks can be found. Please also paste below the Project Results Framework from the Agency document.

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline	Mid-term target	Final target	Means of verification	Assumptions	Responsible for data collection
Project Objective: Promote the sustainable transformation of Ecuador's banana industry by reducing its environmental footprint and ensuring compliance with international standards.							
Component 1: Strengthening Institutional Operative Framework for Sustainable Banana Production							
Outcome 1: Strengthened enabling environment for sustainable banana production and improved sustainable market access							
Outcome 1	Number of banana producer organizations or exporters demonstrating improved access to international markets through verified compliance with sustainability requirements	0 [Within the scope of the project, no banana producer organizations or exporters demonstrate verified compliance with EU or other international sustainability requirements]	10 organizations [At least ten banana producer organizations or exporters demonstrate improved market access through verified sustainability compliance, including documented use of CWF reporting and recognition by international buyers.]	30 organizations [At least thirty banana producer organizations or exporters demonstrate sustained access to international markets through verified compliance with international sustainability requirements, supported by CWF reporting integrated into commercial or	Buyer confirmations; sustainability and compliance documentation; export records; CWF reports.	International sustainability requirements for banana exports remain stable, and producer organizations and exporters maintain engagement in sustainability compliance and CWF reporting, supported by continued functionality of PECC and national regulatory frameworks.	Producer organizations and exporters provide documentation; MAE validates PECC alignment; FAO validates CWF reporting; PCU consolidates and reports indicator data.

		nts using standardiz ed CWF- based reporting aligned with PECC.]		regulatory processes.]			
Output 1.1: PECC Framework and Technical Standard (related to organizations and products) strengthened and updated for Monitoring and Reporting Carbon and Water Footprints in the Banana Value Chain.	Number of public policy instruments, regulations and standards created or updated related to carbon and water footprint management, mainstreamin g intersectional approach.	0 [PECC technical standard exists but is not focused on agricultur e; relevant national policies are fragmente d and not harmonize d.]	2 [PECC technical standard stre ngthened and updated to cover organization and product footprint of the banana value chain; draft national guideline on carbon and water footprint management for the banana sector under consultation]	3 [At least three public policy instruments (e.g. update technical standard of Ecuador Zero Carbon Program , harmonized national guideline, sectoral policy) formally adopted and operational]	Official policy documents and decrees (MAE, MAGP); project progress and final reports; records of interinstitu tional consultatio ns and validation workshops.	Sustained political commitment and interministeri al coordination for policy updates; institutional capacity and stakeholder engagement maintained; no major political or bureaucratic delays in policy approval.	MAE (lead), with support from MAGP, MAE (coordinati on and documenta tion), and PCU; FAO responsibl e for data consolidati on and reporting.
Output 1.2: Stakeholder participation (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peopless) in dialogues and decision-making processes strengthened for the review and update of policy frameworks, including the PECC and its compensation scheme (with an	Number of stakeholder groups (including women, indigenous, afro-descendant and Montubio peoples) engaged in the definition of strategies and alternatives for improved banana production and reducing carbon and water footprints	0 [No structured participat ory process in place to define strategies and alternativ es for improved banana productio n or footprint reduction; no stakehold er participati on data	3 [Active participation of key stakeholder groups (family farming producers, small holders, producers, exporters, public institutions, research entities, and civil society, women, youth indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples.) including at	5 [Representative and inclusive participation of stakeholders (50% women) across all relevant typologies (small holders, producers, exporters, public institutions, research entities, and civil society, women and youth, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio	Participati on records and attendance lists disaggrega ted by sex and stakeholde r typology; meeting minutes and consultatio n reports; validated strategy and action plan documents ; evidence of community -level participati on and	Stakeholders remain engaged and motivated to contribute; inclusive participation promoted by project partners; institutional coordination and transparency ensured; gender and intersectional equity actively supported.	MAE (lead, facilitation and documentation of participatory processes) with support from FAO (guidance and validation) ; MAE and MAGP (institutional coordination); PCU consolidates participation on data and ensures

intersectional approach)	(disaggregated by sex, ethnic self-identification and sector-typology) (50% men; 50% women)	collected by sex, age, ethnicity or typology]	least 35% women in multi-stakeholder consultations, workshops, and technical working groups contributing to the formulation of improved production and sustainability strategies]	peoples.) in the definition and validation of strategies for sustainable banana production and carbon/water footprint reduction; stakeholder inputs reflected in national or sectoral strategies and action plans]	local engagement.		sex and typology disaggregation.
Output 1.3: Sustainable financing mechanisms and/or monetary and non-monetary incentives with an intersectional approach developed and supported by environmental public policy in coordination with the national and local government; private sector and public banks; academia; and international organisms to ensure effective long-term implementation of sustainable productive actions and carbon and water footprint reporting and measurement	Number of environmental policy instruments developed and/or updated in issues related to sustainable financing mechanisms or incentives (monetary or non-monetary) developed with gender and intersectional approach	0 [No existing financial mechanisms or incentives integrating carbon/water footprint criteria in the banana sector]	2 [Engagement with at least 3 financial institutions; 2 mechanisms/incentives co-designed and validated]	3 [Mechanisms/incentives operational or formally adopted by partner institutions]	MoUs, technical proposals, official bank/agency documentation, information from the national IRS and project reports.	IRS, Financial institutions and government maintain commitment; enabling regulatory and market conditions established.	PCU, MAE, FAO (validation).

Component 2: Strengthened National Systems for Comprehensive Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of Environmental Indicators related to NDC/LDN, CWF and Ecuador Carbon Zero Program

Outcome 2: Improved accuracy and transparency in carbon and water footprint assessment through strengthened institutional systems and instruments for measurement, monitoring, reporting, and verification of environmental indicators

Outcome 2	Number of national institutional systems and regulatory frameworks operationally using standardized and automated Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) data for environmental monitoring, reporting, and verification.	0 [Within the scope of the project, no national institutional system or regulatory framework operationally uses standardized and automated CWF data integrated into official monitoring, reporting, or verification processes.]	1 [At least one national system or regulatory framework (e.g. PECC) operationally uses CWF data for environmental monitoring and reporting, with partial automation and institutional validation.]	2 [At least two national systems or regulatory frameworks (e.g. PECC and the national agricultural MRV system) operationally and systematically use standardized, automated, and validated CWF data for monitoring, reporting, and verification of environmental indicators.]	Official resolutions or MoUs; MRV system dashboards and reports; PECC documentation; CWF system records; validation reports.	Institutional coordination and political support are maintained, and national MRV and PECC systems remain interoperable and operational.	MAE leads institutional validation and MRV integration; FAO provides technical validation of CWF data and systems; MAGP supports sectoral data integration; PCU consolidates and reports indicator data.
Output.2.1: Advanced modules developed and integrated into the CWF tool to address upstream and downstream emissions and to include functionalities for new user categories (auditors and traders, exporters and international	Number of new environmental indicators related to the agricultural sector integrated into the CWF framework to comprehensively assess impacts across the banana production lifecycle.	0 [CWF software includes carbon (organization & product), water, soil ecotoxicity, human toxicity, land-use change, and soil carbon accounting]	3 [New indicators (biodiversity, nutrient balance, soil health, ecosystem condition) integrated in pilot version; baseline data and draft SBTi reduction targets mapped. Reduction]	5 [New indicators (biodiversity, nutrient balance, waste, circularity, ecosystem condition) fully operational in software; automatic reporting aligned with CSRD and SBTi]	Digital platform records, version logs, new indicator dashboards, technical documentation, validation datasets, FAO publications on CSRD/SBTi integration.	Institutions maintain engagement; data interoperability and technical capacity ensured; no major delays in validation.	FAO (CWF update), MAE (oversight), academia, software team, PCU consolidates evidence.

importers), aligned with the requirements of the national regulatory framework (technical regulation for PECC) and Ecuador's context		<i>g; no biodiversity indicators or SBTi/CSRD alignment]</i>	<i>targets defined]</i>				
Output.2.2: Automation of the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) System strengthened and enabled interoperability between PECC and MRV systems, including data collection, analysis, reporting and evaluation of the results	<i>Number of automated data integration processes implemented in the CWF system, reducing reliance on manual input</i>	0 [3 Static internal databases (pesticides / fertilizers, scarcity, maritime transport) ; yet presently no automated integrations; only farm/ company user profiles]	3 [Automated integration of meteorological, carbon map, and preliminary land-use, hydric balance, soil degradation, datasets; auditor user profile active]	6 [Automated integrations (meteorological, land-use, scarcity, pesticide/fertilizer, soil, maritime transport); trader and auditor profiles fully functional]	System architecture docs, API logs, synchronization reports, software dashboards, validation records, MAE/FAO verification	Data-sharing agreements and IT capacity maintained; interoperability and institutional coordination ensured.	FAO (CWF update), MAE (oversight) , academia, software team, PCU consolidates evidence.
Output.2.3: Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) Tool adapted for other value chains.	<i>Number of value chains with CWF tools developed or adapted</i>	0 [Banana methodology (2017) needs to be updated; pineapple methodology external, no value-chain approach]	1 [Banana methodology updated and draft coffee/cacao (or other value chain) methodologies developed and field-tested]	3 [Banana, coffee, and cacao methodologies finalized and validated]	Updated methodological guides, CWF software release notes, validation reports, MAE/FAO publications.	Collaboration with coffee and cacao sector established and coordination ensured.	FAO (Lead), MAE (oversight) academia & producer associations, PCU consolidates evidence.
Output.2.4: Training program developed and delivered for MAE and	<i>Number of MAGP and MAE personnel trained on the management</i>	0 [No formal	10 [Relevant MAGP and	20 [Relevant MAGP and MAAT staff	Attendance lists, certificates , training materials, and	Institutional commitment and staff continuity are ensured.	FAO (coordination), MAE & MAGP (participants and

MAGP personnel on CWF tools, linkage with PECC and MRV systems and carbon and water footprint reduction practices.	of the CWF tool (disaggregated by sex, gender and ethnic self-identification) (50% men; 50% women)	training on updated CWF system; limited familiarity with old version]	MAE staff trained (5 each) on tool operation, data workflows, and reporting; internal guidelines drafted]	(10 each) trained on full tool management, database integration, and policy reporting; institutional training module adopted]	evaluation forms.		records), MAE (training logistics), PCU consolidates evidence
Output.2.5: CWF Tool Integration with the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program, the National Agricultural and Livestock Policy (2025-2034) and MRV systems	Number of national programs of the targeted sectors and MRV systems integrating and implementing the CWF Tool	0 [CWF tool not yet integrated into national programs or MRV systems, though methodologies are fully aligned with PECC and GHG inventory frameworks]	1 [CWF integrated into PECC following technical guidelines of the program]	2 [CWF implemented within PECC and the National Agricultural MRV System]	Official resolutions or MoUs; MRV system dashboards and reports referencing CWF data; meeting minutes; verification reports.	Institutional coordination and political support maintained; MRV systems remain interoperable; producer organizations and communities engaged and benefiting from improved environmental performance.	MAE (lead, MRV and PECC integration); MAGP (sectoral data and MRV); FAO (technical validation and support); PCU consolidates documentation.

Component 3: Capacity development for compliance with international standards through the Implementation of Sustainable Practices

Outcome 3.1: Stakeholders enhance their capacities to comply with EU frameworks and other international standards

Outcome 3.1	Percentage of trained stakeholders (Including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) in the banana value chain demonstrating effective application of international sustainability standards (EU or equivalent) through verified use of Carbon and Water	0% [Within the scope of the project, trained stakeholders do not demonstrate verified application of EU or equivalent national and international	30% [At least 30% of trained stakeholders (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) demonstrate effective application of EU or equivalent national and international	60% [At least 60% of trained stakeholders (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) demonstrate sustained and effective application of EU or equivalent national and international	Post-training assessments; validated CWF reports; compliance documentation; audits or technical reviews; CWF system user records.	Trained stakeholders (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) have continued access to CWF tools and technical support, and international sustainability requirements remain applicable.	FAO validates technical application and compliance readiness; MAE and MAGP support field-level verification; MAE supports regulatory alignment; PCU consolidates and reports indicator data.
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	Footprint (CWF) tools	sustainability standards through the use of CWF-based reporting or compliance tools.]	sustainability standards, evidenced by correct use of CWF tools, completion of compliance-related exercises, or submission of validated footprint reports.]	al sustainability standards through routine use of CWF reporting integrated into operational, commercial, or regulatory processes.]			
Output 3.1.1: Knowledge management, communication, and capacity-building strategy developed and implemented for diverse beneficiaries (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) of the banana value chain on carbon and water footprint measurement and national and international regulatory standards, including training materials and field training and e-learning courses applying a gender, intercultural and intersectional approach	Number of beneficiaries participating in training sessions regarding the measurement of carbon and water footprints and international regulatory standards including comprehensive Training Materials and e-Learning Courses (disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic self-identification and typology) (minimum 40% women)	0 [No updated training materials or e-learning courses available for the new CWF version or for international regulatory standards (CSRD, SBTi, GHG Protocol); no beneficiaries trained]	1,500 [Beneficiaries (producers, technicians, auditors, institutional staff, and workers (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) trained using newly developed materials; one e-learning course launched; sex, age, ethnic self-identification and typology data recorded]	5,000 [Beneficiaries trained (≥45% women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples across banana, coffee, and cacao value chains, including producers, workers, auditors, and institutional staff; two e-learning courses integrated into institutional platforms]	Updated training materials and e-learning modules; attendance lists disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic self-identification and typology; course analytics; evaluations.	Stakeholder including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples and institutions actively participate; digital infrastructure and training logistics maintained; gender and intersectional inclusion and community engagement promoted.	MAE (lead, training coordination and implementation) with technical support from FAO; MAE and MAGP; PCU consolidates sex-age, ethnic self-identification and typology-disaggregated data and verifies results.

	Percentage increase in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices along the banana value chain among trained stakeholders, measured through pre- and post-training evaluations and field-level verification.	0%	20%	40%	Standardized pre-/post-training assessment tools; field verification checklists; producer self-reporting validated by technicians; digital MRV/CWF data; georeferenced evidence (photos, GPS logs, drone imagery); training attendance records; provincial implementation reports.	Producer including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples, technicians, and companies actively participate in training cycles; adequate technical support and inputs are available; incentives favor the adoption of sustainable practices; market requirements (EU regulation, private sector demand) remain stable; territorial teams maintain regular monitoring activities	FAO (technical oversight, quality assurance); producer associations and private sector partners (practice implementation data); MAGP and MAE territorial staff (field verification); PCU M&E Specialist (indicator consolidation and reporting).
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Outcome 3.2: Widespread adoption of sustainable alternatives, including Carbon and Water Footprint reduction practices to comply with EU, other international regulations and the Ecuador Zero Carbon Program standards and regulations

Outcome 3.2	Core Indicator 4: Number of hectares implementing innovative practices and technologies to enhance climate resilience, Carbon and Water	0	50,000	150,000	Field validation reports coordinated with Agrocalidad operative frameworks (BPA) and case studies;	Farmers (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), producer organizations, and	FAO (technical oversight and verification); Agrocalidad (technical support), producer association
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	Footprints reduction practices and meet EU regulatory standards, validated through case studies and field assessments (Target of 150,000 ha)	practices or technologies aligned with EU regulatory standards; pilot testing and field validation yet to begin]	(e.g., optimized fertilizer use, efficient irrigation, soil management, waste valorization) validated through field assessments and initial case studies]	practices validated through CWF data, field assessments, and case studies demonstrating compliance with EU sustainability and due diligence requirements; communities (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), benefiting from improved soil, water, and climate resilience]	CWF tool datasets; georeferenced monitoring data; producer association and private sector records.	companies adopt and maintain innovative practices; sufficient technical support and incentives provided; BPA frameworks remain operative; EU sustainability and due diligence standards remain stable; community participation and local engagement ensured.	s and private sector partners (field data and implementation); PCU consolidates spatial, technical, and community-level evidence
Outcome 3.2	Core Indicator 6: Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions	0 [No GHG emission reductions currently measured or verified through the CWF system; baseline emissions to be established through initial carbon footprint assessments]	478,191 tCO ₂ e [Estimated GHG emission reductions achieved during the project period (3 years) through adoption of improved banana production practices (e.g., optimized fertilizer use, renewable energy adoption, waste management) and initial soil carbon enhancement measures]	18,022,619 tCO ₂ e [Cumulative projected GHG emission reductions over 20 years, resulting from sustained adoption of low-emission banana production practices, soil carbon sequestration, and afforestation/revegetation of degraded or buffer areas; reductions verified through the CWF tool and integrated into national MRV and PECC reporting frameworks; communities (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio	CWF tool GHG reduction datasets; validated emission factors; field-based soil carbon monitoring; MRV and PECC reports; independent verification audits; geospatial analysis and case studies documenting long-term emission reductions and community co-benefits.	Farmers (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), and companies continue mitigation practices beyond project period; soil carbon and afforestation methodologies validated; institutional coordination ensures verification and MRV alignment; community participation supports sustained and land restoration.	MAE (lead, MRV and PECC integration); FAO (technical validation and reporting); MAGP and producer associations (field and soil data collection); PCU consolidates verified results and long-term emission reduction projections.

				peoples), benefiting from improved soil health, microclimate, and ecosystem services]			
Outcome 3.2	Percentage increase in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and along the banana value chain among trained stakeholders (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), measured through pre- and post-training evaluations and field-level verification.	0% [No standardized system exists to measure adoption of sustainable agricultural practices; producers and value chain actors have not yet been evaluated through harmonized pre-/post-training assessments or territorial verification. No consolidated evidence of practice implementation across Los Ríos, Guayas, and El Oro]	20% [Stakeholders including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples, (producers, technicians, and value chain actors) demonstrate at least a 20% improvement between pre- and post-training scores, and implement a minimum of three validated sustainable practices (e.g., optimized fertilizer use, IPM, irrigation optimization, soil organic matter enhancement) confirmed through territorial field checks, producer records, and digital reporting]	40% [Stakeholders (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), achieve a ≥40% increase in knowledge and practice adoption, with verified implementation of multiple sustainable practices across all intervention territories. Practice adoption reflected through pre-/post-assessment scores, CWF-linked monitoring, and field validation reports; widespread territorial uptake aligned with EU regulatory requirements and national sustainability frameworks]	Standardized pre-/post-training assessment tools; field verification checklists; producer self-reporting validated by technicians; digital MRV/CWF data; georeferenced evidence (photos, GPS logs, drone imagery); training attendance records; provincial implementation reports.	Producers, (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), technicians, and companies actively participate in training cycles; adequate technical support and inputs are available; incentives favor the adoption of sustainable practices; market requirements (EU regulation, private sector demand) remain stable; territorial teams maintain regular monitoring activities	FAO (technical oversight, quality assurance); producer associations, (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), and private sector partners (practice implementation data); MAGP and MAE territorial staff (field verification); PCU M&E Specialist (indicator consolidation and reporting).
Output.3.2.1: Output 3.2.1: Field validation,	Number of farmers (Including women, indigenous afro-descendants and	0 [No banana producers or	200 [Farmers (including women, indigenous	400 [Farmers (including women, indigenous afro-	PECC certification and award records; verification reports; CWF tool	Integration of CWF into PECC system completed; producers (including women, indigenous	MAE (lead, PECC management); FAO (technical validation); producer association

scaling up of sustainable practices, and cost-benefit analyses of existing practices and sustainable alternatives implemented by family farming, small-, medium- and large-scale producers or other stakeholders (including women, indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples) in the banana value chain to reduce carbon and water footprints with a gender transformative, intercultural and intersectional approaches.	Montubio peopless) and value chain companies that have been certified and/or awarded the distinction for quantifying Carbon Footprint and/or certified reduction of Carbon Footprint in products under the PECC program (minimum 40% women)	companies currently certified or awarded under the PECC using the CWF tool; methodologies are fully aligned but not yet operationally connected to PECC certification]	afro-descendants and Montubio peopless), or companies complete the certification process and receive the PECC distinction for quantified or reduced product-level Carbon Footprint using the CWF tool]	descendants and Montubio peopless and banana-producing companies certified or awarded under the PECC program for verified Carbon Footprint quantification and/or reduction]	registry of certified entities; MAE and PECC databases.	afro-descendants and Montubio peopless) and companies motivated to participate; through the cost-benefit analysis results, certification and verification processes function efficiently; community and market incentives sustained.	s and banana companies (data provision).
Output 3.2.2: A portfolio of pilot projects for water and carbon footprint reduction is financed or supported with tailored sustainable finance instruments and incentive mechanisms (monetary and non-monetary) aligned with	Increase in public and private investment per production unit on innovative practices and technologies to enhance climate resilience, Carbon and Water Footprints reduction achieved through project intervention	0 [No additional investment per unit of production currently attributable to project interventions; baseline production and investment data to	7% [Increment in investment per unit of production (USD/ton) achieved in target farms (including farms and companies led by women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peopless), through access to	15% [Increment in investment per unit of production achieved across banana, coffee, and cacao value chains through project-facilitated financing schemes, improved resource-use efficiency, and adoption of sustainability standards;	Financial and production records from participating farms (including farms and companies led by women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peopless); reports from financial institutions	Market conditions and prices remain stable; producers (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peopless), and companies reinvest in sustainable practices; financing mechanisms become	MAE (lead, economic performance monitoring) with support from FAO (data validation); producer associations (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peopless) and

PECC and regulatory frameworks.	s (disaggregated by sex, age and ethnic self-identification) minimum 40% women indigenous, afro-descendants and Montubio peoples.	be established during the first year through value chain and farm-level assessments]	sustainable financing mechanisms, efficiency gains, and adoption of CWF-certified practices]	contributing to long-term economic and environmental resilience]	and sustainable investment programs; case studies.	accessible; data on production and investment collected consistently.	financial partners (data collection and reporting); PCU consolidates farm- and company-level data.
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Component 4: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Outcome 4.1: Effective gender-responsive project implementation based on adaptive management

Outcome 4.1:	Core Indicator 11: People benefiting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (count)	0 [No consolidated record of beneficiaries or gender data]	20,000 – [Beneficiaries across banana, coffee, and cacao value chains and adjacent communities (≥8,000 women, ≥12,000 men)]	80,000 [Total beneficiaries along value chains (≈50% women), including producers, traders, auditors, institutional staff, and those covered in Outputs 2.4, 3.1.1, 3.2.1, as well as communities benefiting from improved environmental conditions]	Beneficiary registry; attendance lists and sex-disaggregated data; producer and value chain association and MRV reports; e-learning analytics; field evidence of communities benefiting from reduced pollution, improved water management, and sustainable land use.	Adoption of CWF tool across value chains sustained; gender and intersectional community inclusion promoted; environmental benefits (e.g., improved resource efficiency, reduced emissions) directly reaching local populations.	PCU consolidates data from FAO, MAE, MAGP, and producer and exporters associations; local organizations document community-level impacts and beneficiary participation.
Output.4.1.1: Baseline establishment for project indicators.	Baselines established for project indicators	No	Yes	Yes	Approved baseline assessment documenting baseline values for all project indicators.	Relevant institutions (MAE, MAGP, PECC Secretariat and other data holders) provide timely access to existing administrative and	PCU

						sectoral data required to establish baselines.	
Output.4.1.2 Comprehensive and gender transformative monitoring and Evaluation System established.	A comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system incorporating gender-responsive indicators, sex-disaggregated data, and gender-transformative principles is developed and operational.	No [No Project Steering Committee (PSC) or M&E system established; no structured mechanism for capturing and integrating feedback into implementation.]	Yes [M&E system designed and operational; PSC formally established and meeting regularly; first recommendations documented and partially reflected in workplan updates.]	Yes [Fully functional M&E and PSC mechanisms; all recommendations from PSC meetings, PIRs, and monitoring activities systematically integrated into project planning, budgets, and implementation, improving efficiency and environmental outcomes.]	Project Implementation Reports (PIRs) / Annual Progress Project reports, PSC meeting minutes, PIRs, annual workplans showing adjustments based on recommendations, documentation of improvements resulting from adaptive actions.	Stakeholders participate in M&E processes, including The PSC and M&E system are fully established and active; project management maintains an adaptive and learning-oriented approach; stakeholder participation (including women, indigenous afro-descendants and Montubio peoples), and data quality are ensured.	PCU (lead) develops and manages M&E systems; FAO provides technical oversight and ensures feedback loop; MAE and MAGP contribute with national-level validation.
Output.4.1.3 Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports prepared including an assessment on gender and cultural pertinence of the project	Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports validated	No	Yes	Yes	Mid-term Review and Terminal Evaluation reports validated by independent Office of Evaluation	Required project data, documentation, and stakeholders are accessible to evaluators.	PCU

ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount (\$)
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	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
Local consultants - Specialist in sustainability applied to value chains and environmental footprints (regional)	14,175.00	14,175.00	0.00
Local consultants - Specialist in agricultural policy and socio-environmental and gender analysis (local)	14,175.00	14,175.00	0.00
Local consultants - Administrative and Financial Analyst	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
International consultant GEF Project Design Expert (PDE)	6,750.00	6,750.00	0.00
Local Stakeholder Consultations	2,500.00	2,253.00	247.00
National Travel	3,000.00	1,874.00	1,126.00
Mitigation Analysis (NEXT)	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00
Assessing capacity of executing partners	5,400.00	0.00	5,400.00
Total	50,000.00	41,227.00	8,773.00

ANNEX E: PROJECT MAP AND COORDINATES

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Los Rios	-1.6500	-79.45000	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
El Oro	-3.3333	-79.8333	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Guayas	-2.2500	-79.9167	

Location Description:

Activity Description:

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

The project has a national scope, focusing on strengthening policy frameworks, institutional coordination, and MRV systems at the central level (Components 1 and 2). These interventions will enable replication and scaling of project approaches across additional agricultural value chains beyond bananas, supporting systemic sustainability transitions within Ecuador's agri-food sector.

Component 3 activities will be implemented in the three main banana-producing provinces of Ecuador, Los Ríos, Guayas, and El Oro, which together account for over 150,000 hectares of cultivated banana area, representing the core of the country's export production and employment base. Within these provinces, interventions will be geographically targeted to the municipalities with the highest concentration of banana plantations and related agribusiness activities: Valencia, Babahoyo, Baba, Puebloviejo, Vinces, Buena Fe, Quinsaloma, Ventanas, and Quevedo in Los Ríos; Naranjal, El Triunfo, Balao, Milagro, San Jacinto de Yaguachi, Guayaquil, and Simón Bolívar in Guayas; and Machala, Pasaje, El Guabo, Santa Rosa, Urdaneta, and Arenillas in El Oro.

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Figure 1 provides a national-level spatial overview of banana-planted areas in continental Ecuador (2022), highlighting the geographic concentration and relative contribution of banana cultivation by province. The analysis shows a pronounced concentration of production in Los Ríos, Guayas, and El Oro, which together account for the majority of the national banana-planted area and constitute the core of Ecuador's export-oriented banana sector. This spatial pattern establishes the rationale for prioritizing these provinces for field-level interventions, ensuring that policy, institutional, and MRV system strengthening are directly aligned with territories where environmental pressures, production intensity, and mitigation potential are highest, thereby maximizing the effectiveness and scalability of project outcomes.

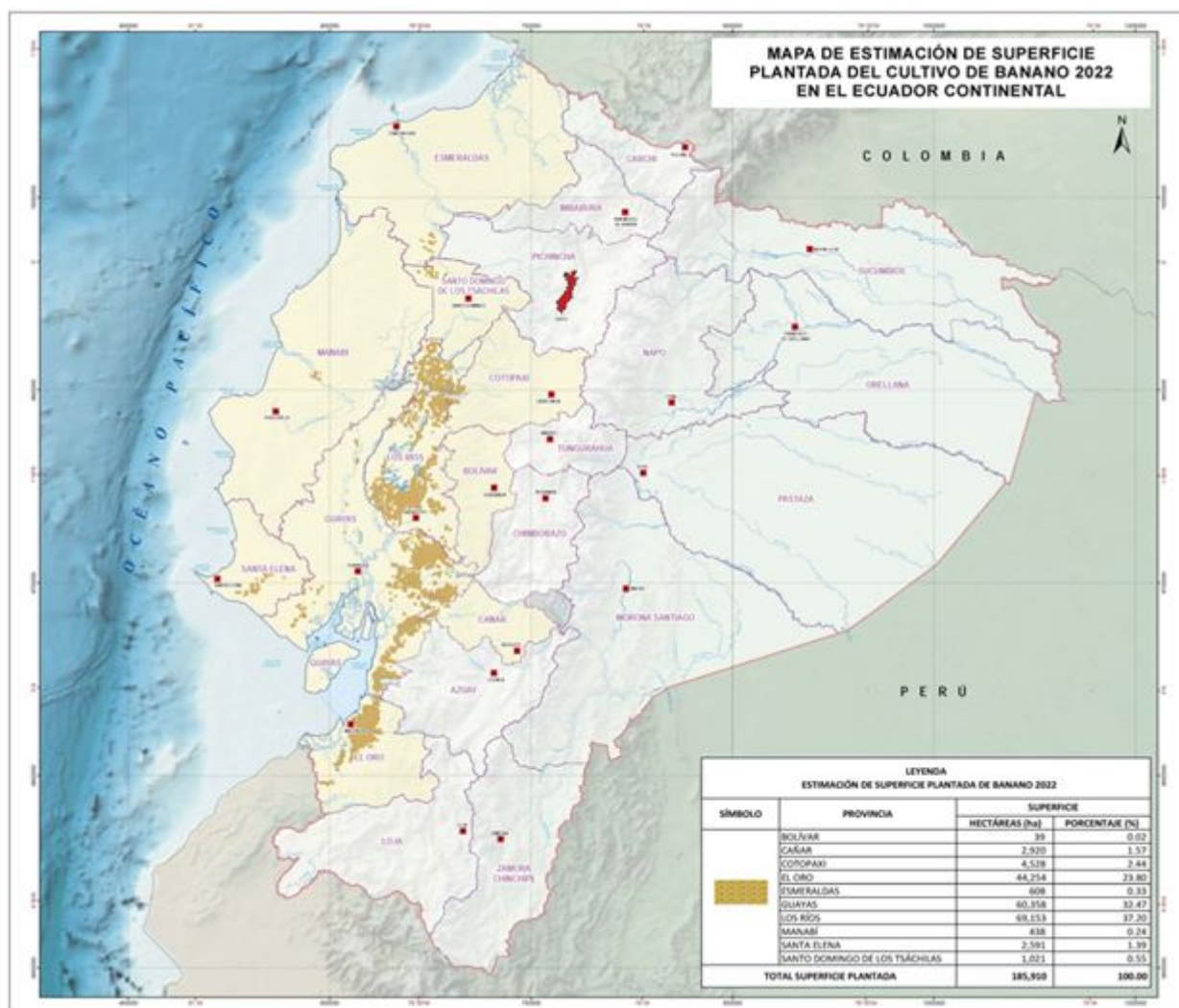


Figure 1: Estimated planted area of banana cultivation in continental Ecuador, MAGP (2022)

Building on this national context, Figure 2 presents the project intervention map for the priority provinces of Los Ríos, Guayas, and El Oro, integrating the spatial distribution of banana plantations and soil organic carbon (SOC) stocks. This overlay supports evidence-based prioritization of field interventions, directing project investments toward areas where intensive production overlaps with lower SOC levels, thereby maximizing potential climate mitigation, land restoration, and productivity co-benefits.

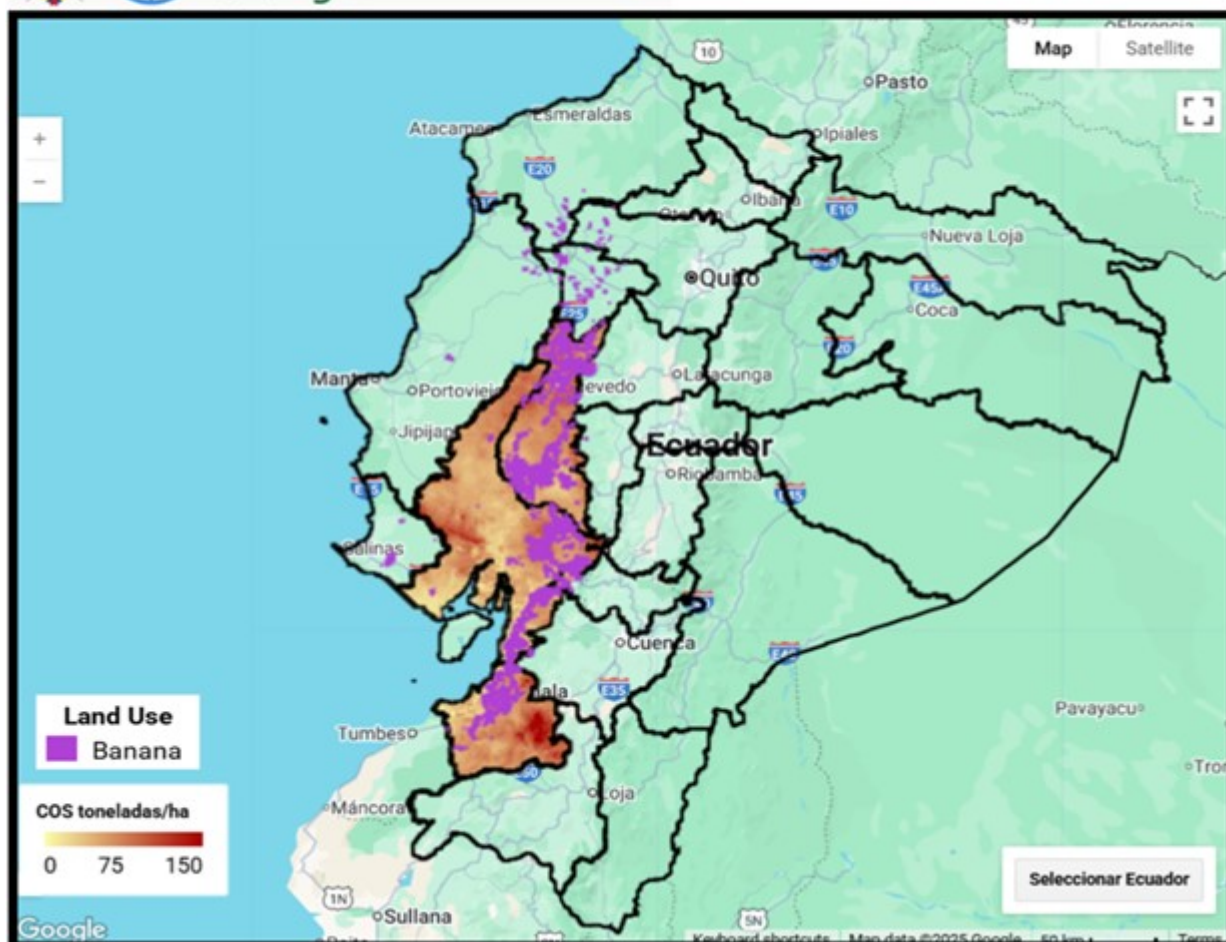


Figure 2: Overall Project Intervention Area: Distribution of Banana Plantations and Soil Organic Carbon Stocks in Guayas, Los Ríos, and El Oro

In Los Ríos (Figure 3), the project will operate in the municipalities of *Valencia* (13,007 ha), *Babahoyo* (8,781 ha), *Baba* (8,139 ha), *Puebloviejo* (6,735 ha), *Vinces* (3,381 ha), *Buena Fe* (5,636 ha), *Quinsaloma* (3,722 ha), *Ventanas* (2,848 ha), and *Quevedo* (4,890 ha), which together account for more than 57,000 hectares of banana plantations. This province constitutes the core of medium-scale and large banana production in Ecuador, characterized by company-owned farms supplying national exporters. Project interventions in Los Ríos will focus on the implementation of sustainable production practices, carbon and water footprint monitoring, and field demonstrations to test and validate low-emission technologies adapted to diverse farm typologies.

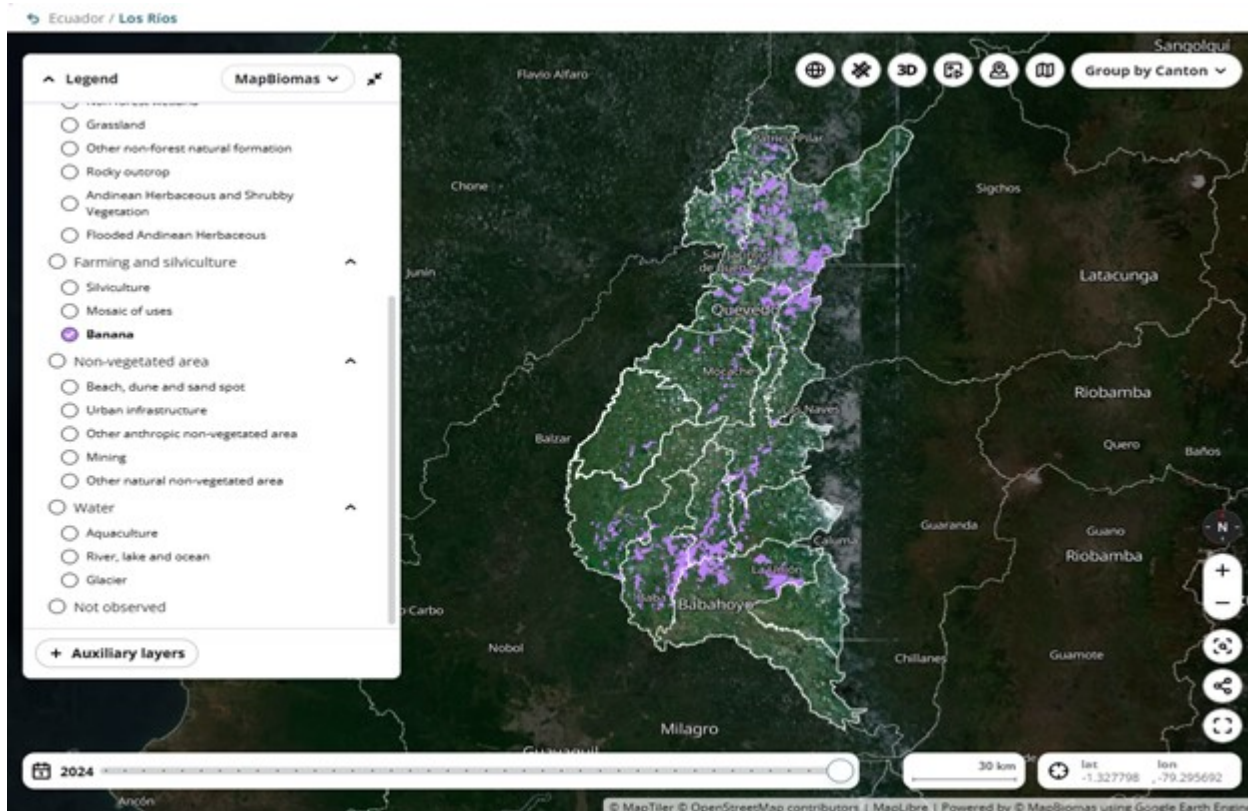


Figure 3. Spatial Distribution of Banana Cultivation Areas in Los Ríos Province, Ecuador (MapBiomias, 2024).

In Guayas (Figure 3), project activities will concentrate in the municipalities of Naranjal (15,009 ha), El Triunfo (7,696 ha), Balao (6,821 ha), Milagro (6,449 ha), San Jacinto de Yaguachi (3,415 ha), Guayaquil (2,713 ha), and Simón Bolívar (4,893 ha), totaling approximately 47,000 hectares of banana cultivation. As Ecuador’s principal hub for banana export logistics, processing, and certification, Guayas plays a strategic role in connecting producers to international markets. The province combines large-scale commercial plantations with a growing number of medium producers adopting sustainability standards to maintain export competitiveness and environmental compliance.

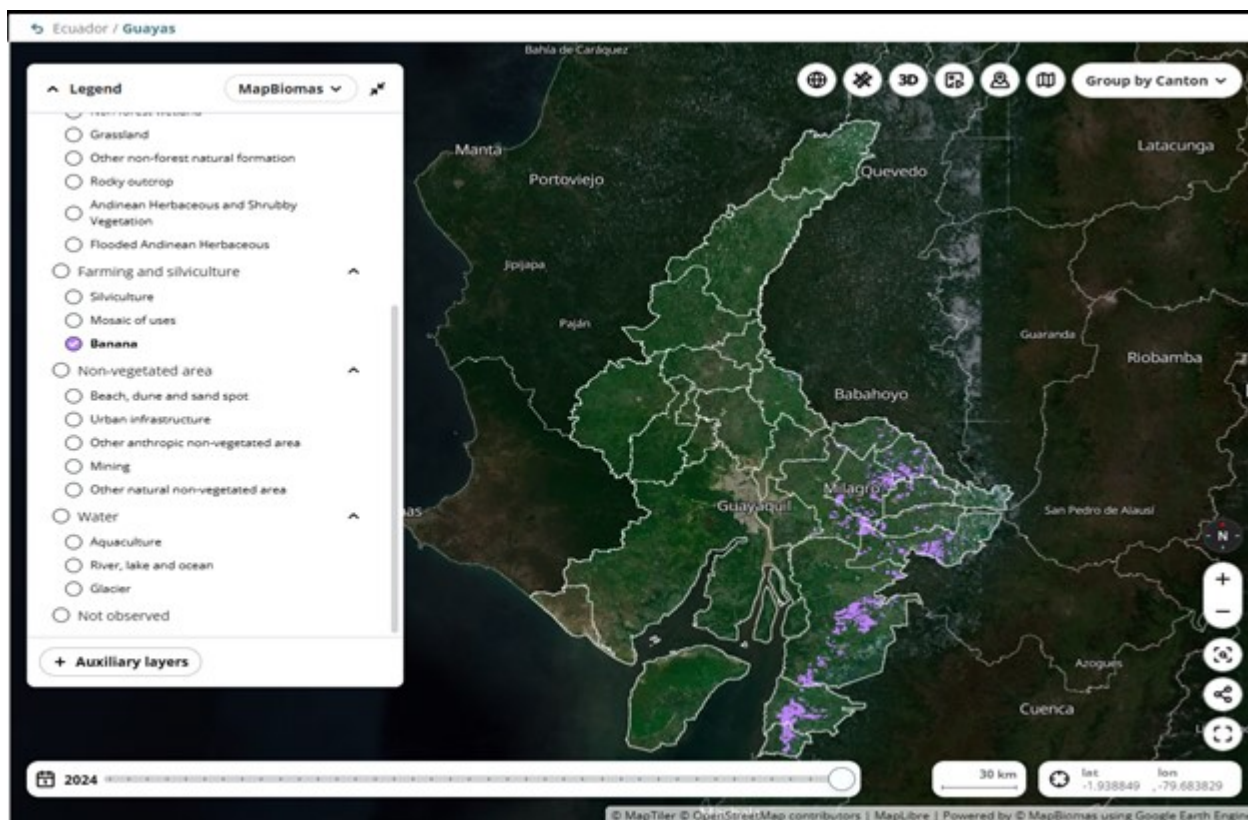


Figure 4. Spatial Distribution of Banana Cultivation Areas in Guayas Province, Ecuador (MapBiomas, 2024).

In El Oro (Figure 5), interventions will focus on the municipalities of *Machala* (14,488 ha), *Pasaje* (7,855 ha), *El Guabo* (16,599 ha), *Santa Rosa* (4,708 ha), *Arenillas* (1,751 ha), and *Urdaneta* (1,661 ha), representing a total of approximately 47,000 hectares of banana plantations. Banana production in this province is dominated by smallholder farms integrated into export-oriented supply chains. Given its high production density and environmental vulnerability, El Oro serves as a strategic area for testing and validating low-emission, resource-efficient practices and for strengthening the sustainability and traceability of banana production systems.

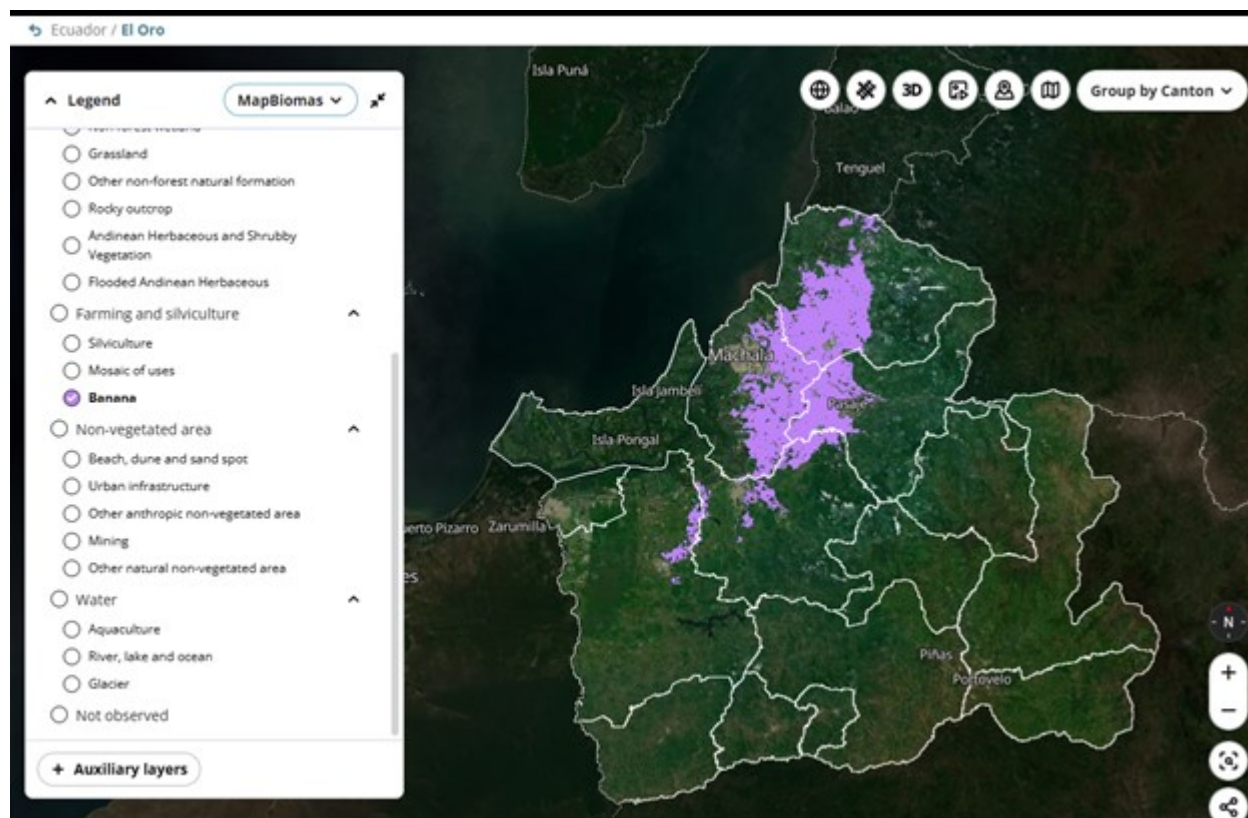


Figure 5. Spatial Distribution of Banana Cultivation Areas in El Oro, Ecuador (MapBiomias, 2024).

ANNEX F: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS SCREEN AND RATING

Attach agency safeguard datasheet/assessment report(s), including ratings of risk types and overall project/program risk classification as well as any management plans or measures to address identified risks and impacts (as applicable).

Title

11923 ANNEX F Environmental and Social Management Plan

ANNEX F1 Climate risk screening_Ecuador

Full ES Risk Screening checklist for project 755893

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE

Please upload the budget table here.

FAO Cost Categories	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3		M&E (Component 4)	Subtotal	PMC	Total	Responsible Entity
	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3.1	Outcome 3.2	Outcome 4.1				
5013 Consultants									
National Consultants									
Project Coordinator	-	-	-	-	-	-	108,000	108,000	Ministry of Environme

									nt and Energy MAE
<i>Administrative and Financial Assistant</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	46,800	46,800	MAE
<i>Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist (Data analyst)</i>	7,000	29,400	17,000	33,000	-	86,400	-	86,400	MAE
<i>Climate Finance Specialist (Nature Based Solutions)</i>	13,200	-	2,000	4,000	-	19,200	-	19,200	MAE
<i>Specialist for Sustainable Agricultural Value Chains and Greenhouse Gas Low-Carbon and water management</i>	22,000	29,600	5,200	20,000	-	76,800	-	76,800	MAE
<i>Social, Gender and Safeguards Technician and focal point</i>	16,600	5,000	5,400	18,000	-	45,000	-	45,000	MAE
<i>Knowledge Management and Communications Technician</i>	7,200	7,200	7,200	-	-	21,600	-	21,600	MAE
<i>Regional Technical Specialist</i>	-	-	10,000	46,880	-	56,880	-	56,880	MAE
<i>Promoter (1) El Oro</i>	-	-	2,000	22,000	-	24,000	-	24,000	MAE
<i>Promoter (1) Guayas</i>	-	-	2,000	22,000	-	24,000	-	24,000	MAE
<i>Promoter (1) Los Rios</i>	-	-	2,000	22,00	-	24,000	-	24,000	MAE
5013 Sub-total consultants	66,000	71,200	52,800	187,880	-	377,880	154,800	532,680	-
5650 Contracts				-					
<i>Development of Updated Ecuador Carbon Zero Programme (PECC) Technical Standard & Governance/Financial Model with participatory methodologies and inclusive approaches (O 1.1)</i>	19,113	19,667	-	-	-	38,780	-	38,780	MAE
<i>Agri-Environmental Policy Analysis to support inclusive Policy Dialogue Sessions with the participation of different stakeholders including women and youth and gender mainstreaming (O 1.2)</i>	11,080	-	-	-	-	11,080	-	11,080	MAE
<i>Development of Green Finance Instruments & Incentive Design with intersectional approach (O 1.3)</i>	33,240	-	-	-	-	33,240	-	33,240	MAE
<i>Update of the Methodological Guide for Measurement of Carbon and Water Footprints on Banana Value Chains (O 2.1)</i>	-	50,000	-	-	-	50,000	-	50,000	MAE

<i>Enhancement of the Carbon and Water Footprint (CWF) tool to integrate new modules, datasets, interoperability upgrades (PECC and MRV) participatory testing and validation with diverse actors of the value chain including women and youth (O 2.1)</i>	10,029	89,971	-	-	-	100,000	-	100,000	MAE
<i>Development of a CWF methodology and tool for coffee and cocoa and validation with stakeholders including women and youth from both value chains (O 2.3)</i>	-	80,000	-	-	-	80,000	-	80,000	MAE
<i>Development of national, curriculum, educommunication strategy and materials on climate change, low-carbon and water-efficient practices, PECC and Green Finance Instruments for diverse stakeholders including small holders, women and youth in the banana value chain and communication of project results to international buyers (O 3.1.1)</i>	-	-	50,000	-	-	50,000	-	50,000	MAE
<i>Development of technical guides and user manuals for banana, coffee and cocoa value chains, covering CWF tool use, PECC programme, Green Finance Instruments and low-carbon and water-efficient good practices, with an intersectional approach (O 3.1.1)</i>	-	15,000	45,000	20,000	-	80,000	-	80,000	MAE
<i>Cost benefit analysis and field validation of sustainable practices to reduce carbon and water footprints in different production systems (agroecological, organic, conventional, agroforestry) (O 3.2.1)</i>	-	-	-	65,000	-	65,000	-	65,000	MAE
<i>Development of e-learning courses for different banana value chain actors (O 3.1.1)</i>	-	-	60,000	40,000	-	100,000	-	100,000	MAE
<i>Gender analysis of the banana value chain in Ecuador (O 4.1)</i>	-	-	12,872	-	-	12,872	-	12,872	MAE
<i>Mid-Term Review (Contracted Services) includes a gender responsive and cultural pertinence project assesment (O 4.2)</i>	-	-	-	-	12,494	12,494	-	12,494	FAO
<i>Spot Checks (O.4.1.3)</i>	-	-	-	-	8,550	8,550	-	8,550	FAO

<i>Evaluation Audits (O.4.1.3)</i>	-	-	-	-	17,000	17,000		17,000	FAO
<i>Final Evaluation (Independent Evaluation Company) (O 4.3)</i>	-	-	-	-	40,000	40,000	-	40,000	FAO
<i>Terminal Report</i>	-	-	-	-	6,550	6,550	-	6,550	FAO
5050 Sub-total contracts	73,462	254,638	167,872	125,000	84,594	705,566	-	705,566	-
5021 Travel				-					
International Travel				-					
<i>International Travel</i>	7,000	-	2,333	4,667	-	14,000	-	14,000	MAE
Domestic Travel				-					
<i>Domestic Travel (Flight Tickets)</i>	6,000	-	6,333	13,667	-	26,000	-	26,000	MAE
<i>Mobilization and transport for field team across the intervention territories</i>	10,000	10,000	10,000	20,000	-	50,000	-	50,000	MAE
5021 Sub-total travel	23,000	10,000	18,666	38,334	-	90,000	-	90,000	-
5023 Training and Meetings				-					
<i>Inception Workshop for project team includig low carbon and water practices, gender awareness, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), in the banana value chain</i>	1,500	2,500	500	500	-	5,000	-	5,000	MAE
<i>Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meetings</i>	1,500	1,700	290	500	-	3,990	-	3,990	MAE
<i>Technical Committee (TC) Meetings</i>	750	2,390	250	600	-	3,990	-	3,990	MAE
<i>Stakeholder Roundtables & Policy Dialogue Sessions with different value chain stakeholders including input suppliers, producers, exporters, importers, women in leadership positions and women banana producers (O. 1.2)</i>	15,000	-	-	-	-	15,000	-	15,000	MAE
<i>Comprehensive capacity-building sessions targeting banana, coffee and cacao stakeholders across all typologies in climate-smart practices and other relevant aspects such as GBV prevention in the value chains and PSEA, O 3.1)</i>	15,000	20,000	45,000	80,000	-	160,000	-	160,000	MAE
<i>Trainings for value chain and public institutions (Exporters, Traders, Ports, Logistics, Packaging, Certifiers) in CWF, PECC, International</i>	15,000	-		44,000	-	59,000	-	59,000	MAE

<i>Standards, Financial Incentives with inclusive approaches (O 3.2.1)</i>									
<i>Free, prior, informed consent of the project with small holders associations including women and youth O 1.2.2)</i>	10,000	-	-	-	-	10,000	-	10,000	MAE
<i>Care support for women assisting with infants and pedagogic kit for Farm Field Schools, field trainings, trainings and meetings (O 3.2.1)</i>	-	-	-	4,000		4,000		4,000	MAE
5023 Sub-total Training and meetings	58,750	26,590	46,040	129,600	-	260,980	-	260,980	-
5024 Expendable procurement				-					
<i>Meeting materials including printing and photocopying of documents, paper supplies, folders, name badges, table name plates, flipchart paper, markers, notepads, pens and other expendable stationery required for Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Technical Committee (TC) meetings.</i>	1,500	400	50	54	-	2,004	-	2,004	MAE
<i>Field Monitoring Equipment (e.g. sensors, water meters)</i>	-	-	-	20,000	-	20,000	-	20,000	MAE
<i>Technology equipment such as computers, tablets, GPS, drones and other data collection tools</i>	35,000	-	-	-	-	35,000	-	35,000	MAE
<i>Farmer field schools and demonstration plots for smallholders, medium and large producers including women and youth in the banana value chain including affirmative actions (O 3.1.2)</i>	-	-	-	130,254	-	130,254	-	130,254	MAE
5024 Sub-total expendable procurement	36,500	400	50	150,308	-	187,258	-	187,258	-
TOTAL	257,712	362,828	285,428	631,122	84,594	1,621,684	154,800	1,776,484	-

Please explain any aspects of the budget as needed here

From GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF.

Regarding the GEFSEC comment to the CEO endorsement request:

'The Agency is requested to report on the implementation of the GAP in its PIR, MTR and TE, in particular, highlighting challenges, lessons learned and best practices, and any adjustments introduced (adaptive management), as applicable.'

The Agency confirm that these will be reported, as is the usual practice in GEF projects implemented by FAO.