

2019

Project Implementation Review (PIR)

**Landscape Approach Mountain Eco.Serv.**

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# Basic Data

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| **Project Information** | |
| UNDP PIMS ID | 4716 |
| GEF ID | 4846 |
| Title | A landscape approach to the conservation of threatened mountain ecosystems |
| Country(ies) | Cuba, Cuba |
| UNDP-GEF Technical Team | Ecosystems and Biodiversity |
| Project Implementing Partner | Government |
| Joint Agencies | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Project Type | Full Size |

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| **Project Description** |
| 1. This project will make a paradigm shift in biodiversity conservation and protected area management in Cuba, from a site based approach to a landscape approach that integrates PAs into the surrounding areas. This is necessary in order to protect core refugia for biodiversity, while addressing fragmentation from production practices in the landscape as a whole, and countering threats such as fire and pollution which have their origins in the practices employed in the production landscape. Hence, the strategic landscape approach supported through this project will constitute an innovative approach and contribute to strengthen the management effectiveness of the PA system. The project will focus on threatened mountain ecosystems located in the principal mountain ranges of the country, which are legally considered as Special Sustainable Development Regions (REDS) and managed by Mountain Organisms (multi-institutional entities directed by a Tripartite Commission composed by the Ministry of Agriculture MINAG, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment CITMA, and the Ministry of the Armed Forces (MINFAR). It will work across altitudinal gradients reaching from mountain ridges to foothills in order to maintain functional connectivity. The project will take a combined BD SO 1 and SO 2 approach, to strengthen the management of PAs, expand PA coverage and ensure the compatibility of PA management with the conservation of BD in production sectors and landscapes. |

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| Project Implementing Partner | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| Other Partners | *(not set or not applicable)* |

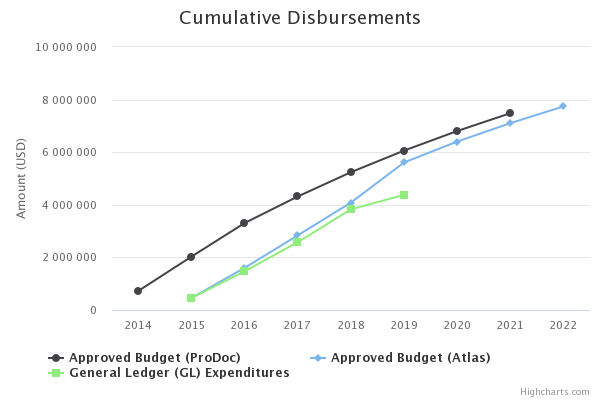
# Overall Ratings

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| Overall DO Rating | Moderately Satisfactory |
| Overall IP Rating | Satisfactory |
| Overall Risk Rating | Moderate |

# Development Progress

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| **Description** | | | | | | |
| **Objective**  **Biodiversity effectively buffered from current and future threats across mountain landscapes, from the foothills to the mountain ridges** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| O.1 Area of major vegetation types in the four target REDS | Guaniguanico  Cuabal (Cb) 1,569.40 ha  Holm oak forest 6,734.73 ha  Pine grove 52,162.40 ha  Semideciduous on acid soil 33,094.92 ha  Semideciduous on limestone 63,232.55 ha  Xerophyll mogote complex 27,315.86 ha  Planted broadleaved (Pt-Lsp) 9,740.76 ha  Pine plantation 67,903.36 ha    Guamuhaya  Scrubland (Chr) 1,299.99 ha  Pine grove 105.53 ha  Mountain rainforest 10,646.55 ha  Semideciduous on acid soil 41,436.31 ha  Semideciduous on limestone 35,600.36  Xerophyll mogote complex 2,930.32 ha    Bamburanao  Cuabal (Cb) 86.29 ha  Mangrove forest 862.20 ha  Pine grove 44.60 ha  Semideciduous on acid soil 1.87 ha  Semideciduous on limestone 18,783.04 ha  Semideciduouson soil with poor drainage 814.50 ha  Xerophyll mogote complex 354.87 ha  Planted broadleaved (Pt-Lsp) 353.38 ha  Pine plantation 516.98 ha    N-S-B  Cuabal (Cb) 2,492.06 ha  Scrubland (Chr) 28,495.31 ha  Mangrove forest 716.56 ha  Coastal marshy tropical forest 943.67 ha  Pine grove 52,456.50 ha  Pluvisilva Rainforest 28,922.30 ha  Mountain rainforest 100,698.07 ha  Semideciduous on acid soil 112,721.11 ha  Semideciduous on limestone 37,832.30 ha  Semideciduouson soil with poor drainage 60.79 ha  Xerophyll mogote complex 23,781.61 ha  Xerófilo de(Xt) 20,168.16 ha  Planted broadleaved (Pt-Lsp) 7,365.31 ha  Pine plantation 20,501.71 ha | *(not set or not applicable)* | No net loss of any major vegetation type | No loss of any type of vegetation is reported in the four REDS, the affectations caused by extreme hydrometeorological events (Hurricane Irma and heavy rains) did not significantly affect the forest heritage in the project intervention areas.  The project design (baseline) describes a classification of natural formations according to the country’s forest cover map that was made in 2012. At present, the Forest, Wildlife and Flora Directorate, national authority that contributes this information, classifies and reports the natural formations as established in the Forest Law, which describes the forest formations defined for Cuba. It establishes 16 forest formations, of which only 13 are represented in the REDS: Charrascal/Scrubland, Encinar/Holm oak forest, Mangrove forest, Coastal marshy tropical forest, Fresh woodland, Cloudy woodland, Pine grove, Rainforest, Mountain rainforest, Semi-deciduous on acid soil, Semi-deciduous on limestone, Semi-deciduous on soil with poor drainage, Xerophyll mogote complex.  The end-of-project indicator establishes that there is no loss of any vegetation type; it is considered convenient to report henceforth the classification by sector and measure its performance from maintaining the committed total of hectares, regardless of the classification type.  Attached is Annex 1. Table with the report on forest cover hectares by natural formations and provinces that are comprised in the 4 RDES. | No loss of any type of vegetation is reported in the four REDS.    The 2018 closing certification indicates that the behavior of forested formations and plantations established with respect to what is represented in the baseline is positive and natural forests did not diminish.    In previous years, the mechanisms existing in the country facilitated the assimilation of this information by the provinces where the project intervenes; but they did not differentiate the mountain areas. At present, with the impact of the project, the information has higher quality, since it allows differentiating the mountain municipalities in which the project intervenes.    Annex 1. Table with forest dynamics for each province of the REDS.    The Mid-Term Evaluation recommended changes in this indicator, according to our suggestions. That is why, since last year we have been working with the classification applied by MINAG. |
| O.2 Índex of ecosystem integrity in 6 of the priority PAs (covering 155,559ha) of importance as refuges in prioritized connectivity zones within the REDS | Values to be defined in PY1 in each target PA | *(not set or not applicable)* | Indices remain stable due to increased effectiveness of PA management and combat of external threats affecting PAs | The ecological integrity index (EII) was assessed for the conservation objects in the selected PAs, reporting the following values:  •Mil Cumbres: 2.45  •RB Sierra del Rosario: 2.55  •Jobo Rosado: 3.0  •Lomas de Banao: 2.98  •Topes de Collantes: 1.98  •Pico Cristal: 2.95  •Alejandro de Humboldt: 2.86  The EII are kept stable, except in the PAs Pico Cristal and Alejandro de Humboldt that show higher values, due to the increase in management effectiveness.  The book “Monitoring protocols for conservation objects to assess ecological integrity in protected areas of mountain ecosystems in Cuba” is in edition process. It will allow to standardize and replicate the assessment methodology. This tool will be available for the first time in Cuba.  The following documents are attached:  Annexes (2.1 to 2.4) Assessment forms for the Ecological Integrity Indexes of each REDS.  Annex 3. Document with EII assessment and sample of some monitoring protocols. | The assessment of these indexes was reported last year and will be done again at the end of the project. Therefore, we are reporting the progress in maintaining these values for the fulfillment of the final goal. A technical meeting was held with the specialists who carry out the monitoring of the EII in the PAs, where the forms to measure the ecological attributes of conservation objects were updated, the monitoring protocols were simplified for a better understanding by the PA technicians and the forms for data collection in the field were prepared.    Work was carried out with the PAs to incorporate the ecological integrity index to the biological diversity monitoring program as management plans for the selected areas are updated.    In the selected PAs, work was conducted to reduce the causes and sources of threats to conservation objects, together with the Forest Guard Corps. |
| O.3 Indexes of species diversity and abundance in the priority areas for the connectivity of the four REDSs focused on some target groups (functional or taxonomic) | Species lists and abundances to be compiled through sampling once detailed methodology is defined in Year 1 (species lists already exist for the core refuges in the 4 REDS | *(not set or not applicable)* | 15 new species are observed in key connectivity zones of each massif over the life of the project | Nine field expeditions were carried out in REDS Guaniguanico, Guamuhaya and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa, with the objective of doing an inventory of the existing biodiversity in connectivity zones of the biological corridor, in buffer zones, outside PAs like: Agroforestry farms, coffee plantations, among others. A database was developed with 1945 records, pertaining to 680 species. This constitutes an important breakthrough for the effective treatment in each REDS, under the landscape approach intended by the project.  In REDS Bamburanao, it is foreseen to carry out the inventories next semester, because there are not enough specialists of the different biological groups.  Annex 4. Base\_Datos\_Biota\_Paisajes | Field expeditions were carried out in the four REDS, with the objective of monitoring biodiversity in high-priority connectivity zones in areas proposed for the construction of biological corridors. Recommendations were made for reforestation with native plants.    In the case of Bamburanao REDS, inventories were increased with 74 species of fauna and 180 of flora.    Annex 2. List of species identified in Bamburanao REDS.    These inventories have allowed us to identify more than 15 new species in the connectivity zone of each REDS, which demonstrates an overachievement of the project’s final goal for this indicator.    A map was made with the index of species richness by 100-ha (1km2) polygons within each REDS, with all the diversity of fauna and flora known so far, including records obtained during field expeditions. Information gaps on biological diversity within the PAs and the connectivity areas between them are identified, with the objective of knowing the places where there are no inventories of these groups, for the future field trip preparation.    Annex 3. Maps of species richness in each REDS.    The database from which the map of all the biological diversity in the four REDS was prepared, which includes the historical records and those obtained in the field trips, was extended to 15174 records.  Guaniguanico: 6358 records of 890 species.  Guamuhaya: 3013 records of 1023 species.  Bamburanao: 978 records of 328 species.  Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa: 5459 records of 618 species.    For the first time in the country, biological diversity diagnoses are made from the mountain top to the coast. Expeditions were carried out for this purpose:    Bamburanao REDS: biodiversity inventory in the connectivity route from Sierra de Bamburanao to Yagüey Abajo coastal wetland. For the first time, the inventory of Agroforestry and Agroecological Farms was carried out in this area, where the main native plant species were identified, which should be included in the reforestation plan to improve connectivity. New fauna records were reported for the locality, which gives importance to the site and indicates the possibility of  identifying new natural values of this group.    Annex 4. Water quality analysis report in the Cabagán River    Guamuhaya REDS: diagnosis of the basin of Cabagan River, Cumanayagua, Cienfuegos and Trinidad, Sancti Spiritus, which is the pilot area within the project to analyze connectivity from the mountain top to the coast. Physical, chemical and biological parameters of the water were analyzed. Polluting sources were identified and the state of the vegetation of the water-regulating strip in three areas of interest was evaluated: close to the river source, in center and near the its mouth. It was found that the effects of anthropization have caused a high degradation of river banks, bringing about damage to the development of native flora and fauna, and a large number of invasive flora species, which influences on the decrease in water quality from regular to bad. All this indicates the actions that we must execute to reverse this deterioration.    Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS: biodiversity diagnosis and inventory in Mata River basin and the Water-Ground-Forest polygon linked to Task Life in Baracoa, Guantanamo, both affected by Hurricane Matthew. The most representative plant formations in the basin were evaluated, and the main threats were identified as wood extraction, soil erosion, hurricane impact, environment disturbance and deterioration (creation of dumping grounds), fires caused for planting crops in almost the whole basin and bad agricultural practices, the invasion of alien plant species after the impact of Hurricane Matthew, displacing some endemic and native species. Mainly in the lower part of the river there is no hydro-regulating strip and these areas are used as croplands for tomatoes and other legumes, using chemical fertilizers. We are working with communities near the polygon and the river in raising awareness towards the conservation and protection of cultural and biodiversity values.    Annex 5. Report on the current state of biodiversity in Mata River basin, Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS.    The MTR recommendations propose to change this objective indicator, with which the project management agrees. The new indicator would consist of species diversity and abundance indexes in the high-priority areas for connectivity in the four REDS, focused on some target groups (functional or taxonomic). They also propose to change the source of verification that would be with the databases. For this purpose, target groups in each REDS have already been selected, as well as the indexes to assess biological diversity in high-priority connectivity areas. |
| O.4 Cumulative width of non-forest gaps separating habitat blocks in prioritized connectivity zones | Monitoring methodology and baseline values to be defined in PY1 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Reduction of non-forest gaps, facilitating movement of species between habitat refuges (targets to be defined in PY1) | For the analysis of fragmentation, satellite image LandSat OLI 8 platform of 2017 and 2018 was used. The standardized vegetation index (NDVI) was calculated. Pixels with values between 0.7 and 1.0 and less than 1 were extracted and the vegetation cover map was obtained. With this layer of information, it was adjusted to the limit of each biological corridor of each REDS. The analysis of fragmentation and connectivity was calculated, GUIDOS software version 2.5 was used.  REDs / Fragmentation / Connectivity  Guaniguanico /23.21% / 98.46%;  Guamuhaya / 37.48% / 91.97%;  Bamburanao/ 36.73% / 79.3%  Nipe Sagua Baracoa / 14.85% / 98.09%  The values demonstrate the reduction of fragmentation and therefore the increase of connectivity in the four REDS.  Annex 5. Maps on fragmentation and connectivity in the four REDS. | The analyzes were carried out using 2018 LandSat OLI 8 satellite image as cartographic basis. The normalized vegetation index (NDVI) was calculated. All the cover higher and equal to 0.70 and lower than 1 was removed. With the resulting layer, it was adjusted to the matrix limit of each biological corridor, and the fragmentation and connectivity analysis was established with GUIDOS version 2.5 software.    REDS / Fragmentation / Connectivity    Guaniguanico /23.21% / 98.46%;    Guamuhaya / 37.48% / 91.97%;    Bamburanao / 36.73% / 79.3%    Nipe Sagua Baracoa / 14.85% / 98.09%    The values show stability in the fragmentation and connectivity in high-priority areas for connectivity within the four REDS.    Annex 6. Maps of fragmentation analysis in each REDS.    The Mid-Term Evaluation suggests modifying the methodology, for which we are doing the permanent analysis to adapt the methodology.    Currently, the specific breadth of well-conserved pilot forest masses is registered – well-established forest areas, according to the evaluated fragmentation indexes for each corridor.    Satellite images were used for their estimation, with the technical specifications that appear in the description of this objective; the possibility of changing the type of image used from Lansat to Centinel should be prospectively evaluated. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 1**  **Systemic landscape management framework** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 1.1: Area in the target REDS that is covered by environmental land use plans that incorporate considerations of biological connectivity and ecosystem resilience | The entire project area is covered by IPF land use planning, with basic environmental issues addressed.    Environmental land use planning has only been carried out in Yaguajay municipality (Bamburanao), at 1:100,000 scale | *(not set or not applicable)* | Area covered by environmental land use plans at 1:250,000 scale:  - Guaniguanico 375,500ha  - Bamburanao 78,216ha (1: 100,000)  - Guamuhaya 157,600ha  - NSB 807,600ha.  Area also covered by environmental land use plans at 1:50,000 scale:  - Guaniguanico 81,500ha  - Bamburanao 24,152ha  - Guamuhaya 24,540ha  - NSB 86,703ha | Areas covered by Environmental Land Use Plans with landscape approach in each REDS are specified bellow:  - Guaniguanico: it covers a total of 375.488 ha. The document including the report on environmental land use plan with landscape approach at 1:250 000 scale is being completed; it should be finished by the end of this year.  - Bamburanao: it covers a total of 87.789 ha. The environmental land use plan with landscape approach at 1:100 000 scale concluded with the approval by the Local Government.  - Guamuhaya: it covers a total of 160.467 ha; and in Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa, a total of 807.600 ha, at 1:250 000 scale, environmental land use plans with landscape approach in both REDS. The report has been finished; its presentation to the Local Government has been scheduled for September.  Annex 6. Preliminary report on environmental land use plan for REDS Bamburanao.  Annex 7. Preliminary report on environmental land use plan with all the maps for REDS Guamuhaya.  Annex 8. Preliminary report on environmental land use plan with all the maps for REDS Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa. | Completed land use plans with an environmental conception (Environmental Land Use Planning) at 1: 250 000 scale for Guaniguanico, Guamuhaya and Nipe - Sagua - Baracoa REDS, and at 1:100 000 scale for Bamburanao REDS.    Areas are being prepared to establish environmental land use plans at 1:50 000 scale that facilitate the achievement of biological corridors.  Main actions initiated:  1.- Sensitization of stakeholders for the Environmental Land Use Planning of the proposed Biological Corridors:    - Guaniguanico REDS: geographic space between the PA of Managed Resources Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve and PA of Managed Resources Mil Cumbres.    - Guamuhaya REDS: geographical space among Topes de Collantes Protected Natural Landscape (PNL), Pico San Juan Ecological Reserve and Hanabanilla PNL.    - Bamburanao REDS: geographical space between Sierra de Bamburanao, Las Tasajeras Outstanding Natural Element and Yagüey Abajo Coastal Wetland.    - Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS: geographical space between Mensura Piloto National Park (NP) and Pico Cristal NP.    2.- Prepared zoning of areas (environmental units) with a landscape approach in pilot corridor between the PA of Managed Resources Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve and the PA of Managed Resources Mil Cumbres.    3.- Conducted a review of the international and national context of legal or regulatory mechanisms, instruments and documents, which will allow us to make a proposal for a legal framework for biological corridors.    Annex 7. Documents showing the environmental land use plans of each REDS.  Annex 7.1 REDS Bamburanao  Annex 7.2 REDS Guaniguanico  Annex 7.3 REDS Guamuhaya  Annex 7.4 REDS N-S-B    Annex 8. Map of landscape units in Biological corridor, REDS Guaniguanico |
| 1.2: Number of institutions in each massif (IES, CNAP, territorial delegations of IPF, INAF, IGT, INRH, Mountain bodies, DNF, SEF, CITMA delegations and local authorities and NGOs) that effectively coordinate and integrate activities vis-a-vis the landscape approach, specifically in relation to the following factors:  (i) Sharing and facilitating access to information;  (ii) Monitoring activities  (iii) Research  (iv) Enforcement | Average scorecard rating for each factor (of 10 institutions in Guaniguanico, Guamuhaya and Bamburanao, and 11 in NSB)  Factors (i) - (iv)  Massifs: I / II / III / IV / Av.  (i) 1 / 2 / 2 / 2 / 1.75  (ii) 2 / 2 / 1 / 1 / 1.5  (iii) 1 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1  (iv) 1 / 2 / 1 / 1 / 1.25    Massifs:  I = Guaniguanico  II = Guamuhaya  III = Bamburanao  IV = Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa | *(not set or not applicable)* | Average rating per massif (per factor)  (i) 2.75  (ii) 2.5  (iii) 2  (iv) 2.25 | In the analyzed stage, the number of institutions involved has increased, which has been expressed in joint methodological and communication products, as part of the fulfillment of activities foreseen in the action plan prepared by the project.  The analysis resulted in the following average qualification for each factor:    I II III IV Av  i 2 2 2 2 2  ii 1 3 3 1 2  iii 1 2 2 2 1.75  iv 2 2 3 2 2.25    The process for environmental land use planning constituted another significant contribution to the integration; as well as the support of all the participants in each sector for the recovery after the damages caused by Hurricane Irma in the two most affected REDS (Bamburanao and Guamuhaya). | Project actions have led to the strengthening of work integration among the different institutions and governments in the mountain territories, increasing the number of participants, maintaining the level of exchange and access to information, as well as the application of the results, increasing monitoring of activities and research as a whole. This has raised awareness and decision-making capabilities.    The integration is demonstrated in:  • Conclusion of environmental land use planning processes in the four REDS.  • Introduction of the concepts addressed by the project in the improvement that Cuba is carrying out in the National Education System, including technical and financial support to publish the book “Paisaje montañoso, una mirada escolar” (Mountain landscape, a school approach), which provides a set of didactic programs that respond to the environmental problems of Cuba’s mountain landscapes, applicable in different educational levels, endorsed by the highest level of the Ministry of Education (First Deputy Minister),  • The virtual node of the geographic information system for Bamburanao REDS was created and put into operation.  • In the spaces for publishing information, in those for communication, through the presence on social media.  • Studies on biological diversity with emphasis on Cabagan River basin, and comprehensive study of the Mata River basin in synergy with Manglar Vivo and OP15 projects where there is a Water – Soil – Forest polygon of Task Life (State Plan for Confronting Climate Change).  I II III IV Av  i 2 2 2 2 2  ii 2 3 3 2 2.5  iii 2 2 2 2 2  iv 2 2 3 2 2.25    Annex 9. Book “Paisaje montañoso, una mirada escolar”.    Annex 10. Technical note of action in synergy between international projects.    The Mid-Term Evaluation recommends eliminating this indicator, since it does not measure effective collaboration among the institutions, with which we agree, since until now we were reporting this only qualitatively. |
| 1.3 Increase in investments with a landscape focus on forestry | There is no information about current environmental investment in the National Economy Plan that specifically promotes the landscape approach | *(not set or not applicable)* | At least 10% increase in environmental investments that promote the landscape approach (baseline and target to be determined by PY2) | In its structure of domestic economy indicators, Cuba recognizes within Environmental Investments the term Investment Expenses for environmental protection. The data of this indicator for the country were obtained through CITMA’s Directorate of Environment. Investments with landscape approach are not included among these expenses. The project is working on the conception and methodology to identify and/or establish proposals of landscape indicators, emphasizing on the insertion in financial mechanisms of the Ministry of Agriculture, like the National Fund for Forest Development (FONADEF) and the Program for Soil Conservation and Improvement. The goal to reach is 2 investments with landscape approach in the second half of the project. | It was identified that the activities of forest development, and soil conservation and improvement are registered in the economic plan and recognized as investment expenses for environmental protection through the forms of expenses for biodiversity and landscape protection and for soil protection and rehabilitation. These are evident in project areas evaluated in the field to introduce them to the training and extension modules and to incorporate the landscape approach.    The National Directorate for Forest, Wild Flora and Fauna recommended to wait for the progress in the second half of this year, to define work projections according to the changes to be made in the financial mechanisms, as part of the update of the legal-administrative framework derived from the Constitution’s renewal process, being this an opportunity to introduce an explicit explanation of the landscape approach in these mechanisms.    The Mid-Term Evaluation proposes to eliminate this indicator, because it is not viable as it is proposed. At the proposal of the project team, on which we had been working through the investments in reforestation, the evaluation team decided that the indicator can be measured in this way, hence we are already reporting the progress in it. |
| - | - | *(not set or not applicable)* | - | *(not set or not applicable)* | *(not set or not applicable)* |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 2**  **Management effectiveness for core PAs within the context of the landscape as a whole** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 2.1 Average METT scores of declared target PAs in prioritized connectivity zones | Guaniguanico 60.9    Bamuranao 59.0    Guamuhaya 91.5    NSB 60.5    Overall 63.8 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Guaniguanico 74.3  Bamuranao 88.0  Guamuhaya 95.0  NSB 82.2  Overall 81.1    Questions 21, 21, 24 and 25 for all PAs must have a score of at least 2 | Updating of METT parameters:  Guaniguanico: 67.2  Bamburanao: 60.0  Guamuhaya: 64.5  Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa: 71.8  Overall: 65.8  In REDS Guaniguanico and Guamuhaya, a decrease in METT score is observed, due to climatological affectations that damaged the facilities of the PAs.  In REDS Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa, management plans are being improved, achieving higher parameters than the baseline as a massif.  The identified priorities to increase METT include working on the application of laws by the personnel of the area, strengthening protection systems, and continuing the work with the communities.  In REDS Bamburanao, METT values reached last year are maintained, being higher than the baseline. The application of laws by the personnel of the area, research needs in interest of the protected area and continuing the work with the communities specifically stand out as priorities to increase the METT parameters in this massif.  Likewise, in REDS Guaniguanico the identified priorities include working to increase METT parameters, developing the public use of the areas, the application of laws by the personnel of the area, working with the communities, as well as increasing economic benefits.  Annex 9. Form for METT assessment in the approved PAs and in the new ones. | METT parameters were updated:    Guaniguanico: 81.5    Bamburanao: 71    Guamuhaya: 72.5    Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa: 69    Overall: 73.5    The work done during the period has allowed the evaluation of the PAs of Guaniguanico REDS to exceed the goal set for the end of the project. In the Bamburanao and Guamuhaya REDS, it increased in relation to last year. Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS decreased the average by three points mainly due to problems related to coordination in the administration.    In the case of Guamuhaya REDS, we are foreseeing the final goal as unattainable, due to the legal-administrative mechanisms of Topes de Collantes PNL, specifically in financial and administrative matters. The overall average among all areas increased with respect to last year and represents 84% of the value proposed for the end of the project.    Developed activities that have allowed to increase METT values:    Specialists from SNAP and cooperating institutions were trained both abroad and in the country on the design, benefits and productive chain of biological corridors; ecological integrity, connectivity and use of ecosystem goods and services based on PAs management; tropical ecology, plant conservation and identification.    The books “Diversidad Biológica de Cuba: métodos de inventario, monitoreo y colecciones biológicas” (Biological Diversity of Cuba: inventory methods, monitoring and biological collections) and “Libro Rojo de Invertebrados Terrestres de Cuba” (Red Book of Cuba’s Terrestrial Invertebrates) were distributed to all the PAs in the country; which contributes to the increase of METT parameters 11 and 12, as well as the fulfillment of the biodiversity monitoring program and the updating of the lists of species present in the PAs, annexed to the management plans of the areas.    The project coordinated with the Forest Guard Corps three regional workshops for strengthening surveillance and protection and fire management, in which members of the PAs fire brigades participated. Representatives of the CGB participated in the PAs Provincial Coordinating Boards and in the updating of their management plans, which has allowed to increase parameter 10.    Equipment, office supplies and work tools were delivered to all PAs, strengthening the value of parameter 18, although it is still insufficient.    We continue working with the communities regarding their participation in decision-making in the PAs, by participating in community workshops to update management plans, especially in the Sierra del Rosario PA of Managed Resources in Guaniguanico REDS. It is necessary to strengthen this parameter in Topes de Collantes PNL, an accompaniment program is prepared for 2020. Local communities actively participate in the PA’s Environmental Education program.    A technical visit of the CNAP was carried out to analyze the process of updating the management plans of Pico Cristal and Mensura Piloto National Parks and the PAs in Santiago de Cuba. (Annex: visit report, CNAP request and update program).    The main difficulties that affected METT values continue to be the instability of qualified personnel and workers to implement protected area activities due to the difficult access to mountain areas. This issue influences the improvement of surveillance and protection, as well as the lack of materials to improve this activity. In addition, personnel training on biological diversity management and conservation issues is still insufficient, as well as specialized equipment to carry out this training.    Annex 11. Analysis of METTS parameters in the 19 protected areas.      The Mid-Term Evaluation proposes a modification in indicators 2.2 and 2.3, instead of average METTS values per REDS, the values of each protected area in the REDS are kept separately, in order to check how METTS will evolve in each massif. We do not agree with this proposed modification, since that is how we do it, only that because there are 19 PA and it is very complicated to report each in this space, in all the PIRs we enclose the forms for each PA in the REDS and in the logical framework we only report the average. |
| 2.2: Area of new PAs declared in prioritized connectivity zones, facilitating biological connectivity between existing core refuge PAs | 0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | 8, covering 13,812ha | The process of requesting approval for new PAs proposed by the project continues. The complete files for “Mogote de Soroa”, proposed to be managed by Cubanacan Company, in Soroa, Artemisa province, belonging to the Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR), and “Maisí-Caleta”, proposed to be managed by Flora and Fauna Company in Guantanamo province, are ready to be presented to the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA) for their approval. Due to administration problems, the Coordinating Board of Ciego de Ávila province decided to exclude the protected area “Boquerón de Ciego de Ávila” from the commitment of the eight areas proposed by the project. Instead and to reach the committed number of hectares, it was decided, after the approval of the Provincial Coordinating Boards (JCP) for Protected Areas in each territory and the coordination between the project direction and the National Center for Protected Areas (CNAP), to incorporate the PAs “Loma La Tasajera” (Sancti Spiritus, Bamburanao massif, with 248.00 ha), “Maisí-Caleta” (Guantanamo, Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa massif, with 7516.00 ha of land and 1662.00 ha of marine area) and “Sierra de la Güira” (Pinar del Rio, Guamuhaya massif, with 2065.00 ha). | The protected areas Pico San Juan Ecological Reserve (2945.0 ha), Martín Infierno Cave Outstanding Natural Element (ONE) (246.0 ha), and Hanabanilla Protected Natural Landscape (1735.0 ha) were approved by the relevant authority, for a total of 4926 ha in areas supported by the project to develop and present their files to CITMA, representing 36% of those committed by the end of the project. We are working on the preparation of their Special Operational Plans (SOP).    The files of the new PAs were developed: Loma Las Tasajeras ONE, La Chucha ONE and Mogote Soroa ONE, to present them to the authorized institution for their approval process by the end of 2019.    Work was done on the preparation of the file for Cañón del Río Santa Cruz area, carrying out different visits to the area and a joint expedition of CNAP, IES, South Coast Agroforestry Company, specialists from Artemisa and Forest Guard Corps with the objective of redefining the boundaries of this area, as those previously proposed did not take into account some landscape and biodiversity values. We worked together with future administrators of the area and identified problems and possible conflicts for management. |
| 2.3 Average METT scores of new PAs to be established in prioritized connectivity zones | Guaniguanico 7.0    Bamuranao 5.0    Guamuhaya 30.0    NSB 7.0    Overall 12.0 | *(not set or not applicable)* | Guaniguanico 62.0  Bamuranao 75.0  Guamuhaya 81.0  NSB 79.0  Overall 74.0    Questions 21, 21, 24 and 25 for all PAs must have a score of 2 or 3 | The METT methodology was evaluated in the 8 new proposed areas. The following result was obtained:  Guaniguanico 37.0  Bamburanao 0  Guamuhaya 39.3  Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa 0  Overall  The new areas of Bamburanao and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa massifs do not have any administration yet; therefore, METT parameters cannot be assessed. Among the Provincial Coordinating Boards for Protected Areas, the analysis of the organizations with interest in the areas is carried out to determine the administration, after raising the awareness of those with responsibilities over the territory.  Annex 9. Form for METT assessment in the new PAs | The result of the METT methodology was:    Guaniguanico - 36    Bamburanao -    Guamuhaya - 42.3    Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa -    Overall 39.2    We worked with institutions and the government of Artemisa province to define the administration of Mogote Soroa ONE, in Guaniguanico. The value of this AP decreased with respect to last year, mainly because the personnel that work in it has not been completed, which does not allow the total fulfillment of its objectives and activities.  In Guamuhaya, PAs value increased in relation to previous years, due to the officialization  of the new areas (indicator 2.2), in which work is being done to prepare their Special Operational Plans. They are located in remote areas difficult to access,  therefore they face a lack of personnel.    The PA proposals of Bamburanao and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa were not evaluated because their administrations are not established, nor are there workers in these PAs that allow to  evaluate them effectively, so the results of previous years are not accurate.  Annex 12. Analysis of METTS parameters in the new protected areas. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |
| **Outcome 3**  **Conservation compatible production systems in threatened mountain ecosystems and conservation corridors leading down to the coast** | | | | | | |
| **Description of Indicator** | **Baseline Level** | **Midterm target level** | **End of project target level** | **Level at 30 June 2018** | **Cumulative progress since project start** |
| 3.1 Area of (i) forest plantations and (ii)water protection belts and (iii) enriched connectivity forests | 385,684ha | *(not set or not applicable)* | - 19,560haof forest established (of which 10,840ha are in prioritized connectivity zones)  - 600ha in of water protection belt forest in prioritized connectivity zones)  - 2,400 ha of enriched connectivity forests in prioritized connectivity zones | Forest covers were verified in high-priority connectivity zones.  • Plantations established in connectivity zones increased in a total of 3 388.8 ha, of which 2 001.4 ha correspond to management of natural regeneration and 1 387.4 ha to established plantations, representing a progress of 58.15 % towards the project final goal, with an accumulated total of 11 375.2 ha.  • The reforestation increase in the hydro-regulator strips was of 71.0 ha, as planned by the project.  • The increase by forest reconstruction and enrichment was of 1 327.7 ha, for 55 % of fulfillment of the project final goal.    Attached is Annex 10. Table of 2017 forest dynamics by provinces comprised in the 4 REDS. | Forest covers were certified in the high-priority connectivity areas.  The certification for this year indicates that the behavior of forest formations and plantations is positive, with respect to what is represented in the baseline. The increase in natural forests for 2018 is of 3 536.3 ha, of which 786.3 ha are forests established by natural regeneration, 1.5 ha of water-regulating strip, and 2 750 ha of plantations.  Plantations established in connectivity areas increased by a total of 3 536.3 ha, of them 786.3 ha by management of natural regeneration and 2750 ha of established plantations. This represents an advance of 76.23% towards the final goal of the project, with an accumulated value of 14 911.2 ha.    The increase in reforestation of water-regulating strips was 72.5 ha, as planned towards the final goal of the project.    A pipette technology nursery was purchased and is in the final assembly process, located in Baracoa, Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS, with a production capacity of 200 000 forest and fruit seedlings, which will allow increasing forest cover in connectivity areas.    The Mid-Term Evaluation recommended changes in this indicator. We agree with: Eliminating the use of satellite images, in obtaining vegetation data, only use annual forest cover data generated by the National Directorate for Forest, Wild Flora and Fauna, with verification in the field by the State Forest Service.    Annex 13. Increase in forest cover in each REDS. |
| 3.2 Area of agroforestry farms and silvopastoral spaces that incorporate agro-ecological management measures | 93 integral forest farms in the target REDS, covering 3,720ha (number and area of these located in prioritized connectivity zones to be determined in PY1)    Baseline values of the area of silvopastoral systems be determined: MINAG does not report officially information on hectares under “silvopastoral systems” but the project will support the establishment of a system for collecting information on silvopastoral systems. | *(not set or not applicable)* | - 1,600 ha of diverse agroforestry systems established in 40 existing integral forest farms (10 per target area), and 4,720 ha of diverse silvopastoral systems, promoting habitat and connectivity (target number and area of these located in prioritized connectivity zones to be determined in PY1)  - 90,000ha of agroforestry and silvopastoral systems established in the REDS replicating the practices demonstrated in the Integrated Forest Farms. | In agroforestry farms, 4 453.0 ha of agroforestry and silvopastoral systems are maintained, with diverse structure and composition (agroforestry system types are not reported separately, because they differ in time due to the variations in management plans, taking into consideration the interest of each heritage administrator).  The most important results obtained in the work of the 40 agroforestry farms are: reforestation plans and agroforestry systems implemented by means of family agriculture; forest use under sustainable management; measures for soil conservation and improvement; application of environmental education and outreach actions; decrease in forest fire occurrence; greater production diversification and identification of new employment sources.  A Master’s Degree Thesis in Forest Sciences was concluded to validate the Management Plan of “Los Mateos” farm. The results allowed to design actions for the management of plantations and natural forests, contributing to the characterization of connectivity routes, and to establish landscape conservation measures in each REDS. The obtained results will be replicated in the other intervention areas of the project during next year.  Attached is Annex 11. Summary of the Master’s Degree Thesis. | The monitoring is maintained for 4 453.0 ha of agroforestry and silvopastoral systems in prioritized connectivity areas, with the follow-up of the corresponding management plans. This allowed to incorporate 3 760 ha in replication sites in various agroforestry systems as a result of extension actions, located at:    Guamuhaya: “La Herradura” Water, Soil and Forest Polygon with 100 ha.    Bamburanao: Los Hondones, La Vega and Las Minas Agroecological Farms with 210 ha.    Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa: Mata River Basin, Baracoa, with 3 450 ha    The Mid-Term Evaluation recommended changes in the indicator. We agree to substitute the current indicator: Area of agroforestry and silvopastoral systems with diverse structure and composition, by: Area of agroforestry farms and silvopastoral spaces that incorporate agroecological management measures. |
| 3.3 Maintenance of coffee areas under diverse shade | 30,000ha of coffee under shade in the target REDS: | *(not set or not applicable)* | Maintenance of 30,000 ha of coffee grown under shade | Reference areas were evaluated for the maintenance of the coffee shade and the results are:  Guaniguanico: 2 321.8 ha.  Guamuhaya: 5 602 ha.  N-S-B: 22 752.7 ha.  This demonstrates that the hectares proposed by the project are maintained. The good practices and experiences developed in two farms of II Frente municipality, Santiago de Cuba, REDS Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa, allowed the preparation of a “Manual for the establishment of coffee shade” (in edition process). These practices will be replicated in the rest of the project coffee plantations.  As complementary action, 6 coffee tasters were trained to execute the final stage of their international evaluation for quality systems and coffee trading.  Annex 12. Manual for the establishment of coffee shade (preliminary version) | The 30,000.00 ha of coffee plantation in the Project intervention areas have been maintained.    Training received on issues related to shade management, presence of native species and cultural care, which have in incidence in obtaining the same or better yields in coffee production.    Applied methodology reflected in the “Manual for the establishment of coffee shade” (in press) in Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa and Guamuhaya REDS.    The Mid-Term Evaluation recommended changes in the indicator, we agree.    Coffee production implies the use of shade. Coffee areas are part of the productive landscapes, they exist in all REDS and biodiversity is favored in them, since the trees used are diverse, showing the resilience of these ecosystems. The monitoring of the highest quality of shade through the application of experiences in the “Manual for the establishment of coffee shade”, identified by the project, would allow to evaluate the effectiveness of this indicator together with the appearance of key or flag species, or other fauna, as a result of other connectivity actions with native species. |
| 3.4 Application of clean production practices in coffee and pig production units, with emphasis on those located in priority connectivity zones | -Guaniguanico: 7 coffee production units, of which 2 are ecological; Guamuhaya: 7 coffee production units, of which 4 are ecological; Bamburanao: 48 pig production units without clean production    - NSB: 149 coffee production units, of which 22 are ecological; | *(not set or not applicable)* | Demonstration units with clean technologies applied in pig production and coffee depulping units  - Guaniguanico: 1 coffee production unit with clean production  - Guamuhaya: 1coffee production unit with clean production  - Bamburanao: 5 of 48 pig production units with clean production, providing cooking gas specifically benefiting 25 women  - NSB: 1 coffee production unit with clean production | Material and technical requirements were evaluated for the application of cleaner production practices in 3 ecological pulpers, as reference units for the Project: Cuatro Vientos, Cumanayagua, Cienfuegos Guamuhaya; Sabanilla, San Cristobal, Pinar del Rio, Guaniguanico; and Cañamazo, Sagua de Tanamo, Holguin, N-S-B.  An ecological pulper is in process of acquisition, which will be located in Cuatro Vientos, Cienfuegos, REDS Guamuhaya; as well as the biodigestors and other equipment for the implementation of clean technologies in four pig farms.  Visits were carried out to the four pig farms for the implementation of clean technologies in Bamburanao, technical project proposals were elaborated for the installation of biodigestors to be implemented in Yaguajay, Sancti Spiritus province:  1. Eloina Farm  2. Bamburanao Farm  3. Zalza Galda Farm  4. La Marianita Farm | In the second half of the year, with the start of the coffee harvest, environmental indicators will be evaluated to measure clean productions.    The results of the diagnosis of the other two pulping plants of reference, Sabanilla in Guaniguanico REDS and El Sitio, Sagua de Tánamo, in Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS, allowed the development of an action plan for best practices.    Achieved integration with local governments, approving a co-financing of Yaguajay Municipality, in the Bamburanao REDS, for the construction of four bio-digesters in the selected pig farms, for waste management, as well as to benefit communities and schools with biogas. Its execution will begin in the second half of 2019 and in 2020. The project will support with other materials.    The Mid-Term Evaluation recommended changes in the indicator, we agree: Eliminating “that limit the pollution of aquatic ecosystems”, it would be as follows: Application of clean production practices in coffee and pig farms, with emphasis on those located in high-priority connectivity zones. |
| 3.5 Number and area of fires in target REDS | Annual average for 2011-13:    - Guaniguanico: 32 fires/year (affecting 873ha in total, average 28ha/event)    - Guamuhaya: 4.7 fires/year (affecting 11.8ha in total, 2.5ha/event)    - Bamburanao: 0.7 fires/year (affecting 0.83ha in total, 1.25ha/event)    - NSB: 20 fires/year (affecting 1,554ha in total, 76ha/event) | *(not set or not applicable)* | Annual average by year 8:  - Guaniguanico: 27 fires/year, affecting 785ha in total, average 25ha/event (10% reduction in fire frequency and extent/fire)  - Guamuhaya: 3.2 fires/year, affecting 9.8ha in total, average 2.0ha/event (15% reduction in fire frequency and extent/fire)  - Bamburanao: 0.6 fires/year, affecting 0.7 ha in total, average 1.1ha/event (15% reduction in fire frequency and extent/fire  - NSB: 18 fires/year, affecting 1,400ha in total, average 69 ha/event (10% reduction in fire frequency and extent/fire) | Surveillance and protection plans were prepared for the CGB circuits to support the Early Warning System (EWS) against fires and the different actions of community work, in addition to the strengthening with the delivery of material resources. The dissemination campaign to prevent fires was carried out. Fire occurrence by massifs at the closing of 2017 was as follows:  Guaniguanico: 7 fires (affecting 13.3 ha);  Guamuhaya: 6 fires (affecting 24.0 ha);  Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa: 25 fires (affecting 2956.36 ha).  Bamburanao did not have any fire incidence.  The increase in the number of fires in REDS Guamuhaya and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa was caused by different factors, such as: illegal use of fire for land preparation, renewal of pasture and handling of beehives without due authorization. | The four REDS comply with the expected indicator for number and area of forest fires:    Guaniguanico: 11 fires (598.50 ha affected)    Guamuhaya: 0 fires (0.0 ha affected)    Bamburanao: 0 fires (0.0 ha affected)    N-S-B: 9 fires (23.00 ha affected)    In Guaniguanico, although it complies with the indicator, the number of fires increased compared to 2017. It is remarkable the actions of the Forest Guard Corps (FGC) in the preparation of surveillance and protection plans in its circuits, to support the Early Warning System (EWS) against fires and the different actions of community work. The project worked on strengthening the FGC with the delivery of material resources and support for the dissemination campaign.    Bamburanao REDS has not had any fire incidents for two consecutive years.    A consultancy was achieved, delivered by Dr. Juan Ramón Molina, from Cordoba University in Spain, who gave a training on the topic “TRAINING ON COMPUTER APPLICATIONS FOR DEFENSE AGAINST FOREST FIRES”, aimed at determining the strategic management points for the forest fire prevention.    The (26) professional, (200) specialized and (125) volunteers brigades for fire fighting have been prepared theoretically and practically. Likewise, eight (8) training events were carried out at regional level and by REDS, to assess the impact and results of fire management activity in forests, to strengthen surveillance and protection as well as fire management in mountain massifs.    In the actions carried out for outreach and environmental education, it is necessary to highlight the work that has been done with the topics associated with the Critical Period of the campaign to fight Forest Fires (CPFF), and the need to protect the flora and fauna, developing conversations, conferences, talks, evaluations of measures, prioritizing forest dwellers, forestry farmers, cooperatives, forestry workers, interest circles and explorer pioneers in the people’s councils in the mountains and prioritized regions. To promote these issues, different media were used, such as written press and radio and television spaces, graphic advertisements like posters and billboards, as well as publishing articles on massif topics and working with children.    Moreover, this work has contributed to the conservation of landscapes and their connectivity, the protection of forests and their biodiversity through the strengthening of capacities, means and training of the forces for the protection and conservation of the REDS, to support the development of biological corridors.    Annex 14. Report on the occurrence of forest fires and illegalities in each REDS. (indicator 3.6 y 3.7) |
| 3.6 Number of illegal activities registered per unit time of Forest Guard Corps patrols affecting the environment in the target areas | Baseline to be determined in each target area at project start | *(not set or not applicable)* | At least 40% reduction in the number of illegal activities registered per unit of time reflecting improved effectiveness of the Forest Guard Corps, improved coordination and synergies between institutions, and increased participation of local communities and their organizations | Surveillance and protection plans were prepared for the Ranger Corps (CGB) circuits; 34 specialists of the REDS Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa were trained, which allowed to increase the capacities of detection and counteracting of illegalities in the REDS. The integration of rangers to the work with the People’s Councils was fortified for a more effective protection management. The following contraventions were applied by the closing of 2017:  Guaniguanico 1328;  Guamuhaya 641;  Bamburanao 154;  N-S-B 3577.  The penalties are related to impacts to the soil by inadequate tilling, hunting, and illegal possession of timber-yielding resources. | At the close of 2018, the following number of fines had been applied:    Guaniguanico: 204    Guamuhaya: 106    Bamburanao: 44    NSB: 274    A total of 628 fines were imposed. Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa continues being the massif where more fines are imposed, representing 77% with respect to the total.    Compared to 2017, the trend is decreasing by 387 contraventions, as a result of the prevention and extinction of forest fires, as well as the protection of natural resources, related to the greater involvement of local communities and their organizations.    Regarding the outreach and environmental education actions, it stands out the work being carried out with the topics associated with the Critical Period of the CPFF Campaign to help protect flora, fauna and natural resources, prioritizing the people’s councils in the mountains and high-priority regions, with the support of the written press, radio, television and graphic advertising spaces.      The Mid-Term Evaluation recommended changes in the indicator; we agree to change the goal, we will adopt the proposal of declining trend analysis after an initial growth. |
| 3.7 Number of families in the REDS that receives an incentive >25% from FONADEF for applying environmentally friendly production systems and that have access to the soil improvement and conservation program of soil improvement and conservation | Families working in integral forest farms are typically only compensates for around 10-15% of their investments in environmentally friendly production systems. | *(not set or not applicable)* | 40 families (10 of which are female-led) working in the 40 integral forest farms that the project will target recover no less than 30% of the farm expenses they incur for landscape management increasing forest cover with native species (targets in farms affected by replication effect to be determined) | The 40 families in Agroforestry Farms catch the total value of their investments in the works they carry out in the forests associated to their heritage, through the execution of technical projects for each of the implemented activities, and received economic incentives between 25 - 30 %, according to the quality of their execution, as established by the National Fund for Forest Development (FONADEF).  Annex 13. Example of certified activities in the agroforestry farms. | All farms recover 100% of the investment they make to execute forestry management operations. In addition, an incentive ≤ 25% has been received for these actions to stimulate best practices based on sustainable forest development and landscape connectivity.    The Mid-Term Evaluation recommended changes in the indicator, we agree to change the current indicator: “Number of families that recover 30% of the costs of their investment in environmentally friendly production systems through FONADEF”. It would be as follows: “Number of families in the REDS that receives an incentive ≥ 25% of FONADEF for applying environmentally friendly production systems. Number of families in the REDS that have access to the soil improvement and conservation program”. |
| 3.8 Increase of direct beneficiaries of the project who are women | Baseline to be determined at startup | *(not set or not applicable)* | At least 40% of all project beneficiaries (from the goods and services provided by forests, agroforestry systems and silvopastoral systems, the incentives provided by FONADEF, and from the availability of cooking gas in pig production units) are women. | 60 women are related to the Project and 50% of them have received direct benefits. They work in Agroforestry Farms, coffee plantations, pig-farming units, medicinal mountain estates and nurseries. Actions have been implemented for the preparation of the Project Gender Strategy in coordination with MINAG, incorporating as permanent guest to the Project Board the specialist who coordinates this subject.  Different meetings regarding gender have been developed to be replicated in the Project intervention areas, at “La Caléndula” Medicinal Estate in Artemisa, REDS Guaniguanico. | The 60 women linked to the project identified in agroforestry farms, nurseries, pig farms, and medicinal farms have received an extensive training program through talks, conversations, workshops, panels and exchange among women, which, according to their testimonies, has allowed them to feel identified and committed to the project. They have become aware of the role of women in landscape connectivity actions. There are other women who receive indirect benefits from the project in the productive sector.    The Mid-Term Evaluation recommended changes in the indicator. We agree to modify the indicator; the goal would be to maintain that more than >40% of the project beneficiaries are women. |
| **The progress of the objective can be described as:** | | **On track** | | | | |

# Implementation Progress



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| Cumulative GL delivery against total approved amount (in prodoc): | 58.52% |
| Cumulative GL delivery against expected delivery as of this year: | 72.23% |
| Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June (note: amount to be updated in late August): | 4,378,775 |

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| **Key Financing Amounts** | |
| PPG Amount | 99,875 |
| GEF Grant Amount | 7,481,944 |
| Co-financing | 40,793,600 |

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| **Key Project Dates** | |
| PIF Approval Date | Jun 15, 2012 |
| CEO Endorsement Date | Jul 14, 2014 |
| Project Document Signature Date (project start date): | Dec 11, 2014 |
| Date of Inception Workshop | Mar 17, 2015 |
| Expected Date of Mid-term Review | Mar 31, 2019 |
| Actual Date of Mid-term Review | Jul 15, 2019 |
| Expected Date of Terminal Evaluation | Dec 1, 2022 |
| Original Planned Closing Date | Dec 11, 2022 |
| Revised Planned Closing Date | *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **Dates of Project Steering Committee/Board Meetings during reporting period (30 June 2018 to 1 July 2019)** |
| 2018-12-06 |

# Critical Risk Management

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| Current Types of Critical Risks | Critical risk management measures undertaken this reporting period |
| Financial | Delay in financial execution of the annual plan (37%) due to delay in importation process. Among the measures implemented to increase the financial execution are:  1. The project team and the Environment Agency support and maintain a permanent exchange with the importing company (EMIDICT) to follow up the procurement plan.  2. UNDP Co in coordination with CITMA (Economics and Planning Department, International Relations Office, Environment Agency, Project Unit), MINCEX and the importing company has carried out 4 financial analysis meetings of this project. These meetings were focus on the analysis and monitoring of all national import and purchasing processes. Measures have been adopted to ensure the implementation of the project |

# Adjustments

**Comments on delays in key project milestones**

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| **Project Manager: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| The Mid-Term Review was carried out as scheduled; however, it has a delay. The final report that was in charge of the team leader (Dr. Segundo Coello) should have been delivered on March 8, but he never communicated with the project and did not present it. This report was prepared and delivered on July 15 by the other members of the evaluation team, which led to delays in its implementation and budget execution. We are working hard to conclude this process in August (first week). |

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| **Country Office: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| It should be noted that the MTR process was carried out satisfactorily until the field mission ended. Subsequently, the head of the evaluation team (Dr. Segundo Coello) produced a 4-month delay to the process, due to the Dr. Coello disappeared without giving any explanation. Dr. Coello never delivered the final Report. This situation has no history in the country office Cuba. We recognize the follow-up work on this problem by the project team, the director of the Ecology Institute and the president of the AMA. The other two members of the evaluation team assumed responsibility for concluding the final report. This report was delivered to the project team on July 15. It was immediately reviewed and approved. The project team has already developed a Spanish version of the management response (is under review). |

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| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser: please provide comments on delays this reporting period in achieving any of the following key project milestones: inception workshop, mid-term review, terminal evaluation and/or project closure. If there are no delays please indicate not applicable.** |
| MTR was carried out in this reporting period with significant obstacles to get to the final report. The MTR was sent to the RTA for clearance and awaits response to comments by the CO. |

# Ratings and Overall Assessments

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| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Manager/Coordinator** | Satisfactory | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | During this period, significant progress was made in the preparation and awareness raising of the different stakeholders in the territory for the establishment and management of biological corridors. For this purpose, a joint work program was established with the international consultancy firm Turismo & Conservación Consultores, chaired by Dr. Ana Baez and based in Costa Rica. We carried out two visits to exchange with and provide training to the managers of biological corridors, recognized for their experience and application of different initiatives for the conservation of biological diversity. In a second stage, Dr. Ana Baez delivered a training here in Cuba, in the project intervention areas, aimed at managers, specialists, farm workers and producers, in order to apply the lessons learned and assess the actions to perform to adapt them, considering the different contexts in which they are developed. The work team was formed to review the legal-administrative framework that supports the creation of biological corridors in Cuba, with the participation of professors and students from the Law School of the University of Havana. It was proposed to start, as a pilot experience, a biological corridor in Guaniguanico REDS, where a plan for training and awareness raising was executed for all stakeholders in the territory.    Another training action received, coordinated by the project, was delivered by Dr. Juan Ramon Molina Martinez, Professor at Cordoba University, Spain, aimed at specialists and technicians in the project intervention areas, who work on fighting against forest fires. The subjects taught respond to the software application, as computer tools, for the simulation of fire behavior in Geographic Information Systems and the determination of strategic management points, to identify opportunities for extinction in advance.    Another aspect achieved that should be highlighted was the strengthening of the integration among the different participating institutions, companies, farms and governments in the areas, as well as the synergy achieved with other projects implemented by our country: Living Mangrove and the Country Partnership Program, CPP-OP15 for Sustainable Land Management (OP15). For the first time in our country, the ecosystem behavior is visualized, from the mountain top to the coast, for which we have worked in three places within the project intervention areas, following water as a common thread in two of them: 1) Guamuhaya REDS: Cabagan river basin, 2) Bamburanao REDS: connectivity route from Sierra de Bamburanao to Yagüey Abajo coastal wetland, and 3) Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS, Mata river basin that includes the water-soil-forest polygon, where actions of the State Plan for Confronting Climate Change in the Republic of Cuba (“Task Life”) are carried out. Biodiversity diagnoses were made, proposing actions for its conservation and management, especially in the upper, middle and lower parts of the basins. The results showed the fundamental influence that biodiversity management has on the health state of coastal ecosystems, especially the mangrove ecosystem. This constitutes a contribution to change the way in which the coastal zone is visualized at present for the purposes of Task Life, by taking into account its interaction with the mountains and basins. The synergy with the international project Third National Communication and First Biennial Report to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (3CN) will allow proving that the project actions in the mountain massifs contribute to the resilience of ecosystems, reducing their vulnerabilities to climate change effects. These actions will appear in a chapter of this report, as the contribution of international projects to confronting climate change in our country.    The Mid-Term Review of the project was carried out in the first quarter of the year, with satisfactory results. It provided substantive elements to the management unit, to re-focus and direct the efforts towards those actions that allow us to accelerate and fulfill the project objectives. We are developing an action plan in response to its recommendations.    In general, we must highlight the achievement of the following results towards the fulfillment of the final goal:    Component 1    - Completed environmental plans for land use (Environmental Land Use Planning) at a scale 1:250 000, for Guaniguanico, Guamuhaya and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa Special Sustainable Development Regions (REDS) and at scale 1:100 000 for Bamburanao REDS. These plans were approved by local governments, which value this result as an indispensable tool for environmental decision-making and management of their regions.    - Developed an environmental unit scheme in the area of the pilot corridor located between Sierra del Rosario PAMR and Mil Cumbres PAMR in Guaniguanico REDS, at scale 1:50 000, providing area zoning with a landscape approach, land planning of the region and land use proposals, to achieve activities aimed at establishing the country's first biological corridor.    - Progress was made in the proposals for the legal framework of biological corridors in Cuba, with a review of the international and national context of the legal or regulatory mechanisms, instruments and documents, generating the fundamental basis for their creation in the country, as possible areas of high environmental significance and historical-cultural importance or with category of areas with special regulations, established by the Cuban State.    - Created and put into operation the virtual node of the geographic information system of Bamburanao REDS. It allows the exchange among the nodes of the project information system at national and regional level, of the institutions involved in the governance of the intervention areas. In Guamuhaya and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS, it is planned for the second half of this year, Bamburanao remains pending due to logistical difficulties in that region.    - Achieved articulation with the National Education System through the insertion of project topics in the improvement of that system. As a result, the book “Paisaje montañoso, una mirada escolar” (Mountain landscape, a school approach) was published in digital format and is in printing process, which provides a set of educational programs that respond to the environmental problems of the mountain landscapes in Cuba.    Component 2    - Conducted field trips that have allowed the development of biological diversity inventories, with the identification of more than 15 new species in the connectivity zones of each REDS, which demonstrates an over-achievement of the final goal of the project for this indicator.    - Biodiversity was diagnosed for the first time in the country from the mountain top to the coast in the Bamburanao, Guamuhaya and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS, proposing management plans for reforestation and protection of water-regulating strips that contribute to protecting the health of coastal ecosystems.    - The work carried out in the PAs during the period has allowed the METT evaluation of the PAs in the Guaniguanico REDS to exceed the goal set for the end of the project. In Bamburanao and Guamuhaya REDS, it increased by more than 8 points in relation to last year.    - Three new PAs in high-priority connectivity zones were approved by the competent authority, for a total of 4 926 ha in areas supported by the project.    Component 3    - There is no loss of any vegetation. Information gathering was achieved by the National Directorate for Forest, Wild Flora and Fauna on the cover in mountain municipalities for the project intervention areas.    - Completed actions foreseen in the management plan, which have allowed the increase in forest cover, showing the decrease in fragmentation in the productive systems (agroforestry farms and other productive units) increasing landscape connectivity.    - Progress was made with the procurement of essential equipment for the fulfillment of the objectives, such as: - An Ecological Pulping Plant that was installed and started up, strengthening clean production actions in the REDS.  A nursery with pipette technology, with capacity for 250 000 forest and fruit plantlets is in the final stage of assembly.    - Incorporation of 3 760 ha in replication sites; extension actions have allowed us to incorporate various agroforestry systems.    In relation to budget execution, the import process has been slow. UNDP Office and the Environment Agency continue to monitor this process, although most of the basic equipment is already at the intervention areas. However, cumulative execution is above 50%.    Considering the complexity of the project and that many of these planned actions are implemented for the first time in our country, there is a significant progress towards the achievement of the final goals. Therefore, I evaluate this progress as SATISFACTORY. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP Country Office Programme Officer** | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | DO RATING - S.    The Progress towards the Objective fulfillment is on track. In this period, the project has shown advances that bring it closer to fulfilling its main objective: “Biodiversity effectively buffered from current and future threats across mountain landscapes, from the foothills to the mountain ridges”. This criteria was confirmed by the MTR. The main arguments to support this consideration are:  - The 4 indicators at the objective level show an adequate progress towards the fulfillment of the final goal.  - The extreme hydrometeorological events that occurred during the period did not significantly affect the REDS forest heritage.  - A favorable result was obtained in the application of the Index of Ecological Integrity (IEI) in the 7 PAs selected in the connectivity zones.  - Biodiversity inventories were completed in the connectivity areas of the biological corridor in all REDS (Guaniguanico, Guamuhaya, Nipe Sagua Baracoa and Bamburanao).  - An assessment executed in the four REDS (using satellite photos) has shown a reduction of the forest fragmentation and a connectivity increase.  - Furthermore, a significant progress was made in the preparation and awareness raising of the different stakeholders in the territory for the establishment and management of biological corridors.    Progress towards the Outcomes fulfillment. Taking into account the results of the MTR the three outcomes progress are on track. The main arguments to support this evaluation by Outcome are:    Outcome 1    - Local governments approved the Environmental Planning of Land Use of each REDS develop by the project. This is an innovative result due to it is has not precedent for the mountain ecosystems in Cuba. This result constitutes an important contribution of the project for development planning in these ecosystems. Therefore, it constitutes an indispensable tool for environmental decision making and development projection in these regions.  - The process of establishing the first biological corridor in the country has begun at local scale. For this target, an Environmental Unit Scheme has been established in an area of the pilot corridor in Guaniguanico REDS. The zoning of the EUS with a landscape approach (scale 1:50 000) and the land use proposals have already been completed.  - The documentary base has already been prepared to support the proposal of a legal framework for the establishment of biological corridors in Cuba. This constitutes an important step towards the sustainability of the project results.  - The virtual node of the geographic information system of the Bamburanao REDS is already operational. This constitutes an important tool for consultation and exchange between the actors and institutions involved in the planning of the development in this REDS.  - The publication of the book "Mountain landscape, a school approach" is a tool of great methodological significance that provides a set of educational programs that respond to the environmental problems of mountain landscapes in Cuba. This work is the result of the joint work of the project with the Ministry of Education. This book will be used in all schools located in the country's REDS.    Outcome 2    - The execution of field inventories has allowed the identification of more than 15 new species in the connectivity zones in the connectivity zones of each REDS. This is an excellent result that exceeds the expected final goal.  - In the Bamburanao, Guamuhaya and Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS an evaluation of the state of biodiversity was carried out with a landscape approach (from the top to the coast). This action is unprecedented in Cuba. This evaluation allowed to elaborate recommendations to the plans of reforestation and protection of the hydroregulatory strips, which will have a positive impact on the protection of the adjacent coastal zone.  - Management in PAs has been strengthened, which is reflected in the result of the evaluation carried out (METT). In addition, the surface area of APs in high priority connectivity zones in the mountainous areas of Cuba is increased by 4926, with the approval of 3 new APs. These results contribute to enhance the biodiversity conservation actions that are carried out in the REDS.    Outcome 3    -The National Forestry Directorate recognizes that forest management actions aimed at increasing landscape connectivity have allowed the increase of forest cover and the reduction of fragmentation in all REDS. An important contribution to the achievement of this goal has been the increase of biodiversity in agro-productive systems (farms and agro-forestry cooperatives). This constitutes a valuable contribution to the increase of landscape connectivity in the mountainous regions of the country.  - During the period under evaluation, the project contributes to the reduction of organic pollution generated by coffee production with the start-up of an ecological plant. In addition, reforestation capacity will be enhanced with the start-up of a forest nursery (currently in the final phase).    IP RATING - S. The main results that support this rating are:    - The annual work plan 2017 – 2018 (only first semester) had an adequate fulfillment (95 %). Monthly meetings with the outcome coordinators and the sectors representatives involved were held to adjust and supervise all tasks.  - In this evaluation period the fulfillment of the main monitoring milestones of the project were achieved with the quality required. For example: PIR report 2017, POA 2019/2018, QORs and MTR). An annual workshop to review project progress was held with the participation of all provinces, main sectors and UNDP CO.  - A National Steering Committee (NSC) meeting was held in December 2018. In compliance with the recommendations of the 2017 PIR report, two meetings of the NSC were planned in 2019, the first one in May and the other one by the end of 2019. The first one was not realized due to the delay of the MTR process.  - The PMU has coordinated and executed joint activities with other international projects (CPP-OP15, MANGLAR and BASAL). These alliances have allowed the project to increase its visibility and scale its results.    Regarding the financial execution, the Project shows the following situation:    It is considered that the actions implemented have contributed to improve the financial execution rate of the project. Although, it is still necessary to continue paying special attention to this issue.  - Annual budget plan 2018 – $1,245,153 USD (75% executed).  - Annual budget plan 2019 – $1,523,736 USD (36% executed until June 30). Taking into account the advanced status of the purchase process, it is expected to conclude 2019 with a financial execution of over 70%.  - Total project budget - $7,481,944 USD (59% cumulative executed).    Risks. The low level of financial execution has been continuing the main risk that threatens the implementation of the project. To enhance the financial execution, the PMU and the Environment Agency are supporting and maintaining a permanent exchange with EMIDICT (the importing company). With the same purpose, in this PIR period the UNDP CO has organized 3 financial review meetings in which CITMA (Economics and Planning Department, International Relations Office, Environment Agency, Project Unit), MINCEX and the importing company have participated. These meetings were focused on the analysis and monitoring of all national import and purchasing processes. In those meeting agreements were adopted to improve the financial execution.    Recommendations:    - Ensure compliance with the plan of measures developed to address the recommendations of the MTR. Update the National Steering Committee, at its next meeting, on the progress made in compliance with these measures.  - In order to support and monitor the financial project execution, it is highly recommended that UNDP CO has continues organizing at least 3 quarterly operational meetings involving MINCEX, CITMA, EMIDICT and PMU. | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **GEF Operational Focal point** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Project Implementing Partner** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **Other Partners** | *(not set or not applicable)* | *- IP Rating provided by UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser and UNDP Country Office only -* |
| Overall Assessment | *(not set or not applicable)* | |
| **Role** | **2019 Development Objective Progress Rating** | **2019 Implementation Progress Rating** |
| **UNDP-GEF Technical Adviser** | Moderately Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Overall Assessment | This project was conceived to promote a paradigm shift in biodiversity conservation and protected area management in Cuba, from a classical site based approach to a landscape approach that integrates PAs into the surrounding areas. It was specifically designed to protect core refugia for biodiversity, while addressing fragmentation from production practices in the landscape as a whole, and countering threats such as fire and pollution which have their origins in the practices employed in the production landscape. The project focuses on threatened mountain ecosystems located in the principal mountain ranges of the country, which are legally considered as Special Sustainable Development Regions (REDS) and managed by “Mountain Organisms”. It operates across altitudinal gradients reaching from mountain ridges to foothills in order to maintain functional connectivity and combines some of the most challenging aspects of a typical PA project (management effectiveness and PA expansion) with some of the toughest issues to address in a mainstreaming project (BD conservation in production practices). It is all about strengthening land use planning and local governance in the wider landscape while contributing to consolidating the management effectiveness of the PA system in mountain areas.    The project is in its 5th year of operation (out of 8) and this is the fourth PIR of the project. Overall the RTA´s general impressions are positive and the rating is moderately satisfactory, given advances in implementation and the results of the project’s mid-term review (which was carried out in this reporting period). The project has made significant progress over the last year, a clear effort to respond to last year’s review.    Actions in component 1, which focuses on developing a systemic landscape management framework, have led to the strengthening of work integration among different institutions and governments in the mountain territories, increasing the number of participants, maintaining the level of exchange and access to information, as well as the application of the results, increasing monitoring of activities and research in general.    Last year the RTA reported that the project was still struggling to find the right entry points to support and reorient investments for sustainable natural resource management in mountain ecosystems and associated corridors (as per project indicator 1.3). This year the team reports that the National Directorate for Forest, Wild Flora and Fauna recommended to wait for the progress in the second half of 2019, to define work projections according to the changes to be made in the financial mechanisms, as part of the update of the legal-administrative framework derived from the Constitution’s renewal process. The RTA recommends intensifying the focus on this indicator in the next reporting period as finding an entry point is the first step and a lot of follow up will be needed to see this through. The RTA also would recommend looking into collaborations with projects like BIOFIN and ECOVALOR to identify opportunities to generate additional revenues for conservation.    In component 2, which focuses on management effectiveness for core PAs within the context of the landscape as a whole, METT scores have generally improved and 3 new PAs have been created. The files for 3 more new PAs were developed: Loma Las Tasajeras ONE, La Chucha ONE and Mogote Soroa ONE, and they will be presented to the authorized institution for approval by the end of 2019.    Component 3 focuses on conservation compatible production systems from mountainous areas to the coast and is on track as per PIR and mid-term evaluation. Generally, area of forest plantation, agroforestry and shaded cover as advancing as expected towards the target. The project also achieved integration with local governments, approving a co-financing of Yaguajay Municipality (in the Bamburanao REDS) for the construction of four bio-digesters for waste management in selected pig farms, which will also benefit communities and schools with biogas. Its execution will begin in the second half of 2019 and in 2020. The project will support with other materials. Also, a pipette technology nursery was purchased and is in the final assembly process, located in Baracoa, Nipe-Sagua-Baracoa REDS, with a production capacity of 200 000 forest and fruit seedlings, which will allow increasing forest cover in connectivity areas.  In terms of execution, as of June 30th the project had executed 72% of this year’s budget, and remaining is under contracting. This indicates a good advance for the year and the project team should be commended for this achievement. In terms of overall execution, the project has executed 58.62% of the budget, in line with prodoc expectations and given that the project still has 3 remaining years of execution. It is also important to note that this is a significant increase over the 40% execution reported last year.    In conclusion, the project has applied an extreme scientific rigor in terms of developing strong baseline data, key assessments and outreach to local actors. It has also accelerated field activities in this reporting period, but some indicators and activities need attention. | |

# Gender

**Progress in Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

This information is used in the UNDP-GEF Annual Performance Report, UNDP-GEF Annual Gender Report, reporting to the UNDP Gender Steering and Implementation Committee and for other internal and external communications and learning.  The Project Manager and/or Project Gender Officer should complete this section with support from the UNDP Country Office.

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| **Gender Analysis and Action Plan:** *not available* |
| **Please review the project's Gender Analysis and Action Plan. If the document is not attached or an updated Gender Analysis and/or Gender Action Plan is available please upload the document below or send to the Regional Programme Associate to upload in PIMS+. Please note that all projects approved since 1 July 2014 are required to carry out a gender analysis and all projects approved since 1 July 2018 are required to have a gender analysis and action plan.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **Please indicate in which results areas the project is contributing to gender equality (you may select more than one results area, or select not applicable):** |
| Contributing to closing gender gaps in access to and control over resources: No |
| Improving the participation and decision-making of women in natural resource governance: Yes |
| Targeting socio-economic benefits and services for women: Yes |
| Not applicable: No |

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| **Atlas Gender Marker Rating** |
| **GEN1:** some contribution to gender equality |

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| **Please describe any experiences or linkages (direct or indirect) between project activities and gender-based violence (GBV). This information is for UNDP use only and will not be shared with GEF Secretariat.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **Please specify results achieved this reporting period that focus on increasing gender equality and the empowerment of women.**    **Please explain how the results reported addressed the different needs of men or women, changed norms, values, and power structures, and/or contributed to transforming or challenging gender inequalities and discrimination.** |
| The Project recognizes gender equity as an advance in the composition of its structure, to contribute to gender equity and the empowerment of women who participate in it. We have implemented a program with different activities, and social justice is garanteed through equitable power relations between men and women. Informative campaigns are developed. Women who are linked to the activity of agroforestry farms, nurseries and medicinal farms have received direct benefits from the project, as new sources of employment were created; they received training, material resources, and participated in meetings and workshops to exchange experiences among producers, as well as in seminars on gender equity, responding to the Gender Strategy of the Ministry of Agriculture. |

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| **Please describe how work to advance gender equality and women's empowerment enhanced the project's environmental and/or resilience outcomes.** |
| The project has made significant progress in gender equity by increasing the number of women living in the mountains linked to environmental work.  Women who only performed work at home, for the first time, were linked to different jobs on agroforestry farms; such as: in nurseries, in reforestation activities, in the creation of spaces for environmental education in mountain schools, in the training of children and young people in the knowledge and protection of biodiversity. Also, women were linked to work on pig farms, for which they were trained in clean productions.  In total, more than 40 women were trained in the creation and management of biological corridors, which are being developed in the four REDS. Biological corridors constitute a model of conservation and sustainable use of natural resources that supports the adaptation and resilience of ecosystems to climate change. |

# Social and Environmental Standards

**Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)**

The Project Manager and/or the project’s Safeguards Officer should complete this section of the PIR with support from the UNDP Country Office. The UNDP-GEF RTA should review to ensure it is complete and accurate.

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| **1) Have any new social and/or environmental risks been identified during project implementation?** |
| No |

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| **If any new social and/or environmental risks have been identified during project implementation please describe the new risk(s) and the response to it.** |
| N/A |

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| **2) Have any existing social and/or environmental risks been escalated during the reporting period? For example, when a low risk increased to moderate, or a moderate risk increased to high.** |
| No |

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| **If any existing social and/or environmental risks have been escalated during implementation please describe the change(s) and the response to it.** |
| N/A |

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| **SESP:** [PIMS 4716 - Cuba ESSP - Signed.pdf](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4716/213513/1669731/1670012/PIMS%204716%20-%20Cuba%20ESSP%20-%20Signed.pdf)  **Environmental and Social Management Plan/Framework:** *not available* |
| **For reference, please find below the project's safeguards screening (Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) or the old ESSP tool); management plans (if any); and its SESP categorization above. Please note that the SESP categorization might have been corrected during a centralized review.** |
| *(not set or not applicable)* |

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| **3) Have any required social and environmental assessments and/or management plans been prepared in the reporting period? For example, an updated Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) or Indigenous Peoples Plan.** |
| No |

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| **If yes, please upload the document(s) above. If no, please explain when the required documents will be prepared.** |
| N/A |

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| **4) Has the project received complaints related to social and/or environmental impacts (actual or potential )?** |
| No |

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| **If yes, please describe the complaint(s) or grievance(s) in detail including the status, significance, who was involved and what action was taken.** |
| N/A |

# Communicating Impact

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| **Tell us the story of the project focusing on how the project has helped to improve people’s lives.**  **(This text will be used for UNDP corporate communications, the UNDP-GEF website, and/or other internal and external knowledge and learning efforts.)** |
| “Connecting threatened mountain landscapes and the monologue of love of the Forest Engineer”    After almost 20 years of work as forest engineer, one day, I don’t know which, but a very important one in my professional development, I was assigned a new challenge that seemed something uncertain, but interesting at the same time. I was going to be part of the PNUD/GEF PIMS 4716 project “A landscape approach to the conservation of threatened mountain landscapes” , commonly known as “Connecting landscapes”. In truth, I did not know what it dealt with, but I did realize that it could mean a change in visualizing in a more comprehensive and nicer way the fields of my beautiful island, as goes the song of “Orichas”, prestigious musical group of my country.  Without making any comments to my new managers, so that they didn’t notice my fear to face this challenge, I began to work in the office computer very quietly. I started to look for the meaning of landscape on the Internet, because I really knew nothing on the matter, only by hearsay that I had heard in some events about what architects said. But relating it to the biodiversity and forest world, my mind was entangled between palm trees and crops, besides involving protected areas, “That’s mad!” – I said to myself, and I even said aloud – “I hope they know what they are talking about!”  But, well, I continued thinking about how to go on with that madness written in the document I had been given about the scientific, political and practical contribution of this project and that I could support it from my position, without leaving to a bad image of my professional work.  In the course of time, I could tell many things that have happened to me while working for this project; but, well, as poet and writer Miguel Barnet says in his story “Fatima”, if priests and doctors have ethics, why shouldn’t I have it as a professional of the fields. Anyway, with all those slipups, I began to discern who could help me in this way and I found the allied hand of a Project Director that seems to like pork very much, as we say here in Cuba, because she sums up everything by saying at the end of her speeches “it is necessary to add masita to it” , and here “masita” is the tender part of pork meat that we eat in the fields, fried and full of natural fats (Very unhealthy! Isn’t it?!). So, nothing of that in the landscape. But in her I found a very professional work allied.  A very well-trained team, though somehow crazy beginning by the illustrious university professor, academician and having I don’t know how many nobility titles more in natural sciences, “the head of Component three of this project”, who has a very vast knowledge of the project, but with his feet upon a tree, very far from the practical reality; although, in truth, he is a walking encyclopedia as far as many subjects in which I was a neophyte on the matter under consideration.  With him, by means of shouting and joking, through games and a great friendship, we were building some elements that would be useful for us to work in this long way that could be the project. Often, I tried to remove him from my office, so that he let me work on what would pay my daily sustenance; but, being persistent, he did not care if I had bad attitude towards him or no, always patient and giving a lesson on good manners and knowledge.  Those are the personages with whom greater relations I have had in this working time, trying to connect I don’t know what, but connecting. There are many more in that team, with a very great personal and professional love, with whom I have shared jokes, games, commentaries, successes and errors, both in Cuba and abroad, for they are wonderful people in their professional work and personal life.  That is why, in just a short time I have managed to understand that the forest knowledge I had was a little far from the reality that surrounded me, by my professional development. I could realize that I needed just a little bit more. Then, at that moment of my reflection, somebody arrived with a sweet voice, a beautiful smile and an extraordinary karma, in addition to being the youngest member of the project, and explained to me, very slowly, what landscape connectivity was, how I could see it from the set of the ecosystems that surrounded me, and that I should see not only the forest. It was necessary to think as a whole to understand it and to be able to connect there, in the field, the protected areas, the agroforestry systems and crops in general, to give way to the animals, plants and everything that would one day seek for a change of place to improve its habitat.  Thus, I began understanding, with those lessons and going deeper into the geography of the sites, how to visualize a map and why an environmental land planning was made. What fundamental objective would be fulfilled, to my mind, by connecting the ecosystems from the mountain to the coast, as people in that project wanted to do, which I was understanding step by step.  With a very special person, I strengthened my knowledge that the people’s voice and the communitarian work were a vital element to achieve the integration of knowledge on what we wanted to understand, and the knowledge we wanted to apply in the agro-diverse ecosystems, in the widest sense of the word.  I cannot baptize her as the “Diva of the bare feet”, since that name has already been given to a great Cape Verdean singer ; but I can call her “my friend, the Galician fatty girl from Guanabo”, who wakes up at 04:00 a.m. to be punctual to work and goes in search for bus A40, which becomes an odyssey. Something that in the end she never gets, but we have not managed either to erase a smile from her face and to make her wear some shoes at the time of working.  With all these people, concepts, maps, environmental land planning, community work; tours by agroforestry, medicinal, silvopastoral and pig farms, and an excellent team work, I have managed to understand why the project was denominated “Connecting landscapes”, and what is lacking so that the others understand it, as I did, with the love that all of them have given me, with the strengthened knowledge of those who better do “science”.  Before beginning the passage with this team of colleagues, I had many isolated concepts and I could observe my field as the engineer that I am. After four years, today I can even deliver a conference about why it is necessary to continue connecting landscapes, to conserve the biological diversity. How to establish a biological corridor, from the integration of the key stakeholders that take part in the productive and of conservation processes. The simplest way to connect to a farmer, or a technician that works directly in the productive sectors, and to communicate that we all need to help conserve the biodiversity, to have a small piece of country that is prettier, clean and sustainably conserved.  I need the same knowledge so that now, in my work as Project technical adviser, I can guide other goals to fulfill from my position in the work with that wonderful team that taught me so much, but without forgetting that part of my secondary roots as regards biodiversity management came from them. For that reason, with upmost humility I can link ideas, from my viewpoint, to manage to interconnect protected areas, agricultural crops, communities and their culture to integrate them as a whole, in one concept: the landscape. |

**Knowledge Management, Project Links and Social Media**

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| --- |
| **Please describe knowledge activities / products as outlined in knowledge management approved at CEO Endorsement /Approval.**    **Please also include: project's website, project page on the UNDP website, blogs, photos stories (e.g. Exposure), Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, as well as hyperlinks to any media coverage of the project, for example, stories written by an outside source. Please upload any supporting files, including photos, videos, stories, and other documents using the 'file lirbary' button in the top right of the PIR.** |
| Official website of the project:   http://www.ecosis.cu/ConectandoPaisajes/index.php/paisaje   http://www.medioambiente.cu/index.php/proyinternacionales   https://www.facebook.com/ConectandoPaisajes/   http://repositorio.geotech.cu/    News related with the project implementation:  www.rcm.cu/tag/ecosistemas/ ... por la salud de los ecosistemas montañosos cubanos y la conservación de la diversidad biológica existente, mediante el proyecto Conectando paisajes.  www.radiobaracoa.icrt.cu/ .../14072-coordinan-primera-experiencia-del-proyecto-con... 1 jul. 2017 - Una cita de trabajo entre propulsores del proyecto internacional Conectando paisajes en Guantánamo tuvo lugar hoy en Baracoa, donde ...  www.escambray.cu/2017/sancti-spiritus-por-la-salvacion-del-paisaje/ 28 ago. 2017 - Paisajes naturales de cuatro municipios espirituanos se benefician con este ... En el proyecto conectando paisajes participan en el territorio la ...  www.trabajadores.cu/20171210/conectando-paisajes/ 10 dic. 2017 - Paisajes para el rescate de la biodiversidad. .... “Conectando paisajes logró despertar el ánimo en los productores, lo que unido a un mejor y mayor suministro de... Fax: 053 (7) 555927 E-mail: digital@trabajadores.cu.  www.escambray.cu/2017/montanas-espirituanas-incluidas-en-proyecto-internacional/ 19 dic. 2017 - Detalla la fuente que se trata de conectar esos paisajes montañosos que tienen biodiversidad —relacionada casi toda con las áreas ...  www.traveltradecaribbean.es › Turismo 23 dic. 2017 - Tomado de Prensa Latina. Sancti Spiritus, Cuba.- Incluidas en el proyecto internacional Conectando Paisajes figuran 18 fincas enclavadas en ...  www.cmkc.icrt.cu/index.php?option=com...view...conectando-paisajes ... Conectando paisajes en las montañas santiagueras. Por: Cary Ferriols Solán Santiago de Cuba, Lunes 8 de enero de 2018. CMKC, Radio Revolución.  www.radiosanctispiritus.cu/es/2018/03/paisajes-santiagueros-llegan-a-sancti-spiritus/ 15 mar. 2018 - Otras publicaciones: Conectando paisajes cobra vida en Sancti Spíritus (+ audio) La iniciativa internacional Conectando paisajes cobra vida ...  www.radiomajaguabo.cu Inicio › Cinco Héroes › Audios 24 mar. 2018 - San Luis, mar. 24, 18.- Para apoyar en la disminución de las amenazas a la biodiversidad biológica en ecosistemas de montaña se gestan las ...  www.radiosurco.icrt.cu/montanas-avilenas-proyecto...conectando-paisaje/ 5130/ 4 abr. 2018 - De ahí la importancia que se le concede a Conectando Paisaje, implementado desde el 2014 hasta el 2022 en las áreas Guaniguanico, en el ...  www.ecosis.cu/ConectandoPaisajes/ El domingo 22 de abril Conectando Paisajes compartió la celebración del &quot;Día de ... Conectando Paisajes en la revista informativa RP-105 de Radio Progreso, ...  www.acn.cu/especiales-acn/33389-ciego-de-avila-protege-sus-ecosistemas-montanosos. Creado el Lunes, 23 Abril 2018 10:45 | Lubia Ulloa Trujillo | Foto Internet... para conservar ecosistemas montañosos amenazados (Conectando Paisaje).  www.bohemia.cu/.../2018/.../ destaca-proteccion-a-los-ecosistemas-montanosos-en-ciego-de-...Publicado el 24 Abril, 2018 por ACN en Medio ambiente... enfoque paisajístico para conservar ecosistemas montañosos amenazados (Conectando Paisaje).  http://mesaredonda.cubadebate.cu/noticias/2018/05/02/ una-vida-una-historia-..... telepinar.icrt.cu ... Conectando paisajes desde Mil Cumbres (+Fotos y Video) ...  www.invasor.cu/index.php?searchword=Medio%20ambiente&ordering. ..  Martes, 8 de mayo de 2018 8:00 PM... Montañas avileñas en proyecto internacional Conectando Paisaje: (Ciencia y ... Abre en Cuba Convención de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación: (Ciencia y tecnología) ... nacionales y extranjeras.  www.invasor.cu/component/search/?searchword=delegación&ordering...125  Miércoles, 9 de mayo de 2018 8:00 PM... Creado el 26 Abril 2018; 2. ... domingo a Prensa Latina el presidente de la Cámara de Comercio de Cuba, Orlando ... Montañas avileñas en proyecto internacional Conectando Paisaje: (Ciencia y ...  www.venceremos.cu/...noticias/13554-sesionara-en-guantanamo-segunda-jornada-cie. .. 24 may. 2018 - ... Holguín y la Universidad de Guantánamo, y una visita técnica el primero de junio a la finca forestal Proyecto Conectando Paisajes, Río Toa, .  www.radiotaino.cu/web/site/mostrar?url=Identifican-en-Cuba-corredores ...2018... 30 de mayo de 2018 - Tomado de Prensa Latina ... Las actividades del proyecto Conectando Paisajes están destinadas a mitigar la perdida de la biodiversidad ...  www.radioenciclopedia.cu/.../proyecto-ambiental-favorece-cuba-nueve-provincias-27 ... 3 jun. 2018 - Conocida también como Conectando paisajes, la iniciativa es liderada por el Instituto de Ecología y Sistemática, de la Agencia de Medio ...  www.cuba.cu/medio-ambiente/2018-06-06/por-la-preservacion-de-los.../41902 6 jun. 2018 - ... ONU para el Desarrollo, denominado Un enfoque paisajístico para conservar ecosistemas montañosos amenazados, Conectando Paisajes.  www.cuba.cu/medio-ambiente/2018-06-19/por-la-preservacion-de-la.../42130 Prensa Latina S.A. Agencia Informativa Latinoamericana con sede en La Habana,.... 19 junio, 2018 / Fuente: Radio Reloj... con mayor número de especies de plantas por kilómetro cuadrado en el mundo y más de la mitad de ellas exclusivas. ... 354 páginas, en una edición financiada por el proyecto Conectando paisajes.  www.ahora.cu/es/holguin/2121-conectando-paisajes-en-ecosistema-montanoso 21 jun. 2018 - Un enfoque paisajístico para conservar ecosistemas montañosos amenazados” es el proyecto que desde 2015 es rectorado por Sergio ...  www.cubasi.cu/...mundo.../66784-cuba-y-pnud-marcan-pautas-en-la-preservacion-de-paisaj ... 27 junio 2018, 09:26 ... El proyecto Conectando paisajes, iniciativa del Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología y Medio Ambiente ... Según explicó a Prensa Latina Leonel Delgado, delegado del Citma en Sancti Spíritus, ...  www.escambray.cu/2017/sancti-spiritus-por-la-salvacion-del-paisaje/ junio 29 2018 ... Paisajes naturales de cuatro municipios espirituanos se benefician con este proyecto internacional. ... puntualizó a la prensa Leonel Díaz Camero, delegado del Citma en la provincia. ... En el proyecto conectando paisajes participan en el territorio la Delegación del Citma, ...  www.radiocaibarien.icrt.cu/.../plan-turquino-bamburanao-da-nuevos-aires-a-caibarien.. . lunes, julio 2, 2018 ... Turquino Bamburanao con nuevos aires en Caibarién ... promovió en la región por el Proyecto Conectando Paisajes.  www.cadenagramonte.cu › Artículos › Ciencia y Entorno › Medio Ambiente 05 de Julio de 2018 ... bajo el lema de Conectando Paisajes, tendrá la particularidad de trabajar desde la ...  www.tiempo21.cu › Cuba Domingo 08 de Julio de 2018 ... Fund (Fondo de conservación de especies MBZ), así como del Proyecto Conectando Paisajes, del Instituto de ...  Revista Buenos Días 2018/06/19 ENTREVISTA Betina Neyra Raola  Revista ECOS/Canal educativo/mayo2018  Revista Hola Habana/Canal Habana/2018/06/20    Knowledge activities 2018 - 2019    News related with project implementation    - http://www.tribuna.cu/ciencia/2018-12-11/celebran-en-cuba-dia-internacional-de-las-montanas. 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Refiere el objetivo del corredor biológico en esta REDS y explicó que se hace énfasis en la atención a la mujer rural y finqueros además de la biodiversidad.  - http://www.facebook.com/pg/ConectandoPaisajes/posts/?ref page\_internal  - http://www.facebook.com/search/top/?qCitmacienfuegos epa Search\_Box  - http://www.facebook.com/citmacfg/?refbr\_rs. Impacto de la instalación de una despulpadora ecológica en Cuatro Vientos, Cienfuegos, REDS Guamuhaya.  - http://www.acn.cu/cuba/38059-fomentan-empoderamiento-de-la-mujer-rural-desde-la-ciencia Fomentan empoderamiento de la mujer rural desde la ciencia.15/10/2018. Conectando Paisajes celebra el día de la Mujer Rural en Santiago de Cuba. 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Freddy Morales Ruitiña, Coordinador Técnico y a Olga Vianka coordinadora de la exhibición en el Museo Nacional de Historia Natural de Cuba.  Revista Buenos 2018/06/19 ELOISA (DOCUMENTAL) (Video) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11gEapDfo7Y    Radio programs  Revista Paraíso/Habana Radio/  Conectando Paisajes hace su magia en Majayara Radio Baracoa - 6 jul. 2017  Mimos ambientalistas en Baracoa RadioBaracoa YouTube - 15 jul. 2017  www.radioreloj.cu/es/inicio/page/25/ 8 jun. 2018 - Radio Reloj es una emisora de alcance nacional que integra el Sistema de la Radio... Want create site? ... de Bonn, cita en la cual participa el experto cubano Tomás Francisco Lamas... el proyecto internacional Conectando Paisajes, informó el Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología y Medio Ambiente, CITMA.    2019 Radio and TV programs, and Video  Perlavisión informative program. Cienfuegos local TV center, 2018  Program of Coco Radio station. January 2019  Programs “ECOS” (3), national TV Educational Channel, January 2019  Program “Tengo algo que decirte”, national TV Educational Channel, April 2019  Program “Nexos”, FCOM. Canal Habana, local TV center, May 2019 |

# Partnerships

**Partnerships & Stakeholder Engagment**

Please select yes or no whether the project is working with any of the following partners. Please also provide an update on stakeholder engagement. This information is used by the GEF and UNDP for reporting and is therefore very important!  All sections must be completed by the Project Manager and reviewed by the CO and RTA.

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with any Civil Society Organisations and/or NGOs?** |
| Yes |

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with any Indigenous Peoples?** |
| No |

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with the Private Sector?** |
| Yes |

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with the GEF Small Grants Programme?** |
| No |

|  |
| --- |
| **Does the project work with UN Volunteers?** |
| No |

|  |
| --- |
| **Did the project support South-South Cooperation and/or Triangular Cooperation efforts in the reporting year?** |
| Yes |

|  |
| --- |
| **CEO Endorsement Request:** [PIMS 4716 CUB Landscape Approach CEO Endorsement Request Final 26Feb2014.doc](https://undpgefpims.org/attachments/4716/213513/1669743/1670029/PIMS%204716%20CUB%20Landscape%20Approach%20CEO%20Endorsement%20Request%20Final%2026Feb2014.doc) |
| **Provide an update on progress, challenges and outcomes related to stakeholder engagement based on the description of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan as documented at CEO endorsement/approval (see document below). If any surveys have been conducted please upload all survey documents to the PIR file library.** |
| The project has achieved a high level of participation and involvement of key actors and institutions to achieve its objectives. This is evident both nationally and locally. Among the NGOs with active participation are: The Cuban Association of Agro-Forestry Technicians (ACTAF), the Félix Varela Center (CFV), the Cuban Botany Society (SOCUBOT) and the Cuban Society of Zoology (SOCZOO). These organizations have had an outstanding participation in workshops, meetings and exchanges for the socialization of the results.  Training farmers and producers of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) has allowed: - Enhancing the conservation of biodiversity and increasing landscape connectivity; - Increase and stability of the productions; - Increase in the workforce, with emphasis on the incorporation of women in productive work; Increased access to different state funds such as FONADEF and the Fund for soil conservation and improvement.  Governments at the provincial and municipal levels have played a leading role in the development and approval of the Environmental Planning in each REDS. This was a participatory process. |

# Annex - Ratings Definitions

**Development Objective Progress Ratings Definitions**

(HS) Highly Satisfactory: Project is on track to exceed its end-of-project targets, and is likely to achieve transformational change by project closure. The project can be presented as 'outstanding practice'.

(S) Satisfactory: Project is on track to fully achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. The project can be presented as 'good practice'.

(MS) Moderately Satisfactory: Project is on track to achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure with minor shortcomings only.

(MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is expected to partially achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure with significant shortcomings. Project results might be fully achieved by project closure if adaptive management is undertaken immediately.

(U) Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is not expected to achieve its end-of-project targets by project closure. Project results might be partially achieved by project closure if major adaptive management is undertaken immediately.

(HU) Highly Unsatisfactory: Project is off track and is not expected to achieve its end-of-project targets without major restructuring.

**Implementation Progress Ratings Definitions**

(HS) Highly Satisfactory: Implementation is exceeding expectations. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and risk management are fully on track. The project is managed extremely efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the project can be presented as 'outstanding practice'.

(S) Satisfactory: Implementation is proceeding as planned. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and risk management are on track. The project is managed efficiently and effectively. The implementation of the project can be presented as 'good practice'.

(MS) Moderately Satisfactory: Implementation is proceeding as planned with minor deviations. Cumulative financial delivery and management of risks are mostly on track, with minor delays. The project is managed well.

(MU) Moderately Unsatisfactory: Implementation is not proceeding as planned and faces significant implementation issues. Implementation progress could be improved if adaptive management is undertaken immediately. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and/or management of critical risks are significantly off track. The project is not fully or well supported.

(U) Unsatisfactory: Implementation is not proceeding as planned and faces major implementation issues and restructuring may be necessary. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones, and/or management of critical risks are off track with major issues and/or concerns. The project is not fully or well supported.

(HU) Highly Unsatisfactory: Implementation is seriously under performing and major restructuring is required. Cumulative financial delivery, timing of key implementation milestones (e.g. start of activities), and management of critical risks are severely off track with severe issues and/or concerns. The project is not effectively or efficiently supported.