TERMINAL EVALUATION OF THE UNDP/GEF PROJECT

Conserving biodiversity through sustainable management in production landscapes in Costa Rica

GEF Focal Area: Biodiversity (BD-4), Land Degradation (LD-2 and LD-3) and Sustainable Forest management (SFM-1)

UNDP ID: 5842

GEF ID: 9416

Final evaluation report

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Prepared by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 7

1.1. Purpose and objective of the evaluation 7
1.2. Scope and methodology of the evaluation 7
1.3. Structure of the evaluation report 9

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT 9

2.1. Context of the evaluation 9
2.2. Brief description of the project 9

3. FINDINGS 11

3.1. Relevance 11
3.2. Project design 17
3.3. Effectiveness 23
3.4. Impact 27
3.5 Efficiency 38
3.6 Sustainability 45

4. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 49

4.1. Conclusions 49
4.2. Lessons 53
4.3. Recommendations 57

5. ANNEXES 61

5.1. Evaluation matrix 61
5.2. List of reviewed documents 75
5.3. List of interviewed persons and institutions 76
5.4. Data collection mission itinerary 78
5.5. Interview questionnaire 83
5.6. Output delivery 87
5.7. Assessment of the results framework 93
5.8. Rating scales of the terminal evaluation 1

5.9. Statement of agreement of the evaluation consultant 1

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Project information table i
Table 2. Evaluation results iii
Table 3. Summary of recommendations and responsible parties v
Table 4.Project finance per year 41
Table 5. Project finance per component 42
Table 6. Project cofinancing 42
Table 7. Evaluation matrix 61
Table 8. Interviewees 76
Table 9. Data collection mission itinerary 78
Table 10. Interview protocols 83
Table 11. Output delivery 87
Table 12. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of Outcomes against End-of-Project Targets) 93
Table 13. Rating scales 1

ACRONYMS and ABREVIATIONS

Acronym	Full name
ACGUS	Chamber of United Cattlemen of the South
ACLA-P	La Amistad Pacific Conservation Area
ADI	Integrated Development Associations
ASADAS	Community Water Associations
ASANA	Friends of Nature of the Central and South Pacific Association
AWP	Annual Work Plan
AyA	Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers of Costa Rica
BIOFIN	Biodiversity Finance Initiative
BMP	Best management practice
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-based organization
CeNAT	National High Technology Center
CENIGA	National Center for Geo-environmental Information
CGIZS	Chamber of Independent Cattle Breeders of the South Zone
CORFOGA	Livestock Corporation
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
COVIRENAS	Natural Resource Surveillance Committees
CSO	Civil society organization
DIGECA	Office for Environmental Quality Management of the Ministry of Environment and Energy
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DRI	Real Estate Registry Directorate- National Registry
ECA	Costa Rican Accreditation Entity
ELSA	Essential Life Support Areas project
ERC	Evaluation Resource Center
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FONAFIFO	National Forestry Financing Fund
FunCeNAT	High Technology Center Foundation
GAM	Greater Metropolitan Area

GEB	Global environmental benefit
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse gases
GIS	Geographic information systems
GIZ	German development agency
ha	Hectares
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IGN	National Geographic Institute – National Registry
IKI	International Climate Initiative
INEC	National Institute of Statistics and Census
INVU	National Institute of Housing and Urban Development
IPPP	Indigenous Peoples Participation Plan
IT	Information technology
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
km2	Square kilometers
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LU/LC	Land use/land cover
LMT	Landscape management tool
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MAIBC	María Aguilar River Inter-urban Biological Corridor
MINAE	Ministry of Environment and Energy
MIVAH	Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements
MOCUPP	Land Use Change Monitoring System within Production Landscapes
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRV	Monitoring, reporting, and verification
MTR	Mid-term Review
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PBM	Participatory biodiversity monitoring
PIF	Project Identification Form
PILA	La Amistad International Park
PIR	Project Implementation Report
PPR	Project Progress Report
PRF	Project Results Framework
PRIAS	Airborne Research and Remote Sensing Program
PROCAMER	Costa Rican Foreign Trade Promote
ProDoc	Project document

PRONAMEC	National Ecological Monitoring Programme
PUFL	Production Units Free of Loss of Forest Cover
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RTA	Regional Technical Advisor
SCALA	Scaling up Climate Ambition on Land Use and Agriculture through Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans Project
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDI	Spatial data infrastructure
SESP	Social and Environmental and Social Screening Template
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SIMOCUTE	National System for Monitoring Land Cover Changes and Ecosystems
SINAC	National System of Conservation Areas
SINIA	National Environmental Information System
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
SNIT	National Territorial Information System
TC	Technical Committee
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TEVU	Project Transitioning to an urban green economy and delivering global environmental benefits
ToR	Terms of reference
UCR	National University of Costa Rica
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNDAF	UNDP Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP-GEF	UNDP Global Environmental Finance Unit
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USD	United States Dollars

Executive Summary

Table 1. Project information table

Project Details		Project Milestones	
Project Title	Conserving biodiversity through sustainable management in production landscapes in Costa Rica	PIF Approval Date:	Jun 8, 2016
UNDP Project ID (PIMS #):	5842	CEO Endorsement Date (FSP) / Approval date (MSP):	Jan 11, 2018
GEF Project ID:	9416	ProDoc Signature Date:	Mar 19, 2018
UNDP Atlas Business Unit, Award ID, Project ID:	91073/96514	Date Project Manager hired:	August 1st, 2018
Country/Countries:	Costa Rica, Costa Rica	Inception Workshop Date:	May 2, 2018
Region:	LAC	Mid-Term Review Completion Date:	May 28, 2021
Focal Area:	Biodiversity/ Land Degradation/ Sustainable Forest Management	Terminal Evaluation Completion date:	December 6, 2022
GEF Operational Programme or Strategic Priorities/Objectives:	BD-4 (Integration of biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use in land and marine productive sectors. LD2: Generate sustainable flows of forest ecosystem services, including sustaining the livelihoods of forest-dependent people. LD-3: Integrated Landscapes: Reduce pressures on natural resources from competing land uses in the wider landscape SFM-1: Maintained Forest Resources: Reduce pressures on high conservation value	Planned Operational Closure Date:	Mar 19, 2023

	forests by addressing drivers of deforestation.		
Trust Fund:	GEF Trust Fund		
Implementing Partner (GEF Executing Entity):	CRI10 (Costa Rica)		
NGOs/CBOs involvement:	Funcenat		
Private sector involvement:	N/A		
Geospatial coordinates of project sites:	La Amistad-Pacífico Conservation Area (ACLAP), which includes the cantons of Buenos Aires, Coto Brus and Peréz Zeledón and the María Aguilar Interurban Biological Corridor (MAIBC), which includes the cantons Aserrí, Curridabat, La Unión, Montes de Oca.		
Financial Information			
PDF/PPG		at approval (US$M)	at PDF/PPG completion (US$M)
GEF PDF/PPG grants for project preparation		150,000	
Co-financing for project preparation			
Project		at CEO Endorsement (US$M)	at TE (US$M)
[1] UNDP contribution:			
[2] Government:		26,066,724	
[3] Other multi-/bi-laterals:			
[4] Private Sector:		31,590	
[5] NGOs:			
[6] Total co-financing [1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5]:		26,098,314	27,901,593
[7] Total GEF funding:		6,699,314	6,699,314
[8] Total Project Funding [6 + 7]		32,797,629	34,600,907

Project description

The project titled “Conserving the biodiversity through sustainable management in production landscapes in Costa Rica”, better known as Productive Landscapes, sought to mainstream biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management, and carbon sequestration objectives in Costa Rica, both in rural production landscapes and in the inter-urban biological corridors of the country. The project was funded by Global Environment Facility (GEF) through a grant of USD 6,699,315, and co-financing from different stakeholders of USD 26,098,314. It was implemented by UNDP Costa Rica through the direct implementation modality for a period of almost 5 years, from March 2018 to December 2022.

Objectives and scope of the evaluation

The objective of this consultancy is to carry out the terminal evaluation of Productive Landscapes. This evaluation analyses the relevance, design, effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability of the project. It also identifies lessons learned and provides recommendations. The conclusions of the document are based on the review of relevant documentation, interviews with key stakeholders and direct observation. The evaluator has triangulated the data collected to answer the evaluation questions.

Ratings

On this basis, in terms of ratings, the evaluation concludes that Productive Landscapes was relevant, highly effective and highly efficient. Monitoring and evaluation were highly satisfactory. Implementation and execution were highly satisfactory. Sustainability is likely in financial, socio-political, institutional and governance terms, and moderately likely from an environmental point of view.

Table 2. Evaluation results[1]

Evaluation Ratings:			
1. Monitoring and Evaluation	***rating***	**2. IA& EA Execution**	***rating***
M&E design at entry	S	Quality of UNDP Implementation	HS
M&E Plan Implementation	HS	Quality of Execution - Executing Agency	HS
Overall quality of M&E	HS	Overall quality of Implementation / Execution	HS
3. Assessment of Outcomes	**rating**	**4. Sustainability**	**rating**
Relevance	R	Financial resources:	L
Effectiveness	HS	Socio-political:	L
Efficiency	HS	Institutional framework and governance:	L
Overall Project Outcome Rating	HS	Environmental	ML
		Overall likelihood of sustainability:	L

Conclusions

Relevance

Productive Landscapes is consistent with global development and biodiversity priorities, GEF and UNDP's global priorities, and those of the UN system and UNDP in Costa Rica. The project is also in tune with national strategies and priorities in the areas of climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, and land use planning. In addition, the objectives and activities of the project respond to the problems and needs of the regions and municipalities where it focuses. All stakeholders actively participated in the design and implementation of the project. However, there was room to engage additional stakeholders for the urban component. The collaborative and interactive nature of the project processes is noteworthy.

Project design

The objective, outcomes, outputs and activities of the project are clear and quite well integrated. The project put forward a holistic approach to address the identified development challenge, but more attention could have been paid to key aspects to achieve transformative impacts in MAIBC.

1 Following the rating scales provided in the UNDP/GEF guidelines for final evaluations.

Targets were feasible and realistic within the budget and available time frame, except regarding international buyers. The results framework included in the project document does not allow measurement of key activities or key impacts. It was expanded during implementation, but some important aspects were still left out

The project document clearly identifies and analyses assumptions and risks to project implementation. All the risks identified were relevant, although not all of them were given due weight and two major risks were not considered. Additionally, the project document included a social and environmental screen plan which determined the project's risk to adverse social and environmental impacts to be moderate. While the project document does not detail lessons upon which the project builds, external lessons learned, especially from past GEF-financed and UNDP-implemented projects, were considered during project implementation.

The project document does a good job at identifying and analysing complementary international projects and identifying synergies. The project is complementary to two past and nine ongoing projects. The project had a high level of coordination with these international cooperation interventions during its implementation, but coordination and collaboration could have been stronger with other projects, particularly in urban areas.

Effectiveness

As of November 2022, delivery of outputs and achievement of targets at outcome and objective level has been highly satisfactory: 87% of the outcome and objective targets have been met, and 80% of the targets have been exceeded. The project has also largely exceeded the targets set in the five GEF core indicators. The quality of outputs and outcomes is good. Project delivery faced hindering factors and benefited from enabling factors, which are detailed in section 3.3.2.

Impact

At the national level and in ACLA-P, pressures on ecosystems have been significantly reduced. In MAIBC, the project made an important contribution, but progress on other key drivers of ecosystem loss, degradation and fragmentation was limited. The project contributed to ecosystem connectivity and forest cover both in ACLA-P and MAIBC. Partial or no conclusive information is available for changes in other natural resources, but some improvement can be reasonably expected over time.

The quality of life of beneficiaries has increased. The project has improved income, scientific knowledge, the technical capacity of a wide range of stakeholders, the social fabric of the communities it worked in, the appreciation and ownership of neighbouring spaces, citizen safety and physical and mental health. Additionally, the project contributed to the preservation of indigenous cultural practices and climate resilience in both rural and urban areas. Furthermore, the project promoted gender equality. As a result of this, the project contributed to several SDGs. The evaluator has identified only positive unexpected impacts.

The project provided public goods in the form of technological innovations, new knowledge, and approaches and took measures to disseminate them. There are excellent prospects in terms of scaling up. Some of the results of the project are being fully adopted by government institutions and scaled-up by other international projects. However, although the project has contributed to policy, legislative and regulatory reforms that will contribute to some replication at the national level, as of November 2022, replication has been limited at the national, regional and global levels.

Efficiency

The project had an excellent adaptive management by identifying obstacles and risks in a timely manner and designing adequate mitigation measures. The project has spent 100% of its budget, with project management costs below the GEF ceiling. Productive Landscapes managed to mobilize 7% more than the co-financing committed in the project document.

The project document includes a sound M&E plan. The Gender Mainstreaming Plan, included in the ProDoc, also establishes specific gender-based indicators to monitor. The initial SESP had to be updated to include potential risks in relation to working with indigenous communities. There is room for improvement in the format and guidelines for the PPRs, but the quality of the PIRs was good.

The project established effective partnerships with relevant actors. The Steering Committee had a broad and diverse representation and worked well. The technical committees provided invaluable experience and knowledge. The project had an experienced and hardworking coordinator and a large and technically robust team.

Sustainability

At the national level, MOCUPP is likely to continue. The legal, regulatory and institutional framework, technological aspects and financial resources will contribute to this. Overall, there is technical capacity and public and private interest to use the data. However, at the national level, the change of government does not seem to help.

In ACLA-P, sustainability is more likely on income generating activities and where follow up international funding has been secured, and less likely on environmental education and participatory biological monitoring brigades. In the MAIBC, the project results will be sustained, especially because of the GEF 7 TEVU project, which will address remaining key barriers to the sustainability of the project's results. In both areas, climate change is a significant risk for the sustainability of project's results.

The project implemented a strategy to gather and share its lessons learned with an emphasis in disseminating this knowledge. The project produced several communication products targeting different audiences. In general, the communication materials served their purpose.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, this evaluation has the following recommendations.

Table 3. Summary of recommendations and responsible parties

No.	Recommendation	Responsible Party
1	Promote the sustainability and scaling up of MOCUPP by 1.1 Following up the approval of the legislative reform aiming at its financial sustainability, 1.2 Finalizing the agreement with the UCR, 1.3 Monitoring the implementation of Transforma and providing technical assistance when relevant, and 1.4 Ensuring SCALA contributes to MOCUPP's sustainability.	UNDP Costa Rica

2	Promote the sustainability and scaling up of the project's results in ACLA-P by 2.1 Exploring ways of providing financial support to some of the grantees 2.2 Exploring ways of expanding certification to agriculture and timber 2.3 Exploring ways of maintaining the provision of technical assistance 2.4 Further linking SINAC ACLA-P with grantees and involved communities more broadly	UNDP Costa Rica
3	Promote the sustainability and scaling up of project's results in MAICB by 3.1 Continuing to articulate ecological and urban rehabilitation through participatory approaches 3.2 Addressing barriers to sustainable cities more strongly 3.3 Involving key stakeholders more directly 3.4 Contributing to climate resilience more directly and systemically 3.5 Reviewing the results framework 3.6 Promoting systems that can foster ownership, accountability, and maintenance	UNDP Costa Rica, and the Steering Committee, the Technical Committee, and the Technical Unit of TEVU
4	Promote the replication of the project's urban results by 4.1 Exploring ways of promoting and supporting similar exercises in Costa Rica 4.2 Linking with other cities, cities' networks, platforms, programmes and projects working on sustainable and resilient cities in LAC 4.3 Linking with GEF 6 and GEF 7 projects in the GEF Sustainable Cities program 4.4 Further linking with other players working on cities 4.5 Maintaining Productive Landscapes' website and continuing and scaling up knowledge management through TEVU	UNDP Costa Rica, and the Steering Committee, the Technical Committee, and the Technical Unit of TEVU
5	Consider lessons from Productive Landscapes in the design of future projects, particularly lessons around project design (1-8, 11-15) and efficiency (9-12, 16).	UNDP Costa Rica and UNDP more broadly

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose and objective of the evaluation

As indicated in the Terms of Reference (ToR), and in line with the Guidelines for Conducting Terminal Evaluations of UNDP-Implemented and GEF-Financed Projects, the objectives of this final evaluation are:

- To assess the achievement of the project results in contrast to what was planned, evaluating, and documenting the contribution of these results to the achievement of the GEF strategic objectives aimed at global environmental benefits.
- To extract lessons learned from the process to improve the sustainability of project results and benefits, refine the selection, design and implementation of future GEF-funded and UNDP-supported initiatives, and help improve the general UNDP programming.
- To promote accountability and transparency.
- To measure the degree of convergence of the project with other priorities within the UNDP country programme, including poverty reduction; strengthen resilience to the impacts of climate change, reduce disaster risk and vulnerability, as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, women's empowerment, and support for human rights.
- To corroborate the implementation (or not) of the recommendations issued in the mid-term review (MTR) that was carried out at the beginning of 2021.

1.2. Scope and methodology of the evaluation

1.2.1. Scope

The evaluation analyses the different phases and aspects of the project, namely

- The project formulation phase: project design, logical/results framework, assumptions and risks, management arrangements, complementarity with other projects and initiatives in the same field, expected involvement of stakeholders.
- The project implementation phase: management and coordination system, financing and co-financing, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, stakeholder participation, adaptive management.
- The project results: impact, country ownership, catalytic or replication effect, integration of other UNDP priorities (including poverty alleviation, improved governance, natural disaster prevention and recovery, and gender equality), and sustainability (political and institutional, financial, socio-economic and environmental) of the project benefits.

1.2.2. Methodology

The evaluation has been carried out following a structured process that integrates data collection and analysis. The evaluation examines the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency

and sustainability of the project results, including gender equality and the empowerment of women, other cross-cutting issues, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The evaluation process takes into consideration the guidelines and procedures set out in the UNDP Guide to Conducting Final Evaluations of UNDP-implemented GEF-funded projects. In addition, in terms of ethics, the evaluation has been conducted in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Consultants in Evaluation established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). In this regard, the evaluation has adopted a participatory, consultative and gender-sensitive approach.

Data collection

Data collection was carried out through three main methods, described below.

Document review: During the preparation and implementation of the evaluation, a detailed review of relevant documentation provided by project management staff was carried out, as well as of relevant national and regional strategies and plans and legal documents. The documentation reviewed is listed in Annex 5.2.

Interviews: 29 interviews and focus groups with project stakeholders were conducted, interviewing more than 100 people (Annex 5.3) on the basis of a questionnaire, with the possibility to ask additional questions to elaborate on emerging issues. Interviewees were selected according to their relevance, with the aim of collecting information from actors who have interacted with the project in different ways. The majority of the interviews were done face-to-face in Costa Rica, in the two intervention areas (La Amistad Pacific Conservation Area (ACLA-P by its initial in Spanish) and María Aguilar River Inter-urban Biological Corridor (MAIBC)), with some interviews being done virtually.

Field missions: The evaluator performed a field mission from October 9-18 in the regions where the project was implemented, that is, the buffer zone of the ACLA-P (with visits in the municipalities of Pérez Zeledón, Buenos Aires and Coto Brus) and the MAIBC (with visits in the municipalities of La Unión, Curridabat, San José, and Alajuelita) (Annex 5.4). The mission allowed both interviews and focus groups and direct observation.

Data analysis

The evaluator compiled the data obtained on project results and analysed it against the project objectives and the expectations set out in the project's logical framework, which provides performance and impact indicators, together with their corresponding means of verification. To ensure the validity and accuracy of the findings, quantitative and qualitative information obtained from different sources was triangulated. Conclusions were drawn from relevant information through interpretative analysis, using both deductive and inductive logic. This systematic approach ensures that all findings, conclusions and recommendations are supported by evidence.

The analytical framework for this evaluation included the following elements:

- **Evaluation matrix**: based on an initial review of available project documentation and following the guidance of the evaluation ToR and the UNDP guidelines for conducting final evaluations of GEF projects, an evaluation matrix presented in Annex 1 was developed. This matrix, which guided the data collection and analysis, includes the evaluation questions considered under each criterion, as well as the qualitative and quantitative indicators to operationalise these questions, sources of information and data collection

methods. Gender equity issues were considered in a cross-cutting manner throughout the matrix.

- **Rating table**: The framework provided in the ToR was used to provide specific ratings on performance criteria, including quality of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), quality of implementation by implementing and executing agencies, assessment of results, and sustainability.
- **Triangulation of information:** To help ensure the validity and accuracy of the findings.
- **Participatory and gender-sensitive approach:** To ensure that the perspectives of the most vulnerable populations are considered in the evaluation.

No limitations have been identified regarding this evaluation.

1.3. Structure of the evaluation report

This evaluation report begins with an executive summary. Section 1 presents the objective, scope and methodology of the evaluation. Section 2 briefly describes the project and the development context. Section 3 presents the findings regarding the project's relevance, design, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability. Section 4 provides conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. The annexes include the evaluation matrix, the list of reviewed documents, the list of people and institutions interviewed, the data collection mission itinerary, the interview protocols, the output delivery status, the table assessing the progress of the results framework, and the statement of agreement of the evaluation consultant.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1. Context of the evaluation

Despite having a robust legal framework for the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity, Costa Rica's ecosystems and their biodiversity outside the network of protected areas have been shrinking, fragmenting, and degrading, both in rural areas, due to agricultural expansion, and in urban areas, due to the expansion of the urban footprint and its infrastructure. Weaknesses in strategic planning and the absence of a systematic monitoring of the landscape or territory have contributed to this. This refers to limitations both in geospatial information tools and systems and in institutional and social/civic monitoring processes, and gaps in their integration.

2.2. Brief description of the project

In this context, the country's Ministry of Environment and Energy (MINAE, by its initials in Spanish), with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and financing from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is carrying out the project *Conserving the biodiversity through sustainable management in production landscapes in Costa Rica* (PIMS No 5842), better known

as Productive Landscapes. The project is executed by the UNDP office in Costa Rica under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM).

The objective of the project is to mainstream biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management, and carbon sequestration objectives in Costa Rica, both in the production landscapes and in the inter-urban biological corridors of the country. To achieve this, the project works on two main aspects. On the one hand, through component 1, it promotes the creation of favorable conditions (political, technological, and economic (markets and finances)) for the generation of multiple global environmental benefits (GEBs). Among other aspects, through this component, the project strengthens the capacities of the National Environmental Information System (SINIA, by its initials in Spanish) through the development of the Land Use Change Monitoring System within Production Landscapes (MOCUPP, by its initials in Spanish), and a pilot in urban environments (MOCUPP-Urbano). These systems contribute to generating annual geospatial data and information, completely free of charge and available through the platform of the National Territorial Information System (SNIT, by its initials in Spanish). These systems can be used by public and private actors to make decisions and address threats to biodiversity.

On the other hand, through component 2, the project promotes the direct generation of multiple GEBs (conservation of biodiversity, reduction in carbon emissions, and increase in carbon sinks) in two specific regions of the country, the productive landscapes in the forest area of the buffer zone of the ACLA-P, one of the eleven conservation areas that make up the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC, by its initials in Spanish) of the country, and which includes three indigenous territories; and the MAIBC, made up of five cantons in the Metropolitan Area of Costa Rica. More specifically, in the ACLA-P the project works in the municipalities of Pérez Zeledón, Buenos Aires and Coto Brus, and in the MAIBC in the municipalities of La Unión, Curridabat, Montes de Oca, San José, and Alajuelita. In these areas, the project focuses on stopping the loss of forest cover and, therefore, of the natural habitat of biodiversity, through the implementation of landscape management tools that capture carbon and promote sustainable land management, with emphasis on the establishment of biological corridors. This component also generates strategies for environmental awareness and education. In ACLA-P, this is done through participatory biological monitoring through brigades, under a citizen science model as the basis of education, knowledge and conservation. At the MAIBC, this is done through the establishment of family urban reforestation brigades to enhance access to green public spaces.

The project also has a third component focused on knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation, which compiles experiences and lessons learned and produces and disseminates knowledge management materials.

The five-year project was signed in March 2018 and is in its fourth year of implementation. It has financing from the GEF of USD 6,699,315, and co-financing of USD 26,098,314 provided by MINAE through the National Center for Geo-environmental Information (CENIGA, by its initials in Spanish) and SINAC, the Livestock Corporation (CORFOGA, by its initials in Spanish), the Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers of Costa Rica (AyA, by its initials in Spanish), the National Geographic Institute (IGN, by its initials in Spanish) and the National Forestry Financing Fund (FONAFIFO, by its initials in Spanish).

At the national level, the main counterparts of the project are the MINAE, IGN, the National Institute of Housing and Urban Development (INVU, by its initials in Spanish) and the National High Technology Center (CeNAT, by its initials in Spanish), which is partly responsible for the project through the High Technology Center Foundation. (FunCeNAT, by its initials in Spanish). At the territorial level, SINAC, the counterpart in the two regions, is joined by specific counterparts in each

of the regions. In ACLA-P, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG, by its initials in Spanish), CORFOGA and some NGOs (Friends of Nature of the Central and South Pacific Association (ASANA), RED-Quercus and Asada Gutiérrez Brawn) play an important role. In the MAIBC, in addition to SINAC and INVU, the municipalities play a central role.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Relevance

3.1.1. Is the project coherent with the objectives of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and its targets?

To what extent is the project aligned with the objectives and targets of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)?

The project is consistent with the CBD by contributing to reducing the direct pressure on biodiversity and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources, improving the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity, as well as enhancing the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services. More specifically, it contributes to the Aichi targets 5, 7, 11 and 14, which are related to reducing in half, by 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, sustainably managing areas under agriculture, promoting the connectivity of natural protected areas, and restoring ecosystems.

3.1.2. Is the project consistent with GEF's strategic priorities?

How does the project contribute to the strategic priorities of the GEF?

The project was designed and approved under GEF 6 and it is consistent with the priorities under that replenishment. It aligns with Focal Area Biodiversity (BD)-4 through its aim of achieving sustainable management and monitoring of landscapes that ensures sustainable production practices and connectivity between landscapes and protected areas. The project also has a strong focus on reducing the loss of natural habitat that results from rapid and uncontrolled land use change, which aligns with Focal Areas Land Degradation (LD)-2 (Programme 3) and LD-3 (Programme 4) for landscape management, restoration, and scaling up. Moreover, it includes as one of its main objectives the reduction of loss in forest cover and degradation which aligns with focal area Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)-1 (Programme 9) to reduce the pressures on forests by addressing the drivers of deforestation.

Additionally, the project strategy incorporated guidance from the GEF's Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) advisory document "Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Practice (2014)" to implement a landscape management approach with better and improved production practices which do not degrade biodiversity, and to design a financial mechanism which will function as an incentive to change current biodiversity degrading practices.

Even though the project is not explicitly aligned with adaptation priorities and is not considered a GEF Adaptation Focal Area project, the project activities do contribute in an implicit but decisive manner to climate change adaptation in Costa Rica.

3.1.3. Are the project's objectives aligned with the UNDP priorities in the country?

How does the project contribute to the UNDP's intervention priorities in Costa Rica?

The objectives of the project are in line with UNDP priorities at both global and national levels[2]. At the global level, it is aligned with UNDP's Strategic Plan 2018-2021 overall objective, which was the plan at the time the project was designed and approved[3]. It is also aligned with the most recent Strategic Plan 2022-2025[4], which focuses on building on the 2018-2021 objective by accelerating and scaling up development results and lessons learned through the organizations' six signature solutions on poverty and inequality, governance, resilience, environment, energy, and gender equality.

The project is also fully in tune with UNDP priorities in Costa Rica. The project is in line with UNDP Country Programme Document 2018-2022, particularly regarding output 2.1: MAG, MINAE, Ministry of Health and MTSS have established multi-stakeholder platforms for dialogue to reduce negative socio-environmental externalities generated by agricultural commodities. Under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2013-2017 for Costa Rica, it contributes to the expected results: 1.1 Public, private, and community institutions with analysis, management, and response capacities strengthened for exercising human rights and improving conditions of human development, and prioritizing populations in vulnerable situations; 2.2 Capacities of the national statistics system are strengthened to generate, analyze, and utilize information for the development, application, monitoring, and evaluation of public policies; 4.2 Public, private, and civil society sectors will have progressed in incorporating and implementing national policies and strategies that consider environmental quality and integrated management of natural resources, as well as the valuation of environmental goods and services and the protection, conservation, and sustainable use of biodiversity; and 5.3 Strategies and programs implemented for sustainable production development, the generation of opportunities and decent working conditions, with an emphasis on micro-, small-, and medium-scale businesses, youth, and women. The most recent UNDAF report is that of 2018-2022[5] which has a strong focus on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) targets. The project specifically contributes to outcomes: 1.2 Actors in society have strengthened their technical capacities to use knowledge that allows decision-making to address national priorities towards a sustainable development with equality; 2.3 Public administration strengthens its technical capacity to generate data produce knowledge which allow for decision-making to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public management; and 3.2 Non-government organizations, social and environmental movements, and grassroots community or production based organizations have strengthened their technical capacities for the

[2] A Country Programme for the period 2018-2022 was developed and is aligned with the UNDAF 2018-2022 outcomes, indicators, and baseline targets.
[3] UNDP's Strategic Plan 2018-2021 overall objective is "to assist countries in achieving sustainable development by eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, accelerating structural transformation for sustainable development and building capacities for recovery from crises and shocks".
[4] https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-07/UNDP%20Strategic%20Plan%202022-2025.pdf
[5] https://costarica.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/UNDAF_CRI2018_2022.pdf

production and use of knowledge that allows for decision-making or development of proposals for participation and the enforceability of rights within the framework of the SDGs, specially from those in disadvantage and vulnerability conditions.

The project is also part of UNDP's effort to support Costa Rica's progress towards achieving, specifically goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; and goal 15 Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss.

The project is consistent with UNDP's Costa Rica programmatic approach of integrating projects to advance the country's intertwined environmental and biodiversity agendas. Productive Landscapes was informed by previous UNDP implemented projects, since the Green Commodities in 2011, focusing on reducing the loss of natural habitats that result from land use change due to agricultural and urban expansion and that showed the importance of the use of innovative technological tools to reduce the negative externalities of agricultural production in biodiversity conservation. In turn, Productive Landscapes served as the basis for several pilot interventions which have led to the development of other projects, such as SCALA and TEVU (GEF7).

3.1.4. Is the project in harmony with national environmental and sustainable development strategies and priorities?

As a country rich in biodiversity and with extensive forest lands, biodiversity conservation and mitigation of climate change are key issues for Costa Rica, which are highlighted in many of the country's policy documents and strategies. To begin with, the project is consistent with the National Development Plan 2015-2018, which establishes the promotion of actions against global climate change, through citizen participation, technological change, innovation processes, research, and knowledge. It is also coherent with the most recent National Development Plan 2019-2022, which reaffirmed the ambitious goal of promoting a carbon neutral economy by 2021 and laid out strategies to promote renewable energy, reduce GHG emissions, and consider adaptation initiatives.

The project is in harmony with the country's climate change policies and strategies through its National Climate Change Strategy. More specifically, Productive Landscapes is in line with the first two national communications to the UNFCC, 2015 and 2022 respectively. More fundamentally, the project's mitigation efforts align with the National Decarbonization Plan, which aims for Costa Rica to become a zero-emissions economy for 2050. This plan identifies ten key decarbonization axis for the four emission-sources of the country, with the project contributing to axis number 8, 9 and 10, which focus on developing highly efficient agri-food systems, establishing a sustainable cattle model and establishing a rural land management model focused on biodiversity conservation. As mentioned before, even though the project does not explicitly include adaption activities, it also aligns with Costa Rica's National Adaptation Policy 2018-2030, through its National Adaptation Plan 2022-2026 which defines its strategic actions in terms of "guaranteeing climate change resilience".

Additionally, the project is aligned with the country's environmental laws and policies. The project responds to the National Biodiversity Strategy established for the period 2016-2025, contributing to the national target of 50% of the biological corridors having a strategic plan and applying a management effectiveness tool by 2020. On this last point, the project contributes to the National

Program of Biological Corridors, which works as a mechanism for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources. It also contributes to the National Policy for Protected Areas 2020-2040, which includes among its targets the recovery of the country's forest cover, and the development of mechanisms and incentives that facilitate the restoration, rehabilitation, management and conservation of the natural protected areas.

Through its work in the MAIBC, the project contributes to the National Land Use Policy 2012-2040, which aims to achieve proper management of human settlements in the country and the responsible and sustainable use of natural resources.

The activities carried out in the framework of the project were also consistent with the country's legal and regulatory environmental framework (Forestry Law nº7575 from 1996, Land Use, Management and Conservation Law n° 7779 from 1998, and Biodiversity Law n° 7788 from 1998).

Furthermore, the project has contributed to strengthening the legal and regulatory frameworks of the country. The executive order N° 42886-MINAE-MAG-JP "Creation and operation of the National System for Monitoring Land Cover Changes and Ecosystems" (SIMOCUTE, by its initials in Spanish) was formalized, and with it, the SIMOCUTE is now the official platform to publish the data and information generated by MOCUPP. A proposal to amend the Biodiversity Law is currently under analysis by the Legislative Assembly to ensure the financial sustainability of MOCUPP. The amendment proposes a new distribution of the timber tax, where 4% of the collected taxes will be allocated to support the financing of geographic information systems (GIS) platforms for monitoring land-cover change such as MOCUPP. The MINAE issued the internal directive number 006-2021 called "Protocol for the Publication, Disclosure and Use of Information from the MOCUPP" which defines MOCUPP as an early warning tool for changes in land use and loss of tree coverage and indicates that it is part of the SIMOCUTE. Productive Landscapes also provided support for the development of the Gender Equality and Inclusion National Policy for the Costa Rican Agricultural, Fishing and Rural Sector 2020-2030.

3.1.5. Is the project in harmony with local strategies and priorities on environment and sustainable development?

The project operated in two conservation areas which are very important for the country. According to the interviews and the review of the documents, ACLA-P is an important rural area for biodiversity and forest conservation that is also strategically important for its water production, both for human consumption for the Greater Metropolitan Area (GAM), as well as for hydroelectric energy. MAIBC is an area consisting of a variety of different land uses and it is strategic for containing the upper basin of the María Aguilar River as well as urban green areas consisting of parks and small green areas located in urban zones.

However, both regions have suffered significant habitat loss, soil degradation, and degradation and fragmentation of forests which have led to biodiversity loss and greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. The causes differ by region. ACLA-P, as a predominantly rural area, suffered from a rapid agricultural expansion and use of unsustainable agricultural practices. For example, land-use change of forest habitats increased significantly due to the cultivation of pineapple and African palm oil. Cattle farming did not have a sustainable approach, predominantly using electrified or barbed wires fences and allowing cows to graze anywhere and drink water from the river, which did not allow soil restoration and contributed to water-bodies' pollution. Additionally, there was a

lack of incentives for producers to switch to more sustainable productive practices and preserve forest areas.

In the MAIBC area, there was a rapid urban expansion with forest cover being eliminated to make way for residential areas. This residential and commercial expansion was being done with unsustainable infrastructure and development practices which impacted adjoining riverbanks, ecosystem connectivity, and areas of protection for surface water bodies and springs. The city of San Jose has limited sidewalks, green spaces and green infrastructure such as parks, creating the central need to rehabilitate and improve degraded spaces as well as integrate sustainable urban development policies. There is a predominance of grey infrastructure without trees, and when these are planted, they are often exotic species and do not receive proper maintenance. Negative environmental impacts of these practices include urban floods due to the extension of paved areas without infiltration systems, lack of connectivity and ecological fragmentation, exacerbated heat-island effects and lack of quality in superficial waters.

The environmental fragility of these two regions and the country was further exacerbated by the lack of updated environmental data through efficient monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) systems. The existing systems were complex and operated independently, which led to a duplication of efforts and environmental data that was not easily accessible or readily available to efficiently enforce the country's environmental legislation and promote evidence-based decision making.

In this context, the objectives and activities of Productive Landscapes fully respond to the problems and needs identified in the two areas. According to the interviews and project indicators, the project has helped increase biodiversity conservation and connectivity between ecosystems (see sections 3.3.1 and 3.4.1 for details). It is also very relevant from a participatory and institutional coordination perspective, since there was a need to expand collaborative actions between the different sectors and stakeholders involved in the regions, especially with the consistent trend in the country of urban developers and agricultural commodity producers feeling battered by environmentalists resulting in a lack of harmonization to link forest and biodiversity conservation with economic development.

Have all relevant stakeholders been involved in the design and implementation of the project?

The interviews confirm that the project was designed in a participative manner and most of the stakeholders were involved in this process, both national and regional and civil society organisations. Consultations with community-based organisations and local communities were also carried out during the project preparation phase, except for indigenous peoples, as these were not originally considered a key project stakeholder.

During implementation, there was a high level of involvement and participation of the various stakeholders, although to a different degree. One of the strengths of the project was the creation of alliances, dialogues process, and synergies between stakeholders in both the project's regions. For starters, the involvement of the country's scientific and academic sectors (i.e. FunCeNAT), and the University of Costa Rica (UCR, by its name in Spanish)) for the design and management of the MOCUPP was very positive. The interviews also highlighted a high level of involvement from the production sector in the update and management of the tool, which led to a successful uptake of the system with producers understanding the benefits of using it, such as demonstrating how their efforts contribute to preserving or increasing the forest cover. In addition, the work on

certification was coordinated with the respective public institutions, such as the Costa Rican Accreditation Entity (ECA, by its initials in Spanish).

In the MAIBC, the project worked with the most relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements (MIVAH, by its initials in Spanish), INVU, and the Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers. Particularly, local actors played an active role in decision-making and as executors of actions, these including municipal authorities, the local MAIBC committee, different community-based organizations, and specific actors. Community members were involved as well, through their involvement in the reforestation and participatory biological monitoring brigades which sensitized the community, created engagement with the conservation efforts, and established relationships between the citizens.

In the ACLA-P, all key stakeholders were involved including the Ministry of Environment (through SINAC), the Ministry of Agriculture, the livestock corporation and similar chambers (CGIZS, ACGUS), the community Integrated Development Associations (ADIs) and water associations (ASADAS, for its initials in Spanish), as well as diverse NGO's and community-based organizations (CBOs), local communities and indigenous communities. While the latter were not considered in the design, they were fully involved during implementation as they requested (see section 3.4.1.4 for details). SINAC was not only an executing partner, but also strategic for decision-making processes related to production under a sustainable approach. Similar to MAIBC, local actors were involved through the implementation of the participatory biological monitoring initiatives, as well as the forest brigades. A key instrument for the involvement of stakeholders, and a good practice, was the provision of 27 grants to 45 local organizations for sustainable development practices, including environmental education and productive initiatives. For this to work, the project team provided important technical assistance to structure proposals and make them feasible. This scheme was key for the project to reach the whole of the targeted territory, establish relationships between the diverse local organizations, and involve the local perspective and knowledge.

However, there was an opportunity area for the involvement of additional stakeholders which would have been key for the urban component of the project. The project would have benefited from strengthening the linkages with MIVAH and nationally focused INVU departments and working alongside stakeholders such as the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation, as well as private developers to better coordinate efforts between these institutions and the project's activities executed in the MAIBC, as well as to ensure the uptake of the lessons and recommendations derived from the project implementation. Additionally, the project would have benefited from a stronger involvement of the Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers of Costa Rica for the subject of treating sewage water before disposing it into the river. The conservation efforts being done around the riverbank and its impacts in water quality are less efficient if solid and liquid waste is discharged into rivers without treatment.

Overall, the interviews conducted with a very broad representation of actors highlighted the collaborative and interactive nature of the process, in which different actors worked together. In this sense, the communities indicate that their opinions were heard and taken into account in the project activities, and that there was always a dialogue between people's experience and scientific knowledge, integrating different knowledge.

3.2. Project design

3.2.1. Assessment of the logical results

¿How clear and integrated were the objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities of the project?

The project document (ProDoc) put forward a holistic approach to address the identified development challenge. It rightly considered the development of geographic information systems, legal, policy and regulatory reforms, environmental education and ecological restoration as cross-cutting aspects and covered both rural and urban areas, addressing key aspects in each of them (sustainable production, certification and commercialization in ACLA-P, delimitation of conservation areas in MAIBC). The project even covered activities on land registry and cadastre records. The different elements were in general well integrated and illustrated in a theory of change. However, this could have paid more attention to key aspects for transformative impacts in MAIBC. In particular, at design, from a systemic change perspective, as a strategy to achieve sustainable development in an urban context, the project could have paid more attention to urban planning, including the planning law, municipal regulatory plans, public works infrastructure design codes or standards and planning approaches of developers, including INVU[6], although this seems to be a particularly complex and hard to solve problem in the country. Similarly, at design, there was room for increased attention to urban/municipal environmental-related economics and finance, as well as to urban infrastructure. Nevertheless, as detailed in sections 3.3.1 and 3.6.1, important contributions were made in these areas. Learning from these shortcomings, TEVU (GEF 7) explicitly and directly covers urban planning and municipal finance and to certain extent urban infrastructure, in particular water and sanitation.

How feasible and realistic were the project objectives, outcomes and outputs within the available budget and time frame?

In general, project objectives, outcomes and outputs were realistic within the available budget and time frame, as witnessed by the achievement of most targets and the surpassing of many before the official project completion, as detailed in section 3.3 on effectiveness. As indicated in section 3.4 on impact, many of the ecological, economic and social impacts will be seen more in the medium to long term. That said, the budget allocation proved limited on two aspects. Budget for marketing was not consistent with the target of developing ten agreements with international buyers. This would have required consultants in international markets, the procurement of which was beyond the financial capacity of the project, as well as more mature producers, while many of the producers in ACLAP were subsistence businesses. Similarly, the work on land registry and cadastre was not properly integrated in terms of both budget and time. Tasks in this field would have required more time and significant more budget to make a transformative impact. That said, important results were achieved in both areas.

[6] A key barrier is not just that some urban development happens outside planning, as is the case in many developing and Latin American cities, but that the urban planning instruments and approaches do not promote a compact, sustainable, low carbon and resilient city. On the contrary, they favour single-use, low density, car-dependent sprawl, leading to a massive urban footprint resulting in the loss, degradation and fragmentation of ecosystems.

How effective was the M&E system (indicators, baselines, targets, methods and sources of verification) in measuring the progress/results of the project? Were they SMART and consistent with the project objectives, outcomes and outputs?

The project results framework (PRF) included key aspects but left many out. This comprised important activities, such as the work on land registry and the cadastre, for which there are no targets in the PRF, but also indicators that allowed to measure more broadly not just restoration activities, but their impact on the health of ecosystems and the services these provide. While indicators on forest cover, birds and household income were included, some others, such as indicators on soil erosion, water runoff and quality, air quality, flora or more types of fauna, were disregarded. This was largely due to the limited availability of baselines for these indicators, as well as to more structural challenges. For a project as broad and complex as this one there was a trade off in terms of the length of the results framework. In addition, there is the attribution problem, in the sense that the scale of the project interventions was limited vis a vis other factors that could more significantly contribute to the change in these variables. Furthermore, there is the time lag issue, in the sense that changes in those variables as a result of the project can be evident only after its completion, given that the benefits of restoration activities do not materialize immediately in these types of variables. However, it would have been convenient to add some indicators to better monitor progress. The results framework was indeed expanded during implementation (e.g. with respect to wildlife, where some mammals were added to birds, on indicators 9 and 14), but some important aspects (such as soil retention, water and air quality) were still left out. In addition to indicators 9 and 14, adjustments were made during implementation to indicators 4, which was eliminated early in the implementation because it was successfully achieved and monitoring was deemed unnecessary, and 5, which was reworded because the original target of establishing agreements with international buyers for the acquisition of products verified as free of loss of forest cover was deemed as unattainable given the project conditions, as discussed above. The means of verification of indicators regarding loss of forest cover where also rightly adjusted to make them more robust. Indicator 1 was unclear on how direct beneficiaries would be measured. The project also had to create the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) index, which allowed the project to tailor capacity building activities. It is worth noting that the PRF mainstreamed the gender perspective not only by including some sex-disaggregated indicators, but also by including the gender perspective in other indicators and monitoring tools, such as the KAP.

3.2.2. Assumptions and risks

The ProDoc clearly identified assumptions for the achievement of the project's objective and outcomes. Assumptions for component 1 mainly focused on having willingness by key stakeholders (decision-makers, local stakeholders, local landowners, farmers, international buyers) to incorporate environmental and sustainability criteria and objectives into production activities. Component 2 assumptions were related to having favourable conditions for the implementation of the activities (no substantive changes in land use, normal environmental variability, optimal sampling efforts, etc.), having willingness from local stakeholders, including farmers and landowners, as well as stable markets for environmentally-friendly products. Assumptions for component 3 focused on a wide and timely dissemination of the generated information and optimal sampling.

The ProDoc also identified the risks to project implementation, as per standard UNDP requirements, through a risk management strategy and presented in a risk log. Six risks were included, two of an environmental nature, one of a strategic/institutional nature, one of a

social/financial nature, one of a political nature, and one of a financial nature. Overall, the impact and likelihood of these risks are low or medium in the project document. The risks of greatest impact in the project document are the lack of financial sustainability of MOCUPP by the end of the project, and climate change impacts affecting the project's outcomes. The risk of greatest likelihood is having the project's activities within or adjacent to critical or environmentally sensitive habitats. The other risks included in the project document are changes in the political administration, opposition to publish GIS maps through SNIT, and opposition from producers to have a free-of-loss in forest cover certification.

The project document identified all relevant risks but did not give due weight to all of them. The impact of the political risk should have been higher considering component 1 effectiveness essentially relied on favourable conditions, including political ones, to achieve its targets. Not having supportive administrations of land management tools within private lands, both at the national and local level, would have severely hindered progress and success of the project. On the other hand, the project did not consider a financial risk in relation to the nonfulfillment of established agreements with international buyers for the acquisition of products verified as free of loss of forest cover. This was a key incentive for producers to switch to sustainable productive practices with the potential of selling their products at a higher price. The fact that the indicator for this target had to be modified during implementation reflects the challenge the task imposed. Additionally, there was no risk associated with a health pandemic, such as COVID-19, but this was largely unsuspected by all, not only in 2018, but even in early 2020.

In addition to the risk log, the project also performed a social and environmental screening plan (SESP) to assess whether the project's activities had a risk of adverse social and environmental impacts. The ProDoc was approved with a SESP that determined a low risk. However, the plan had to be updated in 2020 to include potential risks associated with adverse social or environmental impacts on indigenous peoples and local communities. With this, the overall risk of the project was determined to be moderate. The updated version presents seven risks with most of them having a low or moderate impact and likelihood. The risks of greatest impact in the updated plan are the possibility of excluding women, indigenous peoples or communities in the project's activities, the generation of socioenvironmental conflicts as a result of MOCUPP use, and the overall work with the indigenous communities. The other risks included possible adverse impacts to gender equality and the overall situation of women and girls, work within critical habitats or environmentally sensitive areas, climate change vulnerability, and the generation of information which could potentially cause human displacements. The project documents mention there was also new risks identified throughout the implementation: (i) Negative impacts COVID-19 could have on women, (ii) an increase of land invasion on protected areas of riverbanks, (iii) vandalism in reforested and rehabilitated protected areas, and (iv) misuse of funding by local organizations. The project progress reports state no social or environmental risk increased their categorization or escalated and all risks were successfully mitigated throughout the implementation.

Of the risks that were considered, the one that took place was the one related to facing opposition from producers to the certification because of a misunderstanding of the use of MOCUPP to monitor their lands. This was mitigated by better communicating to the producers the benefits and objectives of using MOCUPP. The other expected risks did not materialise or did not have a significant impact. The risk of excluding vulnerable populations did not took place because the project designed and implemented a Gender Action Plan and an Indigenous Peoples Participation Plan (IPPP). There were no socio-environmental conflicts or adverse impacts to gender equality. The risk in terms of affecting critical habitats or sensible environmental areas did not took place because the project executed biodiversity analyses in both the impact areas to properly understand

their conditions, and there were no significant affections due to climate change because the project's activities were to some extent designed to adapt to climate change impacts. There were no major issues with new political administrations, threats to the financial sustainability of MOCUPP or opposition from other GIS and information technology (IT's) departments, as a result of successful partnerships and articulation with key stakeholders.

Of the risks not considered in the project document, the project reworded the indicator for agreements established with international buyers (indicator 5) based on a better understanding of the scope the project could have. Finally, project implementation was also affected by COVID 19, which reduced face-to-face meetings and the capacity to be in the field but was properly mitigated by adapting all project activities to social distancing restrictions.

3.2.3. Lessons from other relevant projects integrated in project design

Were relevant lessons learned from other projects duly incorporated into the project design?

The project document mentions that Productive Landscapes builds upon relevant past and ongoing initiatives, both national and international. The ProDoc generally indicated that lessons learned from some of these initiatives would be used in the implementation of Productive Landscapes but did not detail what these lessons are or how they are specifically integrated. That said, the interviewees exposed that external lessons learned, particularly from other GEF and UNDP projects, were taken into account during the implementation given the project's team vast experience and knowledge acquired from working in previous environmental projects. In addition to other projects, Productive Landscapes coordinator brought the experience from previously working on the GEF 5 project[7] on wetlands and an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) project[8] focused on land property rights registration and administration, where she became fairly acquainted with the topics of public registry, property, layers and how to use these in MOCUPP and for the zoning of river areas. While working for the GEF 5 project, she also learned about key cultural and political differences when implementing participatory processes in rural and urban areas, understanding the additional effort required in urban areas as a result of particular social behaviours (people are busier and less receptive) in comparison with rural areas, and using this knowledge when coordinating these types of activities in Productive Landscapes. Another lesson learned considered by the project relates to the publication of sensitive data. The wetlands GEF 5 project generated information but this was never published by the government because it was sensitive for some stakeholders. Learning from this experience, Productive Landscapes established partnerships with academia (FunCeNAT and UCR) so that they manage the MOCUPP, as independent, non-governmental institutions that are committed to publishing updated data regularly regardless of how controversial it might be, while at the same time allowing the government to be familiar with the data before it is published.

[7] Conservation, sustainable use of biodiversity, and maintenance of ecosystem services of internationally important protected wetlands.
[8] Cadaster and registry regularization program.

3.2.4. Complementarity with other interventions

Were other interventions within the sector clearly identified in the project document?

The project document identifies in section V other internationally funded projects carried out in the country in the areas of biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management, and sustainable forest management, as well as potential areas of synergy. The document describes four of them[9] in more detail and explains the relations and complementarity between the existing initiatives and Productive Landscapes. This section does not identify nationally funded and developed initiatives and interventions, although these are mentioned more generally in other sections of the project document.

To what extent does the project support (and not duplicate) activities and objectives not addressed by other projects or programs?

The project had a high level of complementarity with other initiatives developed in the country and in the project areas. Available information highlight six in particular: i) The "Biodiver_city" project, financed by the German Development Agency (GIZ), which focused on strengthening local capacities to ensure that interurban biological corridors are considered in the planning and management of spaces in the metropolitan region of San Jose (GAM), (ii) the project "Interlace", financed by the European Union (EU) and managed by Costa Rica's national University (UCR by its initials in Spanish), which supports planning processes within the MAIBC for green public spaces, (iii) the "Scaling up Climate Ambition on Land Use and Agriculture through Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans (SCALA)" project, financed by GEF and jointly implemented by UNDP and the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which aims to transform how the agriculture and land use sectors of the country operate incorporating adaptation and mitigation measures, investing in traceability and promoting commercialization of deforestation free verified commodities, (iv) the "Transformative Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Pathways of Costa Rica (Transforma)" project, funded by the German International Climate Initiative (IKI), which supports the country's adaptation and mitigation efforts in the agriculture sector and will support the development of layers for coffee and cacao in the MOCUPP, (v) the "Green Commodities" programme funded by UNDP, which supports responsible production and trade of pineapple, and (vi) the NDC support programme for Costa Rica, which contributes to the country's adaptation actions. The project also coordinated activities and products with Biofin, the GEF 6 funded "Strengthening capacities of rural aqueduct associations (ASADAS) to address climate change risks in water stressed communities of Northern Costa Rica"[10] and phase 7 of the Small Grants Programme.

Productive Landscapes, Biodiver_city, Interlace and NDC Support carried out joint activities towards protecting biodiversity in urban areas and restoring green public spaces. These three projects were complementary because they share the same geographical area of intervention (i.e. the MAIBC). SCALA, Green Commodities, and Transforma carried out joint activities with Productive Landscapes in bringing about transformational change in production practices in the

[9] The mentioned projects are: (i) Conservation, sustainable use of biodiversity, and maintenance of ecosystem services of internationally important protected wetlands, financed by the GEF; (ii) UNDP's GEF Portfolio for addressing chemicals and waste management; (iii) REDD+ Landscape CCAD-GIZ Program, financed by GIZ, and (iv) Implementation of the National Biocorridor Programme (PNCB) within the Context of Costa Rica's National Biodiversity Strategy, financed by GIZ.

[10] https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/6945

agriculture and land-use sectors, with them being complementary because of their contribution to the long-term ecological sustainability of key ecosystems. The interviews noted, however, Biodiver_city and Productive Landscapes had a challenging time finding collaboration spaces, because, unlike Productive Landscapes, Biodiver_city did not have a clear road map, which resulted in some duplications and inefficiencies in relation to the development of urban digital maps for the area. Productive Landscapes was a pioneer through in the use and inter-institutional coordination of a system for monitoring land use cover within production landscapes (MOCUPP) in both rural and urban areas.

Has the intervention been coordinated with other donors to seek complementarity and synergies?

The project also had a high level of coordination with other international cooperation interventions, particularly in its implementation phase. In the urban impact area, the interviews indicate Productive Landscapes and Interlace developed concrete synergies towards the restoration of urban spaces within the MAIBC. Particular, they collaborated in landscaping activities such as trash cleaning of public spaces and transforming them into parks, as well as in community workshops. In the rural areas, Transforma will continue the efforts made by Productive Landscapes with the MOCCUP by adding information on coffee and cacao to the platform. Both SCALA and Green Commodities collaborated with the project on the commercialization of products derived from sustainable practices, and the NDC support Programme contributed by incorporating the perspective of adaptation to climate change through the elaboration of an urban arboriculture for the nurseries. There was also mention of other collaborations with the initiatives Biofin and REDD+ as well as with the UNDP and UNEP implemented project that uses Essential Life Support Areas (ELSA) maps to identify conservation target areas.

However, coordination and collaboration could have been stronger with other projects, both in urban and rural areas, but especially in urban areas. There was no coordination with the projects of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) “City Adapt LAC”, which works in several cities in Latin America, and “Plan A” which impacts some of the same municipalities Productive Landscapes works in towards their transformation to climate change resilient territories. Even though Productive Landscapes was not an explicitly adaptation-focused project, there were implicit areas for coordination and collaboration with these two UNEP projects. Additionally, there could have been synergies with the IDB programme “Emerging and Sustainable Cities”. Coordination with UN-Habitat was limited to an event in 2021. Furthermore, there was no coordination and collaboration with the GEF 6 “Sustainable Cities Programme” which works in Lima, Asuncion and several Mexican cities. Similarly, there was room for more significant coordination and synergies with other GEF 6 Productive Landscapes type of projects, which were implemented in several countries in Latin America. Limited coordination and collaboration with these projects refers not only to the project team, but also to the UN coordination in the country. It also refers to the allocation of regional technical advisors (RTA) at UNDP (projects addressing multiple focus areas may require more than one RTA, or a better coordination between a focal point and other RTAs – in this particular case, biodiversity and urban focused RTAs). Finally, it refers to the GEF Secretariat itself, which could further support coordination and collaboration between projects within and across programmes. Coordination with some UNDP implemented projects, such as the GEF-funded Small Grants Programme and the project’s brigades in ACLA-P, and Biofin, could have also been stronger. In addition, there has been no coordination and collaboration with cities’

networks, such as ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability[11], C40[12] or the Covenant of Mayors[13], and other key players, such as Cities Alliance or CAF-the Development Bank of Latin America, or platforms, such as the Urban Housing Practitioners Hub (UHPH)[14].

3.3. Effectiveness

3.3.1. Has the project been effective in achieving its expected objectives, outcomes and outputs?

The project results framework includes thirty-six (36) outputs, thirteen (13) indicators at the outcome level and two indicators at the objective level. **Delivery of outputs has been highly satisfactory.** The project has fully delivered 30 outputs (83% of planned outputs). One output was partially delivered, 2 outputs were delivered but their scope significantly adjusted, and 3 outputs were not delivered, because they were not feasible or did no longer make sense during implementation. Overall, the quality of outputs is outstanding and their scope more ambitious than planned. Table 11. Output deliveryTable 11 provides a summary of output delivery.

The achievement of targets has been highly satisfactory at both the outcome and objective levels. At outcome level, the achievement of target has been highly satisfactory, as only two of the thirteen targets (or 15% of the targets) have not been met. In particular, achievement of targets has been highly satisfactory in ten indicators (or 77% of the indicators), moderately satisfactory in one (or 8%), moderately unsatisfactory in one (or 8%) and unsatisfactory in one (8%). The achievement of targets was overall satisfactory in all outcomes. At objective level, the two original targets have been exceeded. Table 12 presents the analysis for each indicator, justifying the ratings.

In addition, to its specific results framework, the project reports on five (5) GEF core indicators, in particular regarding indicators 3 (land restoration), 6 (GHG emissions mitigation) and 11 (direct beneficiaries)[15]. The project has largely exceeded the targets set in the five indicators.

It is useful to qualitatively analyse the project's progress on the three expected outcomes beyond the project's indicator system and the GEF Core indicators. The project has clearly contributed to create favourable enabling conditions for delivering multiple global environmental benefits (outcome 1). This has been particularly the case on the technological front, especially through the development of the MOCUPP for real-time monitoring of land uses, and thus control deforestation processes, in both rural and urban areas across the country. As discussed below, some progress has also been made on other technologies, which was not planned. Importantly, the project has contributed to legal, regulatory and policy reforms that secure the use of the MOCUPP, such as

[11] https://iclei.org/; Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean Secretariat: https://iclei.org.mx/
[12] www.c40.org
[13] https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/
[14] https://www.uhph.org/en
[15] More specifically indicators 3, 3.1, 3.2, 6.2 and 11.

the executive decree that creates SIMOCUTE[16] and the MINAE internal decree[17] that formalizes its use. The draft bill[18], which will likely be approved by the Congress in 2023, will contribute to the financial sustainability of the MOCUPP. In addition, the project engaged staff from MINAE and MAG and the productive sector (i.e., livestock, pineapple, and oil palm) to foster the political, institutional and social sustainability of the GIS tool. The project has also improved the legal, regulatory and policy frameworks beyond MOCUPP regarding the delimitation of conservation areas and their public use in urban areas, which was not originally planned. Furthermore, the project has improved the markets for delivering multiple global environmental benefits, by establishing agreements between producers and one international, two national and three regional buyers for the acquisition of products verified as free of loss of forest cover. Although in this case the number of established agreements has been less significant than planned, the contribution is nonetheless important. It is worth noting that the six organizations committed to guarantee the continuity in the application of landscape management tools and use of MOCUPP data for informed purchases, and that the project supported each of them regarding the characterization of their commercial maturity, strengthening the design, and brand registration, promotion, labelling, transition to biodegradable packaging, cattle registration and access to auctions for livestock units led by women.

In addition, the project has delivered multiple global environmental benefits both in the productive landscapes of the ACLA-P buffer zone and the MAIBC (outcome 2). In ACLA-P this has included the adoption of landscape management tools (micro-corridors and silvopastoral systems) in 7,202 ha, with 69 farms verified as free of loss of forest cover, using a certification developed with the ECA and the CORFOGA. This has allowed a 231,976.68 tCO2eq increase in biomass reserves (carbon storage) and a 125,416 MgCO2e/year reduction in CO2e emissions. The adoption of these management tools has also contributed to ecosystem connectivity and biodiversity conservation, including, but not limited to, the stable presence of key bird species. It has also contributed to an 10% average increase in household and both men's and women's annual income, with an important decrease in the percentage of low-income households, even if the trend was negative in the region in the same period. In MAIBC, the project has contributed to the adoption of landscape management tools (micro-corridors, protection areas, particularly along the watershed, and urban green areas) in 2,204 ha. This has increased biomass reserves by 15,591 tCO2eq (again, an important contribution even if the target has not been met), and contributed to biodiversity conservation, including, but not limited to, the stable presence of two important migratory bird species. Importantly, as discussed below (section 3.4.1), the project has conducted activities that were not planned, such as establishing participatory biological monitoring brigades and development of nurseries with local plant species, in both areas, and complementing ecological restoration with urban rehabilitation, in MAIBC, and has thus delivered significant unplanned environmental, social and economic benefits, some of which (e.g. biodiversity) can be considered of global importance.

Finally, the project has greatly increased knowledge (outcome 3). It has developed 35 documents describing successful experiences about the integration of biodiversity conservation, land

[16] Executive Order N° 42886-MINAE-MAG-JP "Creation and operation of the National System for Monitoring the Coverage and Use of Land and Ecosystems (SIMOCUTE)" published in the Official Journal of Costa Rica La Gaceta N° 94, on May 18th of 2021.
[17] Internal directive number 006-2021 called "Protocol for the Publication, Disclosure and Use of Information from the Monitoring System for Land Use Change in Productive Landscapes (MOCUPP)".
[18] An amendment of the Biodiversity Law, subsection K, which states that 4% of the timber tax is allocated to the financial sustainability of geographic information systems (GIS) platforms for monitoring land use change.

management, and carbon sequestration in sustainable production landscapes and interurban biological corridors in Costa Rica. Through the awareness raising and environmental education activities, which benefited 1,772 people with workshops and webinars, among others, the KAP index has increased in both project areas. Overall, the quality of the outcomes is good.

Through these outcomes, the project has made significant progress towards its objective (see section 3.4 for a broader assessment of impacts), namely mainstreaming biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and carbon sequestration objectives into production landscapes and urban biological corridors of Costa Rica. It has directly benefited 52,078 people (61% women) regarding solutions for managing natural resources and ecosystem services, in both rural and urban areas, including sustainable agricultural and cattle farming practices, environmental education, participatory brigades for biological monitoring, topographic and property registration processes within areas prioritized for biodiversity conservation purposes, and reforestation campaigns, among others. Moreover, the project has avoided 4,785.08 ha loss in forest cover by protecting primary and secondary forest areas in farms and primarily riparian forests in urban areas.

3.3.2. How were risks managed and mitigated?

What external factors enabled and hindered the achievement of the expected objectives and outcomes?

Some legal, political and institutional factors enabled the achievement of the expected results. The project benefited from legal, policy and regulatory frameworks promoting sustainable development, including biodiversity conservation, forest protection and restoration, sustainable production, and inter-urban biological corridors. In addition, the project benefited from political commitment from the national government for most of its implementation period (between April 2018 and May 2022) as well as from the municipalities where it worked. In this regard, the project was fortunate there was stability in the national government, and that municipal elections in 2020 did not imply a substantive change. Moreover, the project benefited from the existence of dynamic institutions working on environmental sustainability for a long time in the target territories, such as the local MAIBC committee, SINAC, MAG, ADIs, ASADAs, Chambers, and NGOs that received funds, including in indigenous territories. This institutional fabric helped the project work in the two areas, reach more people and cover larger geographical areas. Similarly, the project benefited from the existence of considerable technical capacity in the country, which allowed the approach of building a strong permanent technical unit, and the existence of solid scientific institutions, such as FunCeNAT and the University of Costa Rica, which allowed developing the MOCUPP in the country, in a more cost-effective and sustainable way than procuring it abroad. In MAIBC, an enabling factor was the preservation of riparian conservation areas. While these were often used as dumpsites, they were very rarely built up with houses, as is the case in many cities in developing countries, both low and middle-income countries. In MAIBC, ecological and urban rehabilitation implied cleaning up the sites and building light recreational infrastructure but did not require relocation and construction of hard infrastructure, which is unavoidable in many cities and is socially challenging, financially demanding and time-consuming.

On the other hand, the achievement of the expected results was compromised by some hindering factors. These include institutional weakness, such as the slowness of political processes to approve new laws, norms, policies and regulations, as well as to update old ones. At the beginning of the project, there was resistance and opposition to the use of MOCUPP with producers. In 2020

there were changes in some local administrations, which created some obstacles to processes that had already started. In some cases, there was distrust from local communities, particularly when it came to having to tear down old, sick exotic trees to give way for native species, and limited resources at the municipal level to provide good maintenance to green public spaces. Interviewees mention there was a challenge with hunters in the rural areas, whom, on occasion, stole or destroyed some of the camera traps thinking they were meant to catch them. In addition, the achievement of the expected results faced some management difficulties, such as the extension of the target territory, which generated long travel distances, and the poor condition of some roads, which made the journeys longer. The weather conditions in the country were not very favourable as well, with a long and heavy rain season that slowed down the work. Working with people from urban areas was also challenging because they are usually short on time during the week, which affected their engagement and interest in project activities. Finally, COVID-19 brought upon mobilization restrictions for in-person trainings, workshops, meetings and activities, as well as for performing field work. This is in line with the emerging risks identified in the Project Implementation Reports (PIRs).

How well were risks and assumptions managed, e.g. COVID-19? What was the quality of the risk mitigation strategies developed? Were they sufficient?

Risks were monitored and assessed at least every three months and reported once a year in the PIRs. They were also promptly identified throughout project implementation, as it was the case with the pandemic. Of the identified risks, very few affected the project severely as a result of defining adequate mitigation strategies, which were integrated into the workplan prior to the beginning of the project, which highlights the high quality of the risk analysis and mitigation strategies definition.

During project implementation, actions to mitigate the risks that were presented, whether identified in the project document (see section 3.2.2 for details) or new, upcoming risks, were appropriate. The multidisciplinary composition of the work teams helped to identify risks and define and implement strategies to mitigate them. For example, this was the case regarding the updating of the SESP when indigenous communities approached and requested the project to participate in it, for which an Indigenous Peoples Participation Plan was drafted with specific actions to include this population according to national and international legislation and procedures. Similarly, the project chose a project unit team with significant previous training on sustainable practices and natural resource conflict management to address any possible risks by working within or adjacent to critical habitats and/or environmentally sensitive areas. To mitigate possible misuse of funding by local organizations, the project carefully selected, through a curated list of requirements, the beneficiaries of the grants and provided guidance, monitoring and control of the funding. When the project faced opposition from producers to the use of MOCUPP, more information on the benefits it provides them was communicated to them. The project was also able to adapt to the new and unsuspected situations generated by COVID-19 by creating new initiatives that were in line with the project's objectives but also generated social and economic benefits, as was the case with the urban family reforestation brigades, and by adapting project activities to the extent possible to social distancing restrictions. Where possible risks where indeed transformed into opportunities for further positive impact. The PIR's indicate precisely how the risks presented were managed. A proof that how well risks were managed is that, despite the pandemic, Productive Landscapes is being completed six months before its official project completion date.

3.4. Impact

3.4.1. Are there signs that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress towards, the intended impact?[19]

3.4.1.1. To what extent has the project reduced pressure on ecosystems in the intervention areas?

The project has contributed to reducing pressure over ecosystems at the national level and in its intervention areas (ACLA-P and MAIBC). The contribution at the national level is considerable, as the MOCUPP will help better monitor land use changes regarding three key drivers of deforestation (the production of pineapple and African palm and cattle farming). The work with these productive sectors and their consequent buy in as a tool that not only indicates negative impacts but also good practices, showing both deforestation losses and gains, as well as the dissemination of sustainable land management tools will be critical to reduce the pressure over ecosystems of these three key sectors across the country.

The contribution to reducing pressure over ecosystems has been especially significant in ACLA-P. The allocated grants have contributed to the wide adoption of sustainable agricultural and cattle farming practices, which is further promoted by the progress made on deforestation free certification and the commercialization of verified products. The environmental education activities and the creation of the brigades have increased social awareness. The project has also resulted in a better integration between conservation and production focused institutions, which is critical to promote environmental sustainability and biodiversity conservation in the buffer zones of protected areas. These factors will contribute to reduce the expansion of the agricultural and cattle farming frontier, unsustainable productive practices within the existing agricultural and cattle farming lands and negative cultural practices, such as hunting and illegal forest cutting, which constitute the three key drivers of ecosystem degradation in the region. The establishment and strengthening of nurseries will contribute to the sustainability of these efforts and fostering impacts.

The contribution of the project to reducing pressure over ecosystems has been important, but less substantive and transformative in MAIBC. The project has greatly contributed to protect and restore riparian ecosystems and has created and improved ecosystems in the already built up areas. Moreover, through the environmental education activities and the creation of the brigades the project has increased social awareness. The project has contributed to governments, particularly municipalities, and communities being in a better position to continue the protection and restoration of ecosystems and the creation and improvement of ecosystem in the built-up areas, through nurseries, equipment and increased awareness and technical capacity. It has also strengthened the regulatory framework, by modifying the delimitation of riparian conservation areas and article 33 of the forestry law allowing the construction of light infrastructure in these spaces in urban areas. In addition, the project contributed to improved solid waste management[20], which was not planned.

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[19] Section 3.3.1 presents progress towards outcomes within and beyond the project results framework, as well progress towards the objective within the project results framework. This section discusses progress towards impact beyond the project results framework.

[20] The project supported the *Comunitas* initiative, which promotes the inter-municipal management of solid waste in the four largest municipalities of the GAM. Productive Landscapes developed a governance study.

These are all very significant contributions. However, the project has not resulted in significant progress in the approaches of public infrastructure (particularly roads and energy) and (public and private) housing and (private) commercial or productive developments in the already built areas, which have a key impact on ecosystems. While there has been a contribution to more and better sanitation infrastructure, for instance through the contribution to the Pact for the Maria Aguilar, factual progress in that front has been reduced. Moreover, the contribution of the project to reducing the expansion of the urban frontier seem so far limited. The urban MOCUPP is an important contribution that has yet to be fully used. As noted, changes in public and private infrastructure developers do not seem substantive. As of October 2022, it seems that the gains in the riparian conservation areas and the already built up areas could be less important than the losses in the peripherical areas, where a significant portion of forests or agricultural land with some forest cover (e.g. coffee plantations) seems to be being transformed into urban land (e.g. low density housing, logistic centres). In short, in the MAIBC, although there has been important progress, there seems to be room to strengthen the work with key stakeholders in the already built-up areas as well as in the peripherical areas to further reduce the pressure over ecosystems.

Overall, both in ACLA-P and MAIBC, the project has promoted circular economy, which contributes to reduce the pressure over ecosystems. This has been fostered in nurseries (i.e. water harvesting, reuse and recycling, use of cut tree branches, compost, dry toilets, seeds from urban parks and even in one case use of organic soil from construction sites across a municipality), as well as in farms, particularly in cattle farming (i.e. use of manure).

3.4.1.2 To what extent has the project improved connectivity between ecosystems?

The project has greatly contributed to improve ecosystem connectivity both in ACLA-P and MAIBC, given its approach. In ACLA-P, the project has done so by protecting forests near rivers, as well as through agroforestry and other approaches, such as life fences. This has improved connectivity not only within the project areas, but also with protected areas, as the project works in their buffer zones. In GAM, where the project has focused on a interurban biological corridor, this has been achieved through the protection and restoration of riparian conservation areas, the establishment and improvement of micro-corridors (e.g. boulevards) and increased planting of a variety of trees, shrubs and herbaceous in a variety of large, medium and small sites, including urban parks and squares, sidewalks, spaces of public institutions and private gardens. The project promoted species that increase pollination and bees to increase it. In this sense, the project has sought not only to expand the number of trees, but more importantly improve the extension, complexity and balance of the vegetative system, in the low, medium and high strata, considering both the specific needs of specific sites and the limitations that these brought in terms of competition with other uses and aerial (e.g. electric cables), terrestrial (e.g. roads) and underground (e.g. water and sanitation, gas, communication) infrastructure. However, although the approach has been quite holistic, there is room for greening buildings through green terraces, roofs and walls.

3.4.1.3 To what extent has the project improved ecosystem health in the intervention areas?

The project has significantly contributed to increase the forest cover, both through the conservation of existing forest cover (reducing deforestation)[21] and active tree planting. As noted above, this is more significant in ACLA-P than in MAIBC, where some key drivers of deforestation have not been addressed.

Partnering with the project, AyA has monitored water quality in the Maria Aguilar river. Data shows no improvement during project implementation.

Partial information is available on the improvement of fauna. Participatory biodiversity monitoring has confirmed a higher relative abundance indicator for the Summer Tanager and Baltimore Oriole species across time in MAIBC. This monitoring has also registered 22 new species, which were not reported in the baseline inventory from 2019. No conclusive information is available in ACLA-P. The project has indeed built some very relevant data on animals in both areas[22], but as there was no baseline or the baselines were weak at the beginning of the project, improvements cannot be fully assessed.

No conclusive information is available on changes in other natural resources, such as soil retention and quality, water runoff, water volume in the Maria Aguilar, air quality and the diversity of plants. The diversity of plants has not been systematically monitored or reported, while water runoff, air quality and soil retention and quality have not been monitored.

However, some improvement in the above-mentioned variables can reasonably be expected: soil retention and quality, water volume, air quality and the diversity of plants and animals have arguably increased, and runoff reduced as a result of the project[23]. For example, particularly in MAIBC, the project contributed to increase the presence of shrubs and herbaceous plants, especially through the garden initiative but also through interventions in public sidewalks and public parks, thus enriching the flora of the area. The idea was indeed to bring the structure of forests to the city, where high, medium and low vegetation cover exists, and trees are complemented with other types of species of flora. It is worth noting, however, that these improvements may be limited as of November 2022, as data on water quality in the Maria Aguilar shows, given the reduced scale of the areas where interventions have been conducted, that sites are not always immediately connected and that these benefits take time to materialize. Indeed, the impact of forest restoration activities take some time to materialize in the form of healthier forests and impacts on other

[21] As noted in section 3.3.1, in particular, the project has avoided 4,785.08 ha loss in forest cover by protecting primary and secondary forest areas in farms and primarily riparian forests in urban areas.

[22] In ACLA-P a total of 172 farms located in 18 communities were included in the biological monitoring program of the productive lands in ACLA-P. The project identified the presence of 41 species of mammals and 571 species of birds. All indicator bird species have been confirmed in at least one monitoring site. The most common bird species is the Plain Chachalaca (Ortalis cinereiceps), followed by the the Great Tinamou (Tinamus major), the Crested Guan, the Black-faced Solitaire (Myadestes melanops) and the Collared Trogon (Trogon collaris). Among mammals the most common species are the White-faced capuchin (Cebus imitator), the Spotted Paca (Cuniculus paca), the Central American Agouti (Dasyprocta punctata) and the Baird's Tapir (Tapirus bairdii). The most widespread feline is the Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis). In the MAIBC a total of 178 bird species, including 45 migratory, including the Summer Tanager and Baltimore Oriole, were registered. Five (5) endangered species were registered; including the Yellow-napped Parrot, Peregrine Falcon and Cabaní´s Ground Sparrow.The data collected confirmed the high biodiversity and richness of indicator species that use the productive lands of ACLA-P and the CBIMA.

[23] According to interviewees, assessments in a nearby river (the Rio Cloro) show that these types of intervention improved water quality.

aspects, such as soil, water, air and animals, are evident only in the medium to long term. In this sense, ceteris paribus, the ecological benefits of the project will likely increase over time. These benefits will of course be positively or negatively affected by other factors, some of which may have a bigger impact on natural resources than the activities conducted by the project. For instance, the water quality of the Maria Aguilar is more influenced by improvements in the extension and condition of sanitation infrastructure, which AyA is promoting, than by the protection and restoration of 204 ha conducted by the project.

3.4.1.4 To what extent has the project improved the quality of life of the inhabitants in the intervention areas?

In ACLA-P, according to the socio-economic survey conducted by the project[24], as discussed in section 3.3.1, the project has increased direct beneficiaries' household and both men's and women's income[25], and has contributed to reduce the percentage of low-income families[26], when the regional economic trend was negative. There is no clear information on income diversification and stability, but interviews suggest both have increased with the support of the project. Beyond agriculture and cattle farming activities, the project has supported the development of nature-related tourism. Directly, it has supported some local initiatives. Participatory biodiversity monitoring (PBM) contributes to this type of tourism indirectly. PBM has allowed the verification of the richness of these areas and the dissemination of data in specialized channels. This has increased the interest in the area of bird fans and thus created new tourist routes. Some of the people participating on the PBM brigades have become guides of these bird tours. Importantly, these tours are less physically-demanding than some of the traditional tours, which brings a more sustainable source of income as these tourist guides become older and less strong. Furthermore, the project improved the economic condition of indigenous communities, in particular regarding the sustained production of handcrafts. In MAIBC, economic impacts are less significant. However, the project contributed to the income stability of around 600 families during the pandemic. Families whose members had become unemployed due to the pandemic were employed by the project to conduct urban reforestation activities, thus mitigating the negative economic impacts of COVID-19.

In both ACLA-P and MAIBC, the project has made scientific contributions, creating a wealth of knowledge, including baselines in tree cover and animals (and not just birds, but also mammals, reptiles and amphibious), often beyond the scope originally envisioned. The project has also increased the technical knowledge of wide range of stakeholders, including on sustainable landscape management tools, tree nurseries, reforestation, biodiversity and technologies, from GIS to biodiversity-related apps[27]. In both areas, but more significantly in ACLA-P, where the grant approach has been key, the project has contributed to strengthen organizations and develop the

[24] The survey interviewed 367 beneficiary households (80% of the households that were interviewed during the baseline survey). The level of confidence is 95%.

[25] The average income of agricultural farms increased 10% on average. This income includes all productive activities. The households monthly average income increased in 14.6%. Men's monthly income increased in 13%, while the trend for the region was -11.7%. Women's monthly income increased in 15%, while the trend for the region was -14.9%.

[26] The group of households that earn less than $150 per month decreased from 37.6% to 28.6%.

[27] Real-time monitoring tools such as E-Bird, Merlin, INaturalist and the National System to Measure Climate Change (SINAMEC), as well as the App that was specifically developed by the project for participative biological monitoring as part of the National Ecological Monitoring Program (PRONAMEC).

soft skills of participants, within and outside these organizations. Participatory biodiversity monitoring brigades have been key for the latter.

Moreover, in both areas, the project has contributed to improve the social fabric, by strengthening the relationships between organizations and citizens, thus fostering social cohesion. Importantly, this has involved inter-generational connections, as particularly the brigades involve children, youth, adults and elderly[28], often members of the same family, thus contributing as well to family cohesion. This has been important in both rural and urban areas, for different reasons. In rural areas, brigades have provided spaces for interaction where this type of spaces are scarce and often focused on religion. In urban areas, this has been important to break social atomization, in mostly gated individual suburban structures where households do not often know their neighbours as they move between their house, office and private commercial spaces by car. Brigades have allowed participants to link with neighbours. In these areas, brigades have also allowed multi-disciplinary links and, to a certain extent, linkages between different socio-economic groups. That said, in MAIBC there is space to expand the diversity of members of brigades[29].

In addition, the project has contributed to increase appreciation and ownership of neighbouring spaces, both in rural and urban areas. Through the brigades, rural and urban dwellers have improved their knowledge of the areas where they live and increased their sense of belonging, often related to the biodiversity wealth. In urban areas this has been particularly important, as this has had a clear physical dimension too. The project has contributed to reclaim neglected spaces, which were in general dump sites, and transform them into clean, healthy, attractive and ready to use public spaces that invite appropriation of public areas in a city that has a limited amount of them[30]. For this, putting forward a participatory design approach, the project has rightly taken into account the uses of different social groups, from children to elderly, and from dog walkers to wheelchair users, creating areas to walk, seat and play different types of games. This has increased the frequency in which urban dwellers relate to their limited but rich natural environments[31].

Furthermore, the project has contributed to citizen safety. In rural areas, this has been mostly achieved through the trap cameras. In urban areas, the reclamation of spaces has been key, as many of the neglected public spaces were not only dirty and unhealthy but also unsafe, and neighbours did not use them on that ground too. Through the ecological restoration, with the sound complementary urban rehabilitation conducted by the project (e.g. murals) and municipalities (e.g. public equipment such as lighting and benches, among others) and the involvement of more than 50 communities, the project has brought back to communities safe public spaces. The

[28] In ACLA-P, A total of 364 people actively participate in the 18 biological monitoring brigades. The brigades are integrated by 135 women and 229 men, children play an essential role in the brigades, they represent 23% of the volunteers. In MAIBC, a total of 141 men and women (92 women and 49 men) participated in the yearly bird counts organized by the project.

[29] On a focus group out of 11 interviewees only 2 were under 40 and only 2 were men.

[30] The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that every city dweller has at least 9 m² of green space within 300 metres or 10 minutes walking distance. Before the project, each inhabitant of the CBIMA had only 0.95 m² of green space and not within a 10-minute walking radius, according to the MAIBC Diagnosis. In the urban area (MAIBC), a total area of 364 ha was rehabilitated. This figure is very impressive because 76% of this corridor is covered by grey infrastructure. https://mocupp.org/octubre-urbano-2021/

[31] Urban interviewees indicated that they associated ecosystems with faraway protected areas that they visited from time to time and not with neighboring spaces, in their doorstep, that they can visit often and a systematic way, as part of their daily or weekly routine. Studies recommend a minimum of one tree for every 3 inhabitants in cities. In the María Aguilar Interurban Biological Corridor, there is not even one tree per person in any district. However, there are some interesting spaces, which urban dwellers increasingly know thanks to the project.

consideration of the uses of different social groups throughout the day has been key to ensure constant presence and thus increase safety. The contribution to safety has been recognized by municipalities, with the cultural and safety departments and local policies acknowledging the contribution of ecological and urban rehabilitation to crime prevention and citizen safety. Safety has also improved around schools, through the safe school program that the project has supported. Importantly, as further discussed in section 3.4.2, the project has also increased safety for women in both rural areas (addressing violence against women) and urban areas (focusing on the fight against sexual harassment).

In urban areas the project has also contributed to mental health, during the pandemic and overall, according to interviewees, given human beings' biophilia and social nature and the importance of agency (some individuals were ready for social and individual responsible actions, but did not know how to mobilize their commitment). It has also contributed to physical health, arguably through better environmental conditions (i.e. air quality), but also through fostering physical exercise, through the brigades and indirectly through the promotion of non-motorized modes of mobility by contributing to make public spaces greener, cleaner and safer. To certain extent, in MAIBC, the project has contributed as well to food security, through the establishment of and support to urban gardens.

From the social and cultural point of view, the project has involved three indigenous communities, which was not originally planned. As further discussed in section 3.4.2, this has allowed the interaction between traditional and scientific knowledge. In addition, by supporting these indigenous communities, the project has contributed to the preservation of indigenous cultural practices. For example, it has allowed the Boruca community to produce the wood they need for the elaboration of their handcraft masks, which are not only important from an economic point of view, but are fundamental from a cultural perspective, as they are key element of their most important traditional festivity. Before the project the Borucas were running out of the supply of the raw material, which compromised both their economy and the preservation of their culture.

In addition, as explained in detail in section 3.1.6 on cross-cutting aspects, including gender equality, the project improved the life of women and gender equality.

Finally, the project has made some contributions to the climate resilience of its beneficiaries both in rural and urban areas. In ACLA-P, project interventions, particularly the promotion of sustainable landscape management tools, will increase the resilience of residents to more frequent and intense hurricanes, droughts, heavy precipitations, and wildfires. In MAIBC, project interventions will arguably increase the resilience of urban dwellers to heat waves and more frequent and intense hurricanes and heavy precipitations. These aspects where explicitly considered in some cases. For example, in Los Yoses, some mature exotic trees were preserved until young native trees become more mature, which may take time, given the shade provided by the former and not yet provided by the later in a urban heat island and climate change context, seeking to strike a balance between short term and long term benefits. While the project could have had a more direct and systematic approach to climate change adaptation, even if funding from the GEF adaptation window was not allocated, its contribution to climate resilience is substantive.

3.4.1.5 To what extent have there been unintended outcomes (positive or negative) and what have they been? Have there been indirect beneficiaries?

There have been many and very significant unintended results. All of them are positive. The project has delivered positive unintended scientific results regarding biodiversity by creating baselines of

birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibs in both ACLA-P and MAIBC through the citizen science approach materialized in the participatory biodiversity monitoring brigades. It has also developed a tailored app for participative biological monitoring as part of the National Ecological Monitoring Program (PRONAMEC). The brigades and the app will secure field data for decades to come.

Moreover, while the project directly benefited 52,078 people, it indirectly benefitted a larger number of people. In the ACLA-P, biodiversity conservation in the project intervention areas will likely benefit people living in other buffer zones of the protected areas targeted by the project as well as the buffer zones of other protected areas in the ACLA-P, as biodiversity moves around these broader areas. In this sense, there are even transnational benefits as one of the protected areas is partly in Panama. In addition, the protection and restoration of conservation areas along the Maria Aguilar will benefit people living along the rivers where it flows in, including the Tiribi, later the Virilla and finally the Great River of Tarcoles, along which 60% of the population of Costa Rica lives and the degradation of which resulted in an order from the country's Comptrollers General's office to restore it[32]. Furthermore, the improvement of parks will benefit a larger amount of people. One of the improvements in the regulatory framework will also have impacts across urban areas in the country, as it allows the development of light infrastructure along riparian conservation areas in cities, which was not previously allowed. This will allow the recreational use of green areas across the country. In GAM, for instance, an NGO has already submitted proposals to develop urban nature routes, which would clearly improve the quality of life of urban dwellers[33].

The project has had even more broader unintended impacts. Data produced by the project through the MOCUPP was used in the negotiation of the free trade agreement between Central America, the Dominican Republic and the European Union (EU), which in Costa Rica is led by the Ministry of Foreign Trade. In the environmental field, and with respect to pineapple, the EU was interested in having information specifically on deforestation. Only Costa Rica was able to provide this information thanks to the MOCUPP. The MAG only had data from the Census and it had been static for a decade, so it was not reliable. MOCUPP was able to provide this data. Few of the countries have information to respond to agreements. This is fundamental because the export of agricultural commodities is an important economic sector for the country. Similarly, data from the MOCUPP is used by the Central Bank of Costa Rica in its environmental accounts, which are part of its satellite accounts.

In addition, except the increase in household income, all the quality of life related results mentioned in section 3.1.4 were not explicitly intended. The circular economy related impacts were not planned either. Participatory biodiversity monitoring brigades were not planned in MAIBC.

3.4.2 Cross-cutting aspects

Did the project successfully integrate other UNDP priorities, such as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), poverty alleviation and generation of socio-economic benefits, prevention and recovery from natural disasters, respect for social and environmental safeguards and empowerment of women?

The purpose and activities of the project contribute to the fulfilment of several SDGs, namely those on gender equality (no. 5), inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities (no.11), sustainable

[32] Voto Garabito Nº 2007-05894
[33] https://rutasnaturbanas.org/

consumption and production (no. 12), and sustainable forests and halt of land degradation and biodiversity loss (no. 15).

On the other hand, as discussed in section 3.3.1, although the project's primary vocation was environmental, it generated economic benefits, particularly in the rural landscapes of the ACLA-P. According to project documents, there has been an increase of income by 10% within the households of the producers who transitioned to more sustainable production practices through the implementation of landscape management tools. Contributions were also made regarding nature-based tourism and indigenous crafts. The project also created an opportunity of income generation in the MAIBC through the implementation of the family brigades for urban reforestation, as a response to the loss of jobs or reduction of income imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These economic benefits contribute to poverty reduction in the beneficiary communities. As detailed in section 3.3.1, the project had important social impacts.

As discussed in more detail in section 3.2.2, social and environmental impacts and risks were defined during project design through the UNDP's SESP. When the ProDoc was approved, the overall risk category was low. However, after implementation began, indigenous communities requested to be involved and participate in the project. To address this demand, the project carried out activities in four indigenous communities (Ujarrás, Cabagra, Boruca and Salitre), and the SESP had to be updated in 2020 with the overall risk being determined to be moderate, as it now included activities that could generate adverse social or environmental impacts on indigenous peoples and local communities. As a result, the project developed an Indigenous Peoples Plan for mainstreaming of their participation throughout the implementation. This plan sought to adjust the existing mechanisms for dialogue and coordination and to strengthen the existing institutional framework, providing it with some skills and competencies to verify compliance with the safeguards and ensure the participation of indigenous peoples in the execution of the project. This was the case for the instalment of a tree nursery in the Boruca indigenous territory, providing support to the forest brigades Ujarrás, Cabagra and Salitre, creation of Biological Monitoring Brigades in these territories, training in the environmental education program, and hiring of four indigenous women as awareness-raising facilitators. The revised SESP also integrated new risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, no negative social or environmental impacts have been reported.

The project greatly contributed to **gender** equality and the empowerment of women. The project document demonstrates that gender mainstreaming was integrated since project design, starting with an analysis of women's participation in decision-making processes, as well as their economic autonomy. With this information, the project designed a Gender Mainstreaming Plan to ensure all gender gaps were addressed in the project's impact territories, as well as specific gender-based indicators for monitoring. Throughout the implementation, a full-time gender expert provided support. The project sought to promote changes in norms, values, and power structures to transform gender inequalities, to create opportunities for women in non-traditional sectors. Gender was also considered in project monitoring and evaluation, as the gender mainstreaming plan was updated at mid-term, and the mid-term review integrated and the terminal evaluation integrates the gender perspective. With this approach, which was innovative for an environmental project, the project was categorized under UNDP´s rating as a GEN 2 project having gender equality as a significant objective[34].

[34]https://info.undp.org/sites/ERM/Shared%20Documents/Atlas%20Project%20Management%20Module%20User%20Guide%20-%20Version%202.0%20(Revised%2020%20May%202019).pdf

The gender mainstreaming plan, which was fully implemented, focused on 5 strategic axis and executed the following activities: (i) Women's leadership and empowerment, through which the programme "Mujer Ganadera" was developed to support women working with livestock in a male-dominated activity; (ii) Institutional capacities strengthening by providing workshops on inclusive language, sexual harassment and gender based violence, as well as on GIS knowledge and the use of MOCUPP; (iii) Transformational incidence through the campaign "MAIBC free of violence and sexual harassment" with the purpose of promoting inclusive green public spaces in the city, as well as providing support for the construction of the Gender Equality and Inclusion National Policy for the Costa Rican Agricultural, Fishing and Rural Sector 2020-2030; (iv) Data production with land tenure registry being disaggregated by sex in productive landscapes; and (v) Communications management with a gender perspective.

In the urban areas, the interventions were always made with the participation and in coordination and communication with women to address their concerns for their safety and sexual harassment. In the rural zones, considerable work was done to address the issue of gender-based violence and gender equality, for example, by assigning grants for community-productive social initiatives in the ACLA-P to 195 women, representing 38% of the total number of initiatives. As a result, 61% of the total project beneficiaries are women, who have been involved in activities related to the management of natural resources and ecosystem services in productive landscapes and urban biological corridors. The project's positive results in gender equality contributed to the project's environmental and biodiversity objectives, as women play a key role in the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems both in rural and urban areas.

As noted, the project does not target the GEF climate change focal area, and therefore, it does not explicitly, directly and systematically work on adaptation topics. However, as mentioned, a big majority of the work conducted has clear benefits for climate change adaptation. For example, through the reforestation of the riverbanks soil and water is retained to prevent landslides and floods, as well as to protect the area to heavy winds and hurricanes; the afforestation of urban areas helps combat heat islands and waves; and more trees in coffee plantations increases their resiliency to higher temperatures; among others. As exemplified, the project contributes to climate change adaptation in many ways, and it would have been important to properly establish a more integral, systematic and explicit approach to ensure those benefits were accounted for. This is, in part, because Costa Rica has predominantly focused on biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation through forests, although this is recently changing, and the country is increasingly working on adaptation.

3.4.3 Production of public goods

The project made an outstanding contribution in the production of public goods. In terms of technologies, the project pioneered a system to track land use changes in production landscapes to monitor forest loss/gain on rural (MOCUPP) and urban landscapes (MOCUPP-Urban) through high-resolution satellite images. MOCUPP monitored loss/gain of forest associated commodities helped define where it was strategic, practical, and feasible to strengthen control and/or reforest, while MOCUPP-Urban developed a baseline study of urban tree cover in the MAICB. It was also used to establish and define riparian conservation areas digitally, which was a national innovation, as this was previously done by going physically to the territories. Another important use of technologies was the adoption of camera traps for participatory biological monitoring, which

confirmed the presences of species which were not accounted initially in some of the protected areas, and the apps used by participants for real-time monitoring of indicator species (i.e. iNaturalist, Merlin and eBird), including the one developed by the project (MBP) for the National Ecological Monitoring Program (PRONAMEC). To address the issue of floods in the urban areas, the project promoted an increase in the use of trees and grass in the sidewalks, as well as a switch from completely waterproof materials to semi-permeable or permeable materials, such as permeable concrete and gravel fix, which had not been used before in MAICB.

A key new approach was the establishment of participatory biological monitoring brigades, which were essential to promote environmental education. These provided citizens with understanding and knowledge with regards to the conservation efforts being done by the project and their importance. It is an example of citizen science and had great scientific, environmental sensitization and social impacts. The project also promoted innovative instruments to finance environmental conservation and green infrastructure. Directly, the project promoted a tax on timber to fund the MOCUPP. Indirectly, the project resulted in a municipality (La Union) using money collected through the fines given by the local police for ecological and urban restoration, acknowledging the link between green spaces and civic safety. Productive Landscapes also brought an innovative approach to ecological restoration, considering a variety of trees, shrubs and herbaceous and a variety of intervention sites, acknowledging the gradual nature of the process and factoring in infrastructure limitations. Furthermore, in MAIBC the project promoted the integration of ecological and urban rehabilitation, including the engagement of a landscape architect in the technical unit, which is uncommon in environmental projects, and explains some of the outstanding unintended social impacts of the project.

3.4.4 Demonstration

The project implemented different measures to disseminate the public goods generated. It promoted demonstrative pilot sites, conducted numerous trainings, workshops and webinars, and produced multiple publications with and for different types of stakeholders on the concepts of GIS, sustainable production practices, biodiversity conservation, and environmental education.

Overall, the project acknowledged its pilot condition in many areas, and conducted activities and established systems, processes and infrastructure aware that they had a demonstrative purpose. This was the case with technologies, particularly the national and urban level MOCUPPs, nurseries and reforestation schemes, environmental education approaches and materials, agricultural and cattle farming lands and even commercialization efforts. The project acknowledged that it was innovating, learning by doing, that these systems, processes and infrastructure had great scaling up and replication potential and it was important to systematize the process and document lessons. To that end, for instance, each of the members of Technical Unit produced a systematization document.

This systematization approach was combined with trainings and publications. In ACLA-P the environmental education and skills strengthening activities benefited a total of 4,615 people, including children, youth and adults, and 9,157 people in the MAIBC, overall involving a wide variety of stakeholders, including technicians, which helps reduce the impact on sustainability of government change. On the topic of GIS, training sessions were provided to both men and women government officials on the characteristics and functionalities offered by diverse geospatial tools including topography tools such as the methodology of digital delimitation of Protection Areas. According to project documentation, to achieve that more public institutions, private sector and

academy use the MOCUPP tool, the project has begun a cycle of strengthening capacities in the tool for different sectors, even international development cooperation staff. In ACLA-P, local and institutional capacities were strengthened to incorporate forest management tools into production practices (such as tree transplantation, planting and reproduction of forest seeds, as well as animal handling). For biodiversity conservation, various training and awareness-raising processes in reforestation and tree-nursery management were carried-out both in the MAIBC and ACLA-P nurseries, including both managers and workers. According to the data reported on the latest version of the project's progress matrix, 364 people actively participated in 18 biological monitoring brigades, for which practical workshops were delivered to strengthen the brigade's knowledge on the identification of wildlife species and the use of mobile applications to record information. Government personnel received training as well on the use of the real-time monitoring app developed by the project and additional training is being provided to local communities to facilitate the monitoring of populations of bird and mammal species in the project sites. The family brigades for urban reforestation received training in non-traditional sectors, such as the conservation of biodiversity and reforestation in urban environments. Importantly, exchanges between groups (e.g. biodiversity monitoring brigades) have also been organized, fostering peer-to-peer learning.

Additionally, through its knowledge management strategy, the project has developed a total of 35 documents which describe successful experiences about the integration of biodiversity conservation, land management, and carbon sequestration in sustainable production landscapes and interurban biological corridors in Costa Rica. The project developed, as well, several virtual courses aimed for communities to develop capacities in the reforestation and management of urban landscapes and environmental education: (i) the series "Landscapes with Sustainable Production", which includes 17 videos for producing bio-inputs, good productive practices, and tools for landscape management, and (ii) 6 Animations for Children CONUBI (Conserving biodiversity) which will continue to be used by the local stakeholders for environmental education programs into the future. The project also positioned MOCUPP as a tool to promote deforestation-free production in international markets through its presentation on a global webinar for agrotransformation, where more than 595 representing diverse stakeholders (such as UNDP, FAO and UNIDO) participated.

Available information suggests demonstration efforts through pilots, trainings and communication has been effective. As a quality assurance process, the project used indices about Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) to measure the awareness and environmental education at the subnational and local levels. In comparison to the defined baseline at the beginning of the project, the KAP index has increased in both the ACLA-P and MAIBC areas.

3.4.5 Replication / Scaling up

As explained in more detail in section 3.3.1 above, the project established, under outcome 3, a strategy to systematize experiences and lessons learned focusing on the production of knowledge products, and the wider communication and dissemination of the project´s lessons and experiences to support the replication and scaling-up of the results. It worked, as well, with an approach that invested mostly in people, understanding that this was key to properly achieve a successful replication and scaling up of the projects experiences and results. This includes participants of the environmental education program, the participatory brigades for biological monitoring and the family brigades for forest restoration. Importantly, it developed education and training programs, developed education and training materials and trained trainers. This was the case in general environmental education, where 39 environmental educators, both men and

women and from indigenous territories, were trained in the use of educational material, and 30 educational kits for educators were donated, creating local capacities to continue implementing the educational programs into the future. Educations materials are also available to download. Efforts were also made in that front on gender. The project supported the preparation and implementation of the Training Plan on Gender Equality of the Ministry of Agriculture, as part of one of the objectives of the Gender Equality and Inclusion National Policy for the Costa Rican Agricultural, Fishing and Rural Sector 2020-2030 policy.

As of November 2022, there is evidence of scaling up, regarding MOCUPP, certification and commercialization of deforestation free commodities and GAM, especially through additional financing. The Transforma project, financed by IKI, is funding the addition of data layers of MOCUPP for pasture and associated gain-and-loss of forest cover, and a monitoring expansion onto coffee and banana landscapes. The SCALA initiative by GIZ is scaling-up the “free of loss in forest cover” certification by creating a new certification for “meat-free from deforestation” along with a strategy to support access to international markets interested in sustainable products. This will likely increase the number of commercial agreements and the use of MOCUPP data in the future. Finally, the GEF 7 project "Transitioning to an urban green economy and delivering global environmental benefits (TEVU)", which comes as a result of the highly satisfactory experience with Productive Landscapes and its lessons learned, is scaling up Productive Landscapes moving from 5 to 20 municipalities in GAM. Through their own resources, municipalities in GAM, productive associations in ACLA-P (i.e. CORFOGA) and local communities in both areas will likely contribute to certain scaling up in their locations. The contribution to scaling up of the national government is limited, given the priorities of the new government.

While scaling up has been outstanding, particularly on the urban aspects, as of November 2022, replication has been limited. Similar initiatives (for instance, participatory biodiversity monitoring brigades) do not seem to be implemented in the other ten SINAC planning regions as a result of the project. Likewise, while TEVU project expands Productive Landscapes’ work to 15 additional municipalities, there is no replication outside the GAM, although this represents about 60% of the population of the country. In this sense, there is for example no replication to Inter-urban Municipal Corridors outside the GAM. TEVU may later on contribute to this replication. The legislative, policy and regulatory reforms supported by the project will also contribute to the replication of project results down the road. Contribution to regional or global replication has been extremely limited, in part because exchanges with other GEF projects working on productive landscapes and sustainable cities has not been actively pursued. Exchanges with projects funded by other vertical funds, multilateral or bilateral development partners, national and local governments and related platforms has also been weak.

3.5 Efficiency

3.5.1 Adaptive management

The project was able to identify obstacles and risks and design and implement strategies to overcome those obstacles and mitigate those risks. In this sense, the project was able to adapt and respond to different needs as it was implemented, showing a great capacity for adaptive management. This was mainly due to the technical robustness, sensitivity and experience of the Execution Unit team and the consultative and participatory management approach for decision-making, which included many actors, valuing the information and ideas of all of them. In this regard,

risks, including political and operational risks, were assessed and addressed at least quarterly and then, as part of the process of preparing the PIR, annually.

Adaptive management was evident in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which, far from limiting the achievement of results, promoted the implementation of a new activity through the urban reforestation family brigades. The environmental education component was modified as well through the establishment of distance learning using online resources in response to the social distancing measures implemented in the country and by developing digital consultation instruments (questionnaires) for the biological monitoring brigades and the beneficiaries of the socio-productive initiatives[35]. Additionally, the mid-term review had to be moved from its originally defined date. Other changes in response to the project needs include: (i) elimination of Indicator 4 early in the implementation because it was successfully achieved and monitoring was deemed unnecessary, (ii) rewording of indicator 10[36] to make it clearer and include more species, (iii) rewording of indicator 5 because the original target of establishing agreements with international buyers for the acquisition of products verified as free of loss of forest cover was deemed as unattainable given the project conditions, (iv) adaptation of the budget with 10% of resources being assigned to accompany the socio-productive initiatives to ensure constant reporting of key information for the systematization of lessons, as well as a redistribution of the budget to be able to pay for an important update in MOCUPP, and (iv) implementation of women focused workshops in the use of geo-spatial tools which was designed based on the results of a diagnostic[37] that reflected a gap between men and women in access to training and equipment for the management of Geographic Information Systems. Another example of adaptive management was in the intervention in Los Yoses. There the project conducted an ecological and urban restoration that involved the replacement of old, unhealthy and unsafe exotic trees with young, healthy and safe native species. Cutting of the old trees raised some social opposition. To address this, the project conducted a communication campaign, including billboards, explaining the reasons behind cutting and the benefits of the replacement plan. Similarly, the project was able to address demand for support from indigenous communities, which was not originally planned, and adjust its risk management tools accordingly.

As a result of the mid-term evaluation recommendations, a management response report was developed. This was then followed up through the UNDP platform for evaluations[38], which shows that the report served as a management tool. The most important recommendation focused on the need to take action to increase the information that buyers have on the advantages of production “free of loss of forest cover” and to advance in the creation of an incentive system to position these products within specialized markets. As a result, the project hired consultancies to aid with commercialization processes and linking to markets.

3.5.2 Financing and co-financing

Is there a difference between the planned and actual expenses? Why?

[35] With these questionnaires, information was collected on the presence and relative abundance of the indicator wildlife species in the study area.
[36] In the original results framework in the ProDoc.
[37] Diagnóstico del flujo y conservación y generación de Información Geográfica del SINAC, 2020
[38] UNDP’s Evaluation Resource Centre: https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/13303

The project made a budget revision, increasing the budget allocated to outcome 1 significantly (by 42%) and reducing the budget allocated to outcomes 2 and 3 and PMC (by 15%, 7% and 3%, respectively). This is mostly explained by a revision in 2020 to expand the analyses made within the framework of the implementation of the MOCUPP. This expansion was justified by stating it would make it easier to connect producers with buyers who are interested in acquiring products manufactured using landscape management tools that favour biodiversity conservation and forest protection. Despite this substantive review and the adverse effects of COVID-19 which affected project activities, as of November 2022, the project had spent 100% of its budget, according to the mentioned revision.

By year, the project had, overall, an excellent level of financial implementation in all its years of operation, except for the first year (2018) which had a budget execution of 60% of what was foreseen in the ProDoc. Starting 2019, financial implementation was very good. According to the interviews, the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) and having a multidisciplinary and highly technical skilled team played a big part in the effective implementation of the budget since there was less money spent in consultancies. These expenditures are analysed in detail below in this section.

Table 4.Project finance per year

2018					2019				
Planned			Percentage		Planned			Percentage	
Prodoc	Revision	Actual	Over the prodoc	Over the revision	Prodoc	Revision	Actual	Over the prodoc	Over the revision
$ 390,992	$ 422,747	$ 422,747	108%	100%	$ 390,993	$ 368,222	$ 368,222	94%	100%
$ 982,829	$ 427,131	$ 427,131	43%	100%	$ 812,683	$ 1,105,500	$ 1,105,500	136%	100%
$ 72,800	$ 35,800	$ 35,800	49%	100%	$ 89,800	$ 78,800	$ 78,800	88%	100%
$ 68,203	$ 28,050	$ 28,050	41%	100%	$ 62,703	$ 47,800	$ 47,800	76%	100%
$1,514,824	$ 913,728	$ 913,728	60%	100%	$ 1,356,179	$ 1,600,322	$ 1,600,322	118%	100%

	2020					2021				
	Planned			Percentage		Planned			Percentage	
	Prodoc	Revision	Actual	Over the prodoc	Over the revisión	Prodoc	Revision	Actual	Over the prodoc	Over the revision
Outcome 1	$ 295,250	$ 389,003	$ 389,003	132%	100%	$ 277,250	$ 832,448	$ 832,448	300%	100%
Outcome 2	$ 817,684	$ 1,262,508	$ 1,262,508	154%	100%	$ 812,684	$ 484,023	$ 484,023	60%	100%
Outcome 3	$ 121,000	$ 103,650	$ 103,650	86%	100%	$ 89,800	$ 97,700	$ 97,700	109%	100%
PMC	$ 62,703	$ 45,800	$ 45,800	73%	100%	$ 62,703	$ 53,500	$ 53,500	85%	100%
Total	$ 1,296,637	$ 1,800,961	$ 1,800,961	139%	100%	$ 1,242,437	$ 1,467,671	$ 1,467,671	118%	100%

2022					Cumulative				
Planned			Percentage		Planned			Percentage	
Prodoc	Revision	Actual	Over the prodoc	Over the revision	Prodoc	Revision	Actual	Over the prodoc	Over the revision
$ 281,250	$ 308,219	$ 308,219	110%	100%	$ 1,635,735	$ 2,320,639	$ 2,320,639	142%	100%
$ 817,684	$ 322,764	$ 322,764	39%	100%	$ 4,243,564	$ 3,601,926	$ 3,601,926	85%	100%
$ 127,600	$ 150,034	$ 150,034	118%	100%	$ 501,000	$ 465,984	$ 465,984	93%	100%
$ 62,703	$ 135,615	$ 135,615	216%	100%	$ 319,015	$ 310,765	$ 310,765	97%	100%
$ 1,289,237	$ 916,632	$ 916,632	71%	100%	$ 6,699,314	$ 6,699,314	$ 6,699,314	100%	100%

Table 5 provides details of the financial execution by component. With regard to project management costs, as of November 2022, actual cumulative expenditure amounted to USD 310,765, which is equivalent to 97% of the total planned costs in the ProDoc.

Table 5. Project finance per component

Components	ProDoc (USD)	Revised (USD)	Actual (USD)	% Over ProDoc	% Over revision
Component 1	$1,635,735	$2,320,639	$2,320,639	142%	100%
Component 2	$4,243,564	$3,601,926	$3,601,926	85%	100%
Component 3	$501,000	$465,984	$465,984	93%	100%
Project Management	$319,015	$310,765	$310,765	97%	100%
Total	**$6,699,314**	**$6,699,314**	**$6,699,314**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Own elaboration based on financial information provided by Productive Landscapes.

Did the leverage of funds (co-financing) occur as planned?

The ProDoc foresaw a co-financing of USD 26,098,314. By June 2022, the PIR reported a total amount of co-financing of USD 27,901,593, or 7% more than planned, with additional amounts provided by CeNAT, IGN, AyA and FONAFIFO. In general, the main source of co-financing remained being FONAFIFO. In addition, co-financing was also provided by CENIGA, CORFOGA, and SINAC. The co-financing was in cash, in kind and as a public investment.

Table 6. Project cofinancing

Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Cofinancing ProDoc (USD)	Actual cofinancing (USD) (as of June 20, 2022)	% of co-financing used over ProDoc
CeNAT	Grants	227,022	227,022	100%
	In Kind	559,572	648,492	116%
CENIGA-MINAE	Grants	122,000	61,000	50%
	In Kind	5,000	5,000	100%
	In Kind	*(not set or not applicable)*	61,000	
CORFOGA	In Kind	31,590	31,590	100%
IGN	Grants	7,635,629	7,635,629	100%
	In Kind	1,019,093	1,019,093	100%
	Public Investment	*(not set or not applicable)*	168,099	
AyA	Grants	236,885	236,885	100%
	In Kind	790	790	100%
	Public Investment	*(not set or not applicable)*	70,766	-
FONAFIFO	Grants	10,693,000	10,693,000	100%
	Public Investment	*(not set or not applicable)*	1,475,494	
SINAC	Grants	1,219,443	1,219,443	100%
	In Kind	4,348,290	4,348,290	100%
TOTAL		**26,098,314**	**27,901,593**	107%

Source: Own elaboration based on the project document and the 2022 PIR

3.5.3 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System

Did the project have a strong M&E system to measure the achievement of results? Did it have sufficient financial resources? Was the logical framework used during execution as a management and supervision tool?

The ProDoc includes an M&E plan in line with UNDP and GEF policies and procedures. The plan clearly defines roles and responsibilities and specifies the tasks to be undertaken. These tasks include an inception report, annual workplans (AWPs), annual monitoring and reporting through the GEF PIR to inform the Project Committee, GEF tracking tools, and quarterly and annually monitoring using UNDP templates. The M&E plan in the project document also includes annual supervision missions, a Mid-Term Review (MTR), and a final evaluation. A final project report would also be prepared during the last three months of the project. The monitoring and evaluation plan also includes audits, which would be conducted annually or at other frequencies according to UNDP audit policies. The Gender Mainstreaming Plan, included in the ProDoc, also establishes specific gender-based indicators to monitor and is aligned with the results framework, including clear activities, and expected results. There is, as well, a multi-year workplan from which the AWPs will have to be based on. Sufficient financial resources are allocated and specified to implement the plan. Overall, the monitoring and evaluation plan is comprehensive and robust.

However, there are some information gaps which could have been better specified. Specifically, this refers to the quantities and the frequencies of PPRs, as well as the frequency and reporting format of the Gender Action Plan progress. Additionally, as previously mentioned, minor adjustments were made to some of the results framework indicators (4, 5 and 10 of the original results framework) and the initial SESP had to be updated to include potential risks as a result of activities with indigenous communities.

What was the frequency and quality of reporting?

Reporting has generally been carried out in accordance with the monitoring and evaluation plan included in the ProDoc. The PPRs where being produced quarterly and bi-annually, instead of annually, and the quantity differs for each year, with 2019 only having one bi-annual report, 2020 having one bi-annual and one quarterly, 2021 lacking both bi-annual reports, and 2022 missing any quarterly report. AWP were developed annually, as planned. The MTR was completed in March 2021 and this document constitutes the final evaluation report.

The quality of project reports, in particular the PPRs, is mixed: they provide useful information, but the format for both the quarterly and bi-annually reports does not allow to easily comprehend the development of the interventions. A different format to visualize the progress scope of all the products and the activities undertaken in each period is something that a project so complex such as this one would benefit from. For example, at times it can be challenging to identify the key progress on activities and link them to their respective outputs and outcome. This is the case as well for the Gender Action Plan indicators, which could have been presented in a format that would allow to better understand the activities undertaken for each one and their progress. The bi-annual reports only present the key advances or actions undertaken to include the gender perspective. The progress reports could have also been clearer regarding the knowledge management system with a specific section focused on clearly enlisting the documents and knowledge products generated in the reporting period. The lessons learned section could also be expanded and

deepened. Despite these important areas of improvement, the PPRs followed the general guidelines of UNDP. The quality of PIRs was good.

3.5.4 Institutional arrangements and stakeholder involvement

Overall, the project organization structure defined in the ProDoc was reported to work harmoniously. The Project Steering Committee carried out its corresponding management duties when needed and reunited at least once within every reporting period. This figure had a diverse representation and overall worked well in terms of dialogue and exchange, and strategic leadership, although in some cases institutions could have been represented by someone with more hierarchy. The Technical Committees (TCs) worked in the urban and rural zones respectively. Each of these committees was made up of technical and key management members specialized in the impact areas, met once a month, and fulfilled their technical and strategic advisory functions.

One of the key success factors of the project, as previously mentioned, was the complementarity of the members belonging to the Technical Unit. The team was broad, multidisciplinary, competent, and committed, and worked in an articulated, intersectoral manner. This was particularly evident in how well articulated and executed the project interventions were. Another key success factor was the effective partnerships established with relevant actors, particularly with public institutions and local representatives, such as the SINAC in the ACLA-P (the technical unit for the region was actually based in SINAC's offices), and the local committee of the MAIBC. These interactions not only strengthened the design and implementation of the project, but also constituted a positive impact of the project which is likely to continue when the project closes.

Finally, the strategy to provide grants to local organizations for sustainable development practices was a key instrument for stakeholder involvement. It was through this strategy the project was able to empower local organizations and communities and establish crucial relationships in the ACLA-P area, strengthening the social structures which will contribute to the project's positive impacts and long-term sustainability.

3.5.5 Management system

The implementation and execution of the project has been highly satisfactory due to several factors. To start with, the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) was a key success factor. This ensured adequate strategic guidance and technical and administrative resources, processes and systems. It was also cost-effective. According to an interviewee, the small grants component of Productive Landscapes, executed by UNDP Costa Rica through DIM, was seven times more cost effective than the Small Grants Programme (SGP), jointly implemented by UNOPS and UNDP Costa Rica, both being funded by the GEF and with very similar approaches. Support from the regional office was good, although this could have been strengthened with a more complex allocation of RTA's, reflecting the significant thematic complexity of the project, given that, as discussed, it does not only focus on biodiversity conservation, but covers also other topics explicitly (i.e. forest management and land degradation) and implicitly (i.e. climate change adaptation), and most importantly considers both rural and urban areas, which are quite distinct.

Another crucial aspect was a structured, experienced and hardworking coordinator and a large and technically robust sustained team, instead of relying on a complex constellation of firm and

individual consultancies that hardly communicate with each other. While some aspects were still procured through consultancies, many of the project activities were carried out by the technical unit, which increased stability, coherence, robustness, integral follow up and was cost-effective, as many of the professionals were component but young and earned in local currency and the approach allowed economies of scale. Furthermore, the existence of two teams, one for ACLA-P and one for MAIBC, supported by a core team, contributed to smooth implementation. This approach allowed the project to tackle the challenge of working in distinct areas and provided strong and continuous support in the development of local actions in both of them, strengthening the links between project executers and beneficiaries. This was critical for environmental education, the establishment and operation of the participatory biological monitoring brigades, the adoption of the sustainable production practices (i.e. landscape management tools) and the ecological and urban rehabilitation in urban areas. It was also cost-effective, as it reduced the travel budget, which would have been massive if there had been only one central technical unit. As part of this strategy, the ToRs for these technical units had as a requirement to own a car and live in the impact area.

Indeed, through these cost-effectiveness measures (i.e. DIM, a comprehensive technical unit relatively split in two in order to have one team in each area), the project achieved great cost-effectiveness. As of November 2022, the project's PMC represented 4.6% of actual project cost, which is below the GEF ceiling for this type of projects and is uncommon in GEF projects.

Overall, the available documentation indicate that the project satisfactorily fulfilled the planned activities on an annual basis.

3.6 Sustainability

3.6.1 Are there political, regulatory, institutional, financial, socio-cultural and environmental risks to the sustainability of the results of the project?[39]

It is important to distinguish between project results at the national level (on MOCUPP) and at the subnational level (i.e ACLA-P and MAIBC), and between different factors that can enable or hinder their sustainability.

At the national level, the MOCUPP is likely to continue. The legal and regulatory reforms approved with the support of the project[40] have institutionalized it quite strongly. The technology is now ready, allowing governmental institutions to easily replicate the analysis in the upcoming years. The

[39] The question on country ownership has been integrated into this question, as this is related to legal, institutional and technical risks, and the question on institutional and community capacities, as this is related to technical, socio-economic and financial risks. Given the complex structure of the project, with three distinct elements, this section has been organized according to those elements and not the factor affecting sustainability. However, for each of three elements, the factors affecting sustainability have been analysed and clearly mentioned.

[40] The Executive Order N° 42886-MINAE-MAG-JP "Creation and operation of the National System for Monitoring Land Cover Changes and Ecosystems" (SIMOCUTE) as the official platform to publish the data and information generated by MOCUPP, and the Ministry of Environment's internal directive number 006-2021 "Protocol for Publication, Disclosure and Use of Information from the Monitoring System for Land Cover Change in Productive Landscapes (MOCUPP)" which defines MOCUPP as an early warning tool for land cover change and tree coverage loss, and indicates it is part of the SIMOCUTE.

technical capacity to implement and use it seems adequate. Both FunCeNAT and UCR have the technical capacity required to implement it. Given the cost of FunCeNAT, UNDP has been negotiating a partnership with UCR for developing updates at a more reasonable cost. Financially this decrease in cost will most likely be combined with the policy reform that allocates 4% of collected timber tax to GIS platforms for monitoring land-use change systems like MOCUPP[41]. Although this direct subsidy makes sense, it can also be exposed to volatile markets and may result in limited funding if forest conservation increases. In any case, in the short term, international development assistance funding will contribute to the financial sustainability of MOCUPP. An IKI-funded project (Transforma) will contribute to its sustainability, funding the development of two more data layers for pasture and associated gain and loss of forest cover and expand monitoring onto coffee and banana landscapes. Importantly, an adequate institutional structure has been set, where the data will be published by an independent, non-governmental institution (i.e. UCR) that is committed to publishing the updated data regularly regardless of how controversial it might be. Arrangements have also been established with the government (MINAE and MAG), so that they are informed and prepared to address questions, comments and requests in advance, as some of the generated data may not please some stakeholders. On the technical side, users seem to have the required technical capacity to use the data generated by FunCeNAT or UCR. Ownership from the private sector is substantive in key productive sectors, which now understand that monitoring land use change can demonstrate their good practices[42], differentiate their products and allow them to reach higher-price markets. The use of MOCUPP in the verification scheme for deforestation free products will increase the use of MOCUPP data in the future, and the interest in financing it. At the national level, however, the change in government does not contribute to the sustainability of results, as the new government seems to focus on production and exports, and not so much on sustainable production and systems, tools and approaches that can foster it. In contrast, the sustainability of the project results on land registry and cadaster does not seem likely.

In ACLA-P, most project results will likely be sustained. A key enabling factor is the social fabric. The area had a good network of NGOs, CBOs and groups (i.e. forest brigades, Natural Resources Surveillance Committees (COVERENAS)), which have been strengthened individually, in organization and technical terms, and are now better linked with each other. Some new groups, such as the participatory biodiversity monitoring brigades, have also been created. The region also has strong public (i.e. SINAC, MAG) and private (i.e. chambers) institutions, which are now better linked with each other and with NGOs, CBOs and groups. Many of these organizations (NGOs, CBOs, public and private institutions) will continue project activities, as they are highly committed, but financial resources are a limiting factor, particularly for brigades, non-productive NGOs and CBOs and public institutions. While there are good prospects in some cases (some brigades will receive funding from public institutions (i.e. Cusingo), some environmental education NGOs (i.e. ASANA) have allocated their own funding to continue the education activities promoted by the project, and some institutions (i.e. ASADA Gutiérrez Brown) are trying to establish a water tax to sustain environmental education activities), many of the activities that do not bring direct economic return will likely fade and/or disappear. In this sense, brigades will more likely continue where biological monitoring has contributed to increase tourism and this can be therefore considered an indirect income-generating activity. The project has promoted this, but the number of tourists is still limited. That said, social ownership is high regarding environmental education and biodiversity

[41] The draft bill developed by the project is currently in the government and administration commission for consideration and approval by the deputies in the Legislative Assembly.
[42] MOCUPP showed that 50% of the area of the cattle farms of Costa Rica is covered with tree cover and many of it with forest cover.

monitoring, conservation and restoration. In this regard, individuals, groups, NGOs and CBOs have been trained[43], have access to education materials[44], monitoring equipment and vegetative material, as well as some technical capacity to continue their work. Children will likely continue educating older generations. However, monitoring equipment requires maintenance and replacement, and scientific guidance is generally required for biodiversity monitoring and restoration, and the capacity of public institutions to provide this financial, physical and technical follow up is limited. Furthermore, communication protocols between SINAC ACLA-P and participatory biodiversity monitoring brigades and NGOs working on environmental education does not seem to be clear. The change in national government and the weak fiscal position of the national government does not contribute to strengthening the capacity of SINAC in ACLA-P.

The use of sustainable landscape management tools will likely continue. The project has increased awareness of its relevance in individual producers and small and medium producers' organizations (i.e. CBOs and chambers). It has also increased technical capacity, and links between producers and their organizations. Besides, it has established 20 small tree nurseries to secure native vegetal material for the improvement of the rural landscape. As noted in sections 3.3.1 and 3.4.1, these tools are already resulting in an increase in household income. This will likely further increase in the future, because typically more significant benefits are seen in the medium and long term. The progress made on certification and commercialization will contribute to this. The certification pilot and the six commercial agreements between producers and buyers are important factors. Other projects, including the GEF-funded, UNDP and FAO-implemented and Ministry of Commerce and the Costa Rican Foreign Trade Promoter (PROCOMER by its initials in Spanish) -supported project SCALA, will strengthen this aspect, particularly regarding the development of a new certification for "deforestation free meat" to better access international markets, further contributing to the continuity of sustainable production practices. However, from a sustainability perspective, it would have been relevant to link the certification scheme with privileged access to inputs, such as lower interest loans through partnerships with banks, offer a payment for ecosystem service scheme for protected and restored forest cover[45], and extend the certification to agriculture and timber, including the timber used by indigenous communities to produce their crafts[46]. As for the non-productive element, the change in national government does not contribute to sustainability, even if the results of the project are clearly in line with the NAMA on livestock.

In MAIBC, the sustainability of the results of the project is highly likely. The legal, policy and regulatory framework will contribute to this regarding the protection of conservation areas and their recreational use. Technologies (i.e. urban MOCUPP) are also now available to support this. At institutional level, conditions are also positive, with a relevant inter-institutional pact, significant involvement of key divisions in municipalities and a very strong MAIBC local committee, with a good representation of all key public institutions as well as CBOs and individuals. As of October

[43] A total of 39 environmental educators (16 men, 23 women; including 6 from indigenous territories) were trained in the use of educational materials.
[44] 30 educational kits for educators were donated, materials are were created under an open-access philosophy and will be available for download, creating local capacities to continue implementing the educational programs into the future.
[45] Costa Rica has a system (FONAFIFO) to incentivise forest conservation, in which the owner of a certain forest is remunerated for the ecosystem services it provides through conserving it, through a system of payment for environmental services. The scheme has a relatively limited coverage or scale and strict criteria. It does not cover small areas or ecosystems of lower natural value than certain forests. Among other ecosystems, it does not cover the type of ecosystems promoted by Productive Landscapes on an individual (a farm) or aggregated (a corridor or micro-corridor) basis.
[46] Some indigenous communities claim that the non-certification of the origin of the timber they use for their crafts is limiting their exports.

2022, there is strong political commitment at the municipal level. However, municipal elections are planned in 2024. Outcomes, which are uncertain, could foster or compromise the sustainability of project results. Social ownership is high in the areas where the project has worked. The involvement of CBOs and community leaders, which have been strengthened, has helped and will contribute to sustainability. The recreational use of riparian conservation areas will further strengthen appropriation. People participating in the brigades show interest in continuing biodiversity monitoring. Transport may be less a problem here than in ACLA-P, because car ownership is greater in GAM, public transport is better and there are less children. However, organization leadership and scientific guidance is key. This will be likely mobilized by volunteers after the project. The project has also built the required technical capacity to sustain the tree nursery management and reforestation practices, training leaders and medium and low level staff[47]. From an economic and financial point of view, municipalities have committed financial resources to sustain the 5 developed or strengthened nurseries (ensuring the sustained provision of the required vegetative material), maintain planted trees and public infrastructure (in most cases)[48] and use the vegetative materials produced in the nurseries to continue reforestation campaigns. Some municipalities have interesting social accountability systems that could be used to strengthen maintenance, although the project has not sufficiently linked its interventions to it[49]. Some municipalities have even established innovative financial mechanisms, funding ecological and urban restoration with budgets typically allocated to police, acknowledging the links between green spaces and civic safety. This is important, although the fiscal position of these governments is structurally weak. Nevertheless, MAIBC benefits from significant external financial and technical assistance not just to sustain the results of the project, but to strengthen, replicate and scale them up. Interlace project will contribute to this, but the game changer is GEF-7-funded TEVU, which by design is meant to help address key barriers to the sustainability of project results, including legal, policy and regulatory framework, planning, economic and infrastructure (i.e. sanitation) related aspects.

From the environmental and climate change point of view, there are no risks for MOCUPP, but there are moderate risks for sustainability of projects results on the ground in ACLA-P and MAIBC. This is due to the non-systemic integration of climate change adaptation into project activities, although the project has contributed to increase resilience, but most importantly to the high hazard, exposure and vulnerability of target areas[50]. In this sense, even if the project would have significantly reduced exposure and vulnerability, risks remain high in both regions, and globally, given very significant hazards and very high exposure and vulnerability at project start (lower risk does not necessarily mean low risk). In this respect, it is worth mentioning the concepts of

[47] A total of 410 women and 135 men were trained in reforestation and tree nursery management.
[48] Results on maintenance are mixed, but overall good. During site visits, the evaluator saw municipal teams maintain trees and cleaning public spaces. In some intervention sites, however, most vegetative material was dead and public infrastructure broken, which could be relatively dangerous. Some construction materials (wood, nails) did not seem to age rightly (without significant maintenance) in the rainy and humid climate of CBIMA.
[49] The Municipality of La Union has a system (I, mayor) for citizens to report incidents. These reports go to the entity in charge (in this case parks, ornaments and works) who are responsible for maintenance and accountability to the citizen who reports the incident. The project could have promoted the use of this tool through environmental education work and brigades as a mechanism to report and request the maintenance of ecological and urban rehabilitation interventions and could be replicated in other municipalities.
[50] According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, risk is the result of the interaction between hazard, exposure and vulnerability, which in turn is the result of the interaction of sensitivity or fragility and the capacity to prepare and respond

residual risk and limits to adaptation, in the sense that no matter how much progress is made in adaptation measures, non-negligible risks may remain.

3.6.2 Communication

The project defined in the ProDoc a strategy to allow the gathering and sharing of lessons learned, with a special emphasis on the dissemination of knowledge. For this, it has undertaken numerous communication efforts, at all levels, and in all topics, which was particularly important to ensure that public institutions, private sector and the academy, both at the national and international level, adopt and use the innovative approach to monitoring land-use changes in production landscapes (MOCUPP) developed by the project.

According to available information, 138 communication materials were produced. Specifically, a total of 35 knowledge products, 7 newsletters, 14 press releases, 3 exposure stories in the Costa Rica UNDP website, 13 articles on UNDP's website for internal use and divulgation in social media, 3 recorded livestreams and 4 webinars on Facebook, and a Youtube channel were produced. Multiple billboards were also produced. This exceeds the target defined in the logical framework during the project design. Importantly, communication materials were tailored to different audiences, which included communication materials in indigenous languages. These products were jointly developed by a journalist and a graphic designer, which complemented each other very well.

Overall, the external and internal communication of the project has been effective and contributed to raising-awareness and sensitizing about the project objectives, strategies and results, which is partly confirmed by the increase in the KAP index for both the ACLA-P and MAIBC. However, the project could have benefited from a more comprehensive knowledge management and communication strategy based on the one defined in the ProDoc. This was not developed, and communication was planned more *adhoc*, in part due to considerable rotation in the journalist role (three people had that role throughout the project in a technical unit where there was overall limited turn over). It is not very clear how the compilation of lessons learned was done throughout project implementation, how and which of these lessons learned were selected to be disseminated and in what format, and which where the targeted audiences for each product. The PIR mentions there was also a systematization and dissemination of best management practices (BMPs), but these, as well, do not have a clear process defined. While in general communication materials serve their purpose, the key messages are not sometimes easily found.

4. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Conclusions

Relevance

Productive Landscapes is consistent with the objectives and targets of the United Nations Convention on Biological Biodiversity as well as with GEF 6 priorities. The project is also in line with UNDP's global priorities through its Strategic Plans 2018-2021 and 2022-2025. In addition, the project is harmonious with Costa Rica's United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks for 2013-2017 and 2018-2022. The project is also part of UNDP's effort to support Costa Rica's progress towards achieving the SDGs. Furthermore, the project is coherent with UNDP's Costa Rica country programme and its programmatic approach of integrating projects to advances the country's intertwined environmental and biodiversity agendas.

Moreover, the project is in tune with national strategies and priorities in the areas of climate change mitigation (National Development Plan 2015-2018 and 2019-2022, National Climate Change Strategy, National Decarbonization Plan), biodiversity conservation (National Biodiversity Strategy, National Program of Biological Corridors, National Policy for Protected Areas 2020-2040), and land use planning (National Land Use Policy 2012-2040). In addition, the objectives and activities of the project respond to the problems and needs of the regions and municipalities where it focuses. All stakeholders actively participated in the design and implementation of the project, with indigenous peoples being incorporated during implementation once they requested to participate in it. However, there was room to engage additional stakeholders for the urban component. The collaborative and interactive nature of the project processes, in which different actors worked together and in which the ideas of all of them were valued, is noteworthy.

Project design

The objective, outcomes, outputs and activities of the project are clear and quite well integrated. The project put forward a holistic approach to address the identified development challenge by considering cross-cutting aspects in both rural and urban areas and addressing key aspects in each of them. However, more attention could have been paid to key aspects to achieve transformative impacts in MAIBC, particularly urban planning, urban/municipal environmental-related economics and finance, as well as urban infrastructure. Nevertheless, important contributions were made in these areas.

In general, targets were feasible and realistic within the budget and available time frame, as witnessed by the achievement of most targets and the surpassing of many before the official project completion. In contrast, the budget for marketing proved limited to achieve the targeted agreements with international buyers. The budget and time required to work on land registry and cadastre were also insufficient to achieve sustainable results.

The results framework included in the project document does not allow measurement of key activities (land registry and cadastre) or key impacts (improvement in the health of ecosystems and the services they provide). The results framework was expanded during implementation, but some important aspects were still left out.

The project document clearly identifies and analyses assumptions and risks to project implementation. All the risks identified were relevant, although not all of them were given due weight. The project document also did not consider two major risks (financial risk of nonfulfillment of commercial agreements and COVID-19). Of the risks not considered in the project document, one occurred, with low impact (opposition from producers to the certification). Additionally, the project document included a social and environmental screen plan which determined the project's risk to adverse social and environmental impacts to be moderate. The project document mentions the project was built upon past and ongoing initiatives but does not detail them. The interviews

suggest that external lessons learned, especially from past GEF-financed and UNDP-implemented projects, were taken into account during project implementation.

The project document does a good job at identifying and analysing complementary international projects and identifying synergies. The project is complementary to two past (i.e. GEF-5 project in wetlands and National Biocorridor Programme) and nine ongoing projects (i.e. Biodiver_city, Interlace, SCALA, Transforma, Green Commodities, and NDC Support Programme), in terms of ecosystem and approach. The project had a high level of coordination with these international cooperation interventions during its implementation, thanks in part to the project team. However, coordination and collaboration could have been stronger with other projects, particularly in urban areas, since similar projects were being implemented in the country and the Latin American region.

Effectiveness

As of November 2022, delivery of outputs and achievement of targets at outcome and objective level has been highly satisfactory: 87% of the outcome and objective targets have been met, and 80% of the targets have been exceeded. The project has also largely exceeded the targets set in the five GEF core indicators. The quality of outputs and outcomes is good.

To meet the targets set out in the project document, the project benefited from legal, policy and regulatory frameworks promoting the key focus areas of the project, the political commitment from national and local governments, the existence of dynamic institutions already working on environmental sustainability on the target territories, and the existence of considerable technical capacity in the country. In contrast, the project faced institutional weaknesses to approve or update laws, norms and regulations, misconceptions by producers and COVID-19.

The risk mitigation strategies identified in the project document were adequate, and during project implementation actions to mitigate the presented risks were appropriate. The project showed a high capacity for adaptive management. The project responded adequately to the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation. The multidisciplinary composition of the technical unit helped to identify risks and define and implement strategies to mitigate them.

Impact

At the national level, pressures on ecosystems have been significantly reduced, particularly through the development and use of the MOCUPP tool to better monitor land use changes. These pressures have been especially reduced in ACLA-P through the adoption of sustainable practices and the reduction of the expansion of the agricultural frontier. In MAIBC, the project contributed to restore and protect riparian ecosystems and improve ecosystems in the built-up areas, but progress on other key drivers of ecosystem loss, degradation and fragmentation was limited.

The project greatly contributed to ecosystem connectivity both in ACLA-P and MAIBC. It has also contributed to improving ecosystem health by increasing forest cover. Partial or no conclusive information is available for changes in other natural resources, but some improvement can be reasonably expected over time.

The quality of life of beneficiaries has improved. The project has brought socio-economic benefits, increasing household income, particularly in ACLA-P. Economic conditions for indigenous communities were also improved. In both target areas, the project has contributed to creating scientific knowledge and increased technical knowledge of a wide range of stakeholders. It also contributed to improving the social fabric of the communities it worked in and the appreciation and

ownership of neighbouring spaces. The project has also contributed to citizen safety and physical and mental health. Additionally, the project involved three indigenous communities and contributed to the preservation of indigenous cultural practices. Finally, the project made some contributions to climate resilience in both rural and urban areas.

Productive Landscapes contributed to SDGs, had socio-economic benefits, respected environmental and social safeguards, and promoted gender equity and the inclusion of indigenous communities and youth. The evaluator has identified only positive unexpected impacts.

The project provided public goods in the form of technological innovations, new knowledge, and approaches. In particular, Productive Landscapes pioneered land use management by developing a system to track land use changes (MOCUPP), and the integration of comprehensive ecological restoration and urban rehabilitation. The project took measures to disseminate these public goods, including training, workshops and webinars, online courses and multiple publications. It also acknowledged its pilot condition in many areas and established demonstrating sites.

There are excellent prospects in terms of scaling up. The results of the project, particularly the use of MOCUPP for decision-making processes and the commercialization of deforestation free commodities, are being fully adopted by government institutions and scaled-up by other international projects. A GEF 7 project is significantly scaling up the work in MAIBC. However, although the project has contributed to policy, legislative and regulatory reforms that will contribute to some replication at the national level, as of November 2022, replication has been limited at the national, regional and global levels.

Efficiency

The project had an excellent adaptive management by identifying obstacles and risks in a timely manner and designing adequate mitigation measures. This is mainly due to the technical robustness, sensitivity, and experience of the project team, as well as the consultative and participatory management approach for decision making processes. Adaptive management was particularly evident in the context of COVID-19, with the project not suffering significant deviations from what was planned and achieving its targets.

As of November 2022, the project had spent 100% of the total budget. Financial implementation was high in all its years of operation, with the exception of the first year. The budget revision included reallocation between components. The project has been highly cost-effective: project management costs represent 4.6% of total actual costs. Productive Landscapes managed to mobilize 7% more than the co-financing committed in the project document. The main source is FONAFIFO. The funds where in cash, in-kind and as a public investment.

The project document includes an M&E plan in line with both UNDP and GEF procedures. The Gender Mainstreaming Plan, included in the ProDoc, also establishes specific gender-based indicators to monitor and is aligned with the results framework, including clear activities, and expected results. Minor adjustments were made to some of the indicators and the initial SESP had to be updated to include potential risks in relation to working with indigenous communities. There is room for improvement in the format and guidelines for the PPRs, but the quality of the PIRs was good.

The project established effective partnerships with relevant actors. The Steering Committee had a broad and diverse representation and worked well in terms of dialogue and exchange and strategic leadership. The technical committees provided invaluable experience and knowledge. The project

had an experienced and hardworking coordinator and a large and technically robust team, which allowed to decrease the number of consultancies hired and rely more on team members carrying-out the project's activities. The ambitious and broad size of the selected target territory was skilfully resolved through the division of the technical unit in two areas (urban and rural), and the implementation of a grants strategy for socio-productive initiatives in the ACLA-P-region.

Sustainability

At the national level, MOCUPP is likely to continue. The legal and regulatory reforms approved with the support of the project will contribute to this. The technology is ready, and the technical capacities required to implement it are present. There is also a proposal for financial mechanism to be approved soon. International development assistance will also contribute to the financial sustainability of MOCUPP. Furthermore, institutional arrangements will ensure the publication of data, even if it is sensitive. Overall, there is technical capacity and public and private interest to use the data. However, at the national level, the change of government does not seem to help since focus seems to be on production and exports and not so much on sustainable production and systems, tools and approaches that can foster it.

From a regional point of view, most of the project´s results will be likely sustained in ACLA-P. The social fabric of the area, which is comprised of solid organizations and community-driven initiatives, several of them created by the project, is an enabling factor. However, this seems to depend highly on the availability of financial resources. In this sense, sustainability is more likely on income generating activities and where follow up international funding has been secured, as is the case for certification, and less likely on environmental education and participatory biological monitoring brigades. In the MAIBC, the project results will be sustained. The legal, policy and regulatory framework, as well as the technologies (urban-MOCUPP) available to support the protection of conservation areas and their recreational use, will help. The current strong political commitment is a also contributing factor, specially from an economic and financial point of view, with some local governments committing financial resources and establishing innovative financial mechanisms to sustain the project's activities, although elections in 2024 are risk. The game changer is, however, the GEF 7 TEVU project, which will address remaining key barriers to the sustainability of the project's results. In both areas, climate change is a significant risk for the sustainability of project's results, even if the project has contributed to increase resilience.

The project implemented a strategy to gather and share its lessons learned with an emphasis in disseminating this knowledge. This was a key effort, particularly important to sensitize the public and the private and the academic sectors on the innovate approach to monitor land-use changes in production landscapes (MOCUPP), and to increase its adoption in the long-term. The project produced several communication products including newsletters, press releases, exposure stories, articles to disseminate on the web, livestreams, webinar and online courses, targeting different audiences, indigenous communities included. The number of products created exceeded the target defined in the results framework. In general, the communication materials served their purpose.

4.2. Lessons

1. Linked to the findings on relevance, project design, sustainability and impact: To advance the environmental agenda, it is critical to work in urban areas, where important ecosystems often

remain and where pressure over them is typically significant, usually with impacts downstream. This is of course also important from a demographic point of view and makes economic sense, given the population size and density in urban areas. Working in these areas often requires a slightly different approach to working in rural areas, for instance regarding key counterparts, with municipalities playing a crucial role in cities. It also demands considering the many social benefits that ecological activities can bring and trying to maximize them, for instance integrating ecological and urban rehabilitation, where degraded ecosystems become green recreational spaces, which is fundamental given that many cities have limited public spaces, and, even less, green infrastructure. In that sense, the importance of the services provided by ecosystems tends to vary between urban and rural areas. While provisioning services are key in rural areas, these are less important in urban areas, where the cultural services, particularly recreational services, are more significant. Regulation services are equally fundamental in both areas. Interventions in different areas need to acknowledge these differences and make the most of them. Engaging a landscape architect in the technical unit of projects working in urban areas is key to this end.

2. Linked to the findings on relevance, project design, sustainability and impact: To advance on biodiversity conservation, it is crucial not only to protect certain areas through the establishment of protected areas, but also to promote landscape management tools in the buffer zones of these areas, fostering sustainable production, which is feasible as this project shows through its income and environmental results.

3. Linked to the findings on relevance, effectiveness, and impact: Geographic information systems are critical for evidence-based decision-making. While the information provided by such a system can be a threat to certain sectors and producers, it can be an opportunity for sectors to demonstrate their sustainability (i.e. livestock and pineapple sectors in Costa Rica) and differentiate producers within a given sector, allowing them, if certification schemes and commercialization agreements are in place, to access high-prices markets. In this sense, these systems should be designed, developed and communicated not (only) as coercive and punitive tools, but (also) as enabling tools. To that end, it is critical to involve the productive sectors in the process, to overcome hesitancy and resistance and increase buy-in. In any case, as some of the generated data may not please some stakeholders, both public and private, these systems need to be managed by independent, non-governmental institutions that are committed to publish the updated data regularly regardless of how controversial it might be. Even in these cases coordination with public institutions is key.

4. Linked to the findings on relevance, project design, effectiveness and impact. The development of certification schemes and the establishment of commercialization agreements with international buyers requires significant budget, as it demands having consultants seated in those markets. It is also time-consuming, particularly if adequate technologies or technological systems (e.g. MOCUPP) have to be developed and producers are not mature and have to be strengthened.

5. Linked to the findings on project design, effectiveness, and sustainability. In some cases, it may not make sense to add elements that are very loosely connected, such as in this project the land registry and cadastre outputs. Although some progress can be achieved with small teams and budgets and in a relatively short time, the focus might be too limited to ensure sustainable results.

6. Linked to the findings on relevance, project design, sustainability, and impact. Globally, nationally, and locally, climate change is a crucial development challenge that requires urgent and significant action on both mitigation and adaptation. All GEF projects, regardless of funding coming from the adaptation focus area or not, should explicitly and systematically promote climate change

resilience, informed by strategic climate risk assessments. In the current climate emergency, climate change adaptation must be mainstreamed.

7. Linked to the findings on relevance, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability. The establishment of participatory biological monitoring brigades has substantive scientific, environmental and social benefits and is a great complement to more formal and theoretical environmental education activities. It can also contribute to address different publics, as, in rural areas, environmental education is more focused on children, brigades on youth and capacity building on adults.

8. Linked to the findings on relevance, project design, impacts and sustainability. In urban areas, addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss, degradation and fragmentation requires not only environmental education and ecosystem protection and restoration activities, but also improving urban planning, from laws to land-use plans and from building codes to design standards. It also demands working with the stakeholders in charge of planning, developing, maintaining, and refurbishing public infrastructure (transport, water and sanitation, energy and social infrastructure) and housing and commercial developments. Of course, the scope of the interventions in each of these areas should be commensurable to the available budget and time.

9. Linked to the findings on effectiveness, impact and efficiency. A large, multi-disciplinary, competent, and committed technical unit greatly contributes to effective and efficient project delivery and is able to promote changes not initially planned in a project's results framework. The Direct Implementation Modality has similar benefits. This is particularly important for especially complex and innovative projects, where the results framework may not comprise all aspects and unexpected risks and opportunities likely arise. These same features make the appointment of several RTAs or at least the regular involvement of several RTAs convenient at UNDP's Regional Office.

10. Linked to the findings on effectiveness, impact and efficiency. Small grants schemes are effective and efficient to cover large geographical areas ensuring regular enough support. They also contribute to sustainability, as they motivate individuals, support champions and strengthen the existing social fabric. They can influence the daily decision making of the people who are on the ground and whose practices shape landscapes, for good or bad. Small grants schemes can have great impact if applied along a biological corridor or a watershed, instead of widespread, achieving economies of agglomeration and scale.

11. Linked to the findings on relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and impact. A programmatic approach is key. Coordination and collaboration between projects are fundamental within a UNDP country office, within UNDP, within the UN system, within the GEF programme areas and across different players.

12. Linked to the findings on relevance, effectiveness, impact, and efficiency. Multilevel, inter-jurisdictional and intersectoral governance as well as integration of public, private, academic, and social sectors is fundamental to advance the environmental agenda. In these institutions it is important to work both with leadership and with technical teams, which are more stable.

13. Linked to the findings on project design, effectiveness, and impact. On ecosystem-related projects, it is critical to have comprehensive results frameworks. These should consider indicators not only on the implementation of ecosystem protection and restoration activities, but also on their short-term and long-term outcomes regarding the health of ecosystems (i.e. soil, water, air, plants and animal diversity), the services these ecosystems provide (i.e. supporting, regulation, provision, cultural) and the impacts these services have (e.g. income, physical and mental health, climate

regulation, protection from extreme climate events). Although the level of some of these indicators may only change slightly during project implementation, and targets need to be realistic and commensurable to the project budget and timeframe, it is critical to have these indicators in place from project start to be able to assess progress in the medium and long term. Data on changes in these indicators is key for the sustainability, scaling up and replication of project's results, especially when projects are considered pilots.

14. Linked to the findings on effectiveness and impact. Long timeframes are adequate for development projects, given the magnitude of the problems being addressed, and particularly for ecosystem-focused projects. Social changes tend to be slow. It typically takes time to adjust natural resources management at individual, community, institutional and collective level, overcoming the inertia related to the development paradigm to be modified. Projects themselves need time to build trust with the people they serve. Changes on the environment also tend to be slow. Adjustments in the management of natural resources do not immediately result in visible changes in the health of ecosystems and the provision of the services they provide, including income generation. Moreover, projects are subject to external shocks, including pandemics (i.e. COVID-19), extreme weather events, political instability or social unrest, which can halt or slow down project delivery. Considering these aspects, development projects benefit from long timeframes. Although a five-year project can be extremely effective and achieve and even exceed most of its targets before the allocated time, as in this project, the achievement of intended impacts typically requires more time. Follow up projects, such as TEVU for Productive Landscapes, can be useful (and more strategic than project extensions) to expand a project's timeframe.

15. Ecosystem restoration needs to promote complex ecosystems. In this sense, it does not only include planting of trees, but also shrubs and herbaceous. This is particularly true in cities, where there is competition with other uses and aerial (e.g. electric cables), terrestrial (e.g. roads) and underground (e.g. water and sanitation, gas, communication) infrastructure may limit the type of trees that can be planted and even planting of trees altogether. Often it may be possible to plant a small tree, but not a big one, or just a shrub and not a tree, but this is still a gain. Often, even, an area may be adequate in terms of trees, by may need other type of complementary vegetation. Improving ecosystems in cities is not just about the number of trees, but improving the extension, complexity and balance of the vegetative system, in the low, medium and high strata. Similarly, improving ecosystems in cities is not just about protecting, restoring, and improving riparian ecosystems and big urban parks, but also about medium and small parks and squares, sidewalks and public and private gardens, as well as terraces, roofs and walls, working in all scales. Improving ecosystems in cities also needs to strike a balance between short term and long term benefits, and may be gradual, where some mature exotic trees may be preserved until young native trees become more mature, which may take some time, given, for instance, the shade provided by the former and not yet provided by the later in a heat island and climate change context.

16. Women play key role and have a key role to play in the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Environmental and biodiversity projects should thus mainstream gender equality, including at project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This requires a gender assessment and a gender action plan, as well as a gender-responsive logical and results framework. Its implementation and monitoring may require the engagement of a gender specialist.

4.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the following recommendations are provided:

Recommendation 1. UNDP Costa Rica should promote the sustainability and scaling up of MOCUPP. To that end, it should

1.1 Follow up the approval of the legislative reform aiming at its financial sustainability (i.e. Biodiversity Law).
1.2 Finalize the agreement with the UCR.

1.3 Monitor the implementation of Transforma and provide technical assistance when relevant.

1.4 Ensure SCALA contributes to MOCUPP's sustainability.

Recommendation 2. UNDP Costa Rica should promote the sustainability and scaling up of the project's results in ACLA-P. To that end, it should:

2.1 Explore ways of providing financial support to some of the grantees of Productive Landscapes. To this end, the project could explore synergies with UNDP Costa Rica implemented and/or executed projects. For the less productive-focused elements of Productive Landscapes, UNDP Costa Rica should explore synergies with the Small Grants Programme. For the more productive-focused elements of Productive Landscapes, UNDP Costa Rica should explore synergies with REDD+ and SCALA. It should also consider ways of building on Biofin. In particular, UNDP Costa Rica should explore ways of extending the FONAFIFO payment for ecosystem services scheme to the types of ecosystems and the types of ecosystem protection and restoration promoted by the project. It should also explore ways of linking certification with privileged access to inputs, for example to loans with lower interest rates, through partnership with financial institutions.
2.2 Explore ways of expanding certification to agriculture and timber, including the timber used by indigenous communities to produce their crafts, in particular through synergies with REDD+ and SCALA.
2.3 Explore ways of maintaining the provision of technical assistance, in particular through synergies with REDD+ and SCALA, beyond certification.
2.4 Further link SINAC ACLA-P with grantees and involved communities more broadly, especially further clarifying communication protocols between SINAC ACLA-P, participatory biodiversity monitoring brigades, and NGOs working on environmental education. For instance, it should be further clarified what support will SINAC provide to the brigades, how they should report information to SINAC and when and how will SINAC process and disseminate the data.

Recommendation 3. UNDP Costa Rica, and the Steering Committee, the Technical Committee, and the Technical Unit of TEVU, should promote the sustainability and scaling up of project's results in MAICB. To that end, they should:

3.1 Continue to articulate ecological and urban rehabilitation through participatory approaches.

3.2 Address barriers to sustainable cities more strongly, assessing whether there are gaps that should be considered and can be considered given the existing TEVU time and budget and the capacities of TEVU's technical unit, which can most likely deliver outputs and make progress towards outcomes and impacts beyond TEVU's results framework. In particular, UNDP Costa Rica and TEVU governance, implementing and executing structures should:

3.2.1 Address barriers related to urban planning more strongly and systematically. In particular, they should explore ways of strengthening the urban planning law, the regulatory plans of the municipalities where TEVU project is working (or a sample of them, as a pilot exercise), the building codes and the design standards. The focus here should consist of continuing the protection and recreational use of riparian conservation areas and increasing the extension and complexity of green infrastructure in the already built up areas at the same time that non-urbanized land is preserved and not built up and the urban frontier does not expand, promoting a more compact city, with increased density and mixed-use. In this sense, TEVU should pay attention both to the built up area and the non-built up area in the process of addressing the drivers of ecosystem loss, degradation and fragmentation.

3.2.2 Expand the scope of urban greening, adding green terraces, roofs and walls to urban parks and squares, sidewalks and public and private gardens.

3.2.3 Address barriers related to municipal finance and environmental economics more directly by supporting ongoing municipal economic reforms and exploring ways of restructuring tax schemes so that they penalize practices with negative environmental effects and incentivize practices with positive environmental effects and raise funds for ecosystem protection and restoration related activities, including maintenance of existing and reforested tress and environmental education.

3.2.4 Address barriers related to infrastructure development more directly by further involving developers (see 3.3) and exploring ways of strengthening building codes and design standards.

3.2.5 Address knowledge barriers more structurally by exploring ways of revising technical and university curricula, not just on architecture and urbanism, but also more broadly from civil engineering and forest management to law and sociology, and providing training to practitioners.

3.3 Involve key stakeholders more directly, including infrastructure-related ministries (public works, transport, energy, water and sanitation), utility companies, developers and professional associations (institutes of architects and engineers, chamber of developers). With these stakeholders, UNDP Costa Rica and TEVU governance, implementing and executing structures should explore ways of identifying, testing, systematizing and scaling up more compact and greener infrastructure and developments in the already built-up areas, in line with recommendations 3.2.1 and 3.2.2.

3.4 Contribute to climate resilience more directly and systemically, by considering climate risks in all relevant TEVU activities, including which solutions are better adapted to the future climate (and thus require less maintenance) and better contribute to increase social resilience[51]. This should consider vegetation species but also design approaches, including infrastructure, and be informed by a climate risk assessment, which could be strategic and based on existing

[51] Not just which species have more ornamental or bee-keeping related benefits, but also how different species contribute to increase the resilience to the different climate risks.

literature rather than detailed and based on primary data if resources are not available for the latter. This should ensure that climate change adaptation is not an afterthought or an unintended effect, but that it is intentionally considered from the outset, to maximize adaptation benefits and avoid maladaptation.

3.5 Review the results framework to strengthen monitoring of impacts in the areas added by GEF 7 and continue monitoring of impacts of Productive Landscapes.

3.6 Promote systems that can foster ownership, accountability, and maintenance, such as "I, mayor", further disseminating them in the participatory biodiversity monitoring, environmental education, capacity building and advocacy work. This should be linked to recommendation 3.2.3, which should allow increasing resources for the maintenance of ecological and urban infrastructure. In some cases, the selection of construction materials could be reviewed from a maintenance point of view.

Recommendation 4. UNDP Costa Rica and the Steering Committee, the Technical Committee, and the Technical Unit of TEVU should promote the replication of the project's urban results. To that end, they should:

4.1 Explore ways of promoting and supporting similar exercises in inter-urban biological corridors of Costa Rica beyond GAM, by supporting study tours from these other corridors to MAIBC and further engaging infrastructure-related ministries (public works, transport, energy, water and sanitation), national level utility companies and developers, and professional associations (institutes of architects and engineers, chamber of developers) (in line with recommendation 3.3).
4.2 Link with other cities, cities' networks, platforms, programmes and projects working on sustainable and resilient cities in LAC, such as CityAdapt, Nature4Cities and Urban Housing Practitioners Hub, among others.
4.3 Link with GEF 6 and GEF 7 projects in the GEF Sustainable Cities program, particularly, but not only, with those in LAC (Argentina (Buenos Aires, Salta, Mar del Plata, Mendoza, Ushuaia), Brazil (Belen, Brasilia, Florianopolis, Recife, Teresina), Mexico (Campeche, La Paz, Xalapa), Paraguay (Asuncion); and Peru (Lima))[52].
4.4 Further link with other players working on cities, such as UN-Habitat, UNEP, IDB, CAF, Cities Alliance, World Bank, ICLEI, C40, Covenant of Mayors, among others.
4.5 Give maintenance to Productive Landscapes' website and continue and scale up knowledge management through TEVU.

Recommendation 5. UNDP Costa Rica and UNDP more broadly should consider lessons from Productive Landscapes in the design of future projects, particularly lessons around project design (1-8, 11-15) and efficiency (9-12, 16). In this sense, they should promote DIM approaches and favour the establishment of stable, multi-disciplinary and large enough technical units, with landscape architects when working in ecological and urban rehabilitation. UNDP regional office should allocate or at least involve several RTAs when needed (for instance, when a project covers more than one technical area). Similarly, gender equality should be mainstreamed from project design. Finally, project design should be cautious to include extremely technical topics that are

[52] https://www.thegef.org/what-we-do/topics/sustainable-cities

rather loosely linked (i.e. land registry in Productive Landscapes) when resources are not enough to ensure the sustainability of the results.

5. ANNEXES

5.1. Evaluation matrix

Table 7. Evaluation matrix

Evaluation criteria	Questions	Indicators	Sources	Method
1. Relevance: To what extent was the project consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the strategic objectives of the GEF and UNDP and local, regional and national priorities in terms of development and the environment?				
.1.1. Is the project consistent with the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its targets?[53]	• To what extent is the project aligned with the objectives and targets of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)?	• CBD priorities and areas of work incorporated in project design and implementation	• ProDoc • PPRs • CBD website • Costa Rica's National Biodiversity Strategy • Interviews with UNDP	• Document analysis • Interviews
.1.2. Is the project consistent with the GEF's strategic priorities?	• How does the project contribute to the GEF strategic priorities?	• Existence of a clear link between the project objectives and GEF strategic priorities.	• ProDoc • GEF Strategy Documents • Interviews with UNDP	• Document analysis • Interviews
.1.3. Are the project objectives aligned with UNDP's strategic	• How does the project contribute to UNDP's intervention priorities in Costa Rica?	• Existence of a clear link between project objectives and UNDP intervention priorities in Costa Rica.	• Project documents • UNDP Country Programme in Costa Rica • Interviews with UNDP	• Document analysis • Interviews

[53] Corresponding to ToR evaluation question 5.

	priorities in Costa Rica?[54]				
.1.4.	To what extent is the project consistent with national strategies and priorities on environment and sustainable development?[55]	• How does the project contribute to the country's strategies and priorities on environment and sustainable development? • What was the level of stakeholder involvement in the design and implementation of the project?	• Level of alignment between the project's objectives and the national environment and sustainable development priorities, policies and strategies • Perception of the level of country ownership of the project • Perception of the level of stakeholder participation in project design and implementation	• Project documents • National policies and strategies • Interviews with MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU and SINAC	• Document analysis • Interviews
.1.5.	Is the project consistent with the needs and regional and municipal plans in the project intervention area?[56]	• To what extent does the project respond to regional and municipal needs in the project intervention area? • Have all relevant regional and municipal stakeholders been included during project implementation?	• Level of alignment between project objectives and the needs of relevant stakeholders at regional and municipal levels, in terms of alignment with provincial and municipal development plans. • Perception of the level of involvement of local stakeholders in the implementation of the project	• ProDoc • PPRs • Regional and municipal development plans • Interviews with representatives of MAIBC and ACLA-P (SINAC), MAG, CORFOGA, the municipalities of the project intervention area, and beneficiaries (brigades).	• Document analysis • Interviews
2. Project design: Was the project internally coherent and robust in its design?					

[54] Corresponding to ToR evaluation question 4.
[55] Corresponding to evaluation questions 1 and 2 of the ToR.
[56] Corresponding to evaluation questions 1 and 2 of the ToR.

2.1. Logical framework analysis/results framework (Project logic/strategy; Indicators)	• How clear and well integrated were the project objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities?[57] • How feasible and realistic were the project objectives, outcomes and outputs within the available budget and timeframe? • How effective was the monitoring and evaluation system (indicators, baselines, targets, methods and sources of verification) in measuring project progress/results? Were they SMART[58] and consistent with project objectives, outcomes and outputs?	• Consistency between project objective, outcomes, outputs and activities; existence of a theory of change • Feasibility of the objectives, outcomes and outputs within the project's budget and timeframe. • Quality of the monitoring and evaluation system in the project document	• Project planning documents • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, INVU and SINAC staff.	• Document analysis • Interviews
2.2 Assumptions and risks	• Were the project assumptions and risks well identified in the Project Document? • Did the assumptions and risks identified help determine the activities and planned outputs?	• Completeness of risk identification and assumptions during project planning and design • Degree and nature of influence of external factors on planned activities • Extent to which the planning documents anticipated or	• Project planning documents • Progress reports • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, INVU and SINAC staff.	• Document analysis • Interviews

[57] Include the second indicator of evaluation question 9 in the ToR.
[58] For specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based.

	• Have externalities (such as climate change effects, etc.) that are relevant to the results been adequately taken into account?	reflected risks/externalities already faced by the project during implementation.		
2.3. Lessons from other relevant projects (in the same field) incorporated in the project design	• Were relevant lessons learned from other projects properly incorporated into the project design?	• Examples of consideration of lessons learned/recommendations from relevant projects in project design	• Project planning documents	• Document analysis
2.4. Linkage and complementarity of the project with other interventions in the sector [59]	• Were other interventions within the sector clearly identified in the project document? • Has the intervention been coordinated with other donors to seek complementarities and synergies? • To what extent does the project support (and not duplicate) activities and objectives not addressed by other projects or programmes?	• Other interventions in the sector duly described and their possible synergies with the project analysed • Level of coordination with other initiatives • Level of coherence and complementarity of the project with projects and programmes in the region.	• ProDoc • PPRs • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, IGN, CERNAT, INVU, SINAC, MAG and CORFOGA.	• Document analysis • Interviews
3. Effectiveness: To what extent have the project's expected results and objectives been achieved?				

[59] Corresponding to evaluation questions 11 and 12 of the ToR. It is important to mention that the indicator for question 11 is already covered in questions 1.4 and 1.5 of this matrix, and that the indicator for question 12 is covered in question 3.3 of this matrix.

3.1. Has the project been effective in achieving its objectives, outcomes and outputs?[60]	• To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives? • To what extent did the project achieve the expected outcomes? • What was the quality of the outcomes achieved? • To what extent did the project achieve the planned outputs? • What has been the quality of the products provided?	• Level of achievement of targets with respect to objectives • Level of achievement of targets with respect to outcomes • Level of achievement of output targets • Quality of outcomes • Quality of outputs	• ProDoc • Progress and monitoring reports (PPR) • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, INVU and SINAC staff.	• Document analysis • Interviews • Field visits
3.2. How were risks and managed and mitigated?[61]	• How well were risks and assumptions managed? • What was the quality of the risk mitigation strategies developed and were they sufficient?	• Quality of existing information systems to identify emerging risks and other issues (project context factors) • Quality of the risk mitigation strategies developed and followed	• Project documents • PPR • Reports of Steering Committee meetings • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, INVU and SINAC staff, municipalities and brigades.	• Document analysis • Interviews • Field visits
3.3. Have unexpected results been achieved beyond what was planned?[62]	• Have unexpected results been achieved beyond what was planned?	• Existence of unintended results during project implementation	• Project documents • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, INVU and SINAC staff, municipalities and brigades.	• Document analysis • Interviews • Field visit
4. Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in accordance with international and national norms and standards?				

[60] Corresponding to evaluation questions 6 and 9 (the first indicator) in the ToR.
[61] Corresponding to evaluation questions 7 and 8 in the ToR.
[62] Corresponding to ToR evaluation question 10.

4.1. Adaptive management (changes in project design and project results during project implementation)	• Did the project undergo significant changes as a result of recommendations from workshops, the steering committee or other review procedures? • What follow-up actions (if any) and/or adaptive management measures have been taken in response to progress reports (PPRs)? • To what extent were the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation taken into consideration? • How were lessons from the adaptive management process documented, shared with and internalised by key partners?	• Responsiveness of implementing and executing agencies to recommendations made through the review process (PPR and mid-term evaluation) • Examples of changes in project strategy/approach as a direct result of recommendations made • Proportion of adaptive management processes documented and shared with partners	• Progress reports and monitoring • Minutes of workshops and meetings of the Steering Committee • Mid-term evaluation report • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU and SINAC staff.	• Document analysis • Interviews
4.2. Financing and co-financing [63]	• Is there a difference between planned and actual expenditure, and why? • Did the leverage of funds (co-financing) occur as planned? • Were the accounting and financial systems established for the management of the project and the production of	• Level of discrepancy between planned and executed budget • Level of discrepancy between planned and leveraged co-financing • Availability and quality of financial reports	• Project planning documents • Progress reports • Financial reporting • Audit reports • Mid-term evaluation • Cost-benefit estimates of the project or similar projects	• Document analysis • Interviews

[63] Corresponding to ToR evaluation question 14.

	accurate and timely financial information adequate? • Have financial resources been used efficiently, and could financial resources have been used more efficiently?	• Level of management expenditure and discrepancy with forecasts	• Interviews with UNDP staff	
4.3. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System	• Did the project have a robust M&E system to measure the achievement of results? • Did it have sufficient financial resources? • Was the logical framework used during implementation as a management and monitoring tool? • Did the project meet the requirements/timeframe for progress reporting? • Were progress reports fully and adequately completed (in compliance with the guidelines and providing the necessary strategic information)?	• Robustness of the M&E system • Financing the M&E system • Level of use of the M&E system • Relevance and quality of monitoring and progress reports	• ProDoc • Progress reports and monitoring • Mid-term evaluation • Interviews with UNDP staff	• Document analysis • Interviews
4.4. Institutional arrangements (with relevant stakeholders) and stakeholder engagement	• To what extent were the capacities of the implementing entities analysed during the design phase?	• Number and types of partnerships established between the project and local bodies/organisations	• Project documents • Minutes of meetings/workshops • Interviews with MINAE, INVU and SINAC,	• Document analysis • Interviews

	• To what extent were roles and responsibilities discussed, and are these clear in the design? • To what extent were effective partnerships for project implementation established with relevant stakeholders at different levels? • To what extent were relevant stakeholders involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project (through information sharing and consultation)? • Did national stakeholders have an active role in project decision-making that guide implementation? • To what extent did the project use local skills, experience and knowledge in the design, implementation and evaluation of project activities?	• Extent and quality of interaction/exchange between project implementers and local partners • Number, type and quality of mechanisms implemented to promote stakeholder participation at each stage of project design, implementation and monitoring • Number and level of participation in workshops • Perception of the use of local skills, experience and knowledge	municipalities and brigades.	
4.5. Management/handling device [64]	• Have the implementing and executing agencies, respectively, provided	• Evidence that clear roles and responsibilities are in place	• Progress reports • AWP's and budgets • Project team members	• Document analysis • Interviews

[64] Corresponding to ToR evaluation question 13.

	sufficient resources to achieve the project results? • What is the quality of project implementation by the implementing agencies? • How effective was the collaboration between the institutions responsible for the implementation of the project? • Have the tasks programmed in the project's Annual Work Plans (AWP) been fulfilled? • Has the project experienced any delays in implementation? If so, why?	• Level of discrepancy between the actual and planned amount of budget and staff time spent on the project • Difference between actual and planned project implementation schedule • Quality of supervision of implementing and executing agencies, respectively. • Number of activities programmed/accomplished according to AWPs	• Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, INVU and SINAC staff, municipalities and brigades.	
5. Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to sustain the project results in the long term?				
5.1. To what extent are there economic/financial, institutional and governance, technical, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to sustain the project results in the long term?[65]	• Did the project devise a sound sustainability strategy, did it include a specific exit strategy, and did it implement it? • What are the main challenges that could affect the sustainability of project results and have they been addressed during project management?	• Existence and strength of a sustainability and exit strategy • Number of management plans developed and implemented as a result of the project • Extent of obstacles and/or risks to the sustainability of project results:	• Project documents • Interviews with staff of UNDP MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU and SINAC, MAG, CORFOGA, municipalities and brigades.	• Document analysis • Interviews

[65] Corresponding to evaluation questions 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 of the ToR.

	• What factors can enable or hinder the achievement of sustainable results?	Coherence with the legal, regulatory and public policy framework Consistency with institutional and governance framework Level of initiative and commitment shown by national counterparts in project activities and results Level of technical capacities displayed by national counterparts in accordance with the levels required to sustain project results and benefits. Existence of socio-political risks affecting the sustainability of project results and benefits. Financial requirements to sustain project benefits Level of expected financial resources available to support the maintenance of project benefits Potential of additional financial resources to support the maintenance of project benefits		

		Existence of environmental risks affecting the sustainability of project results and benefits.		
5.3. Communication	• How effective are communications in ensuring stakeholder awareness of the project and its approach? • Are there effective external communication mechanisms in place?	• Existence of an internal communication plan, communication protocols, and feedback mechanisms. • Level of awareness perceived by stakeholders about project results and activities • Number and type of external communication mechanisms or activities implemented	• Project documents • Communication documents • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, INVU and SINAC staff, municipalities and brigades.	• Document analysis • Interviews
6. Impact: To what extent has the project contributed to or enabled progress towards the intended impact?				
6.1. Are there signs that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress towards, the intended impact?	• To what extent has the project reduced pressure on ecosystems in the intervention areas? • To what extent has the project improved connectivity between ecosystems? • To what extent has the project improved ecosystem health in the intervention areas?	• Number and intensity of stressors on ecosystems in the intervention areas[66] • Hectares of ecosystems with increased connectivity[67] • Hectares of ecosystems with increased health indices (improved soil conditions, increased forest area[68] , increased diversity of flora, increased diversity of fauna[69])	• Progress reports and monitoring • MRV system • Mid-term evaluation • Interviews with staff of UNDP, MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU and SINAC, MAG, CORFOGA, municipalities and brigades.	• Document analysis • Interviews • If possible, field visits.

[66] Has there been any impact on land use planning, e.g. infrastructure planning in MAIBC and farm management in ACLA-P? Related to indicators 4, 5, 6 and 11.
[67] Related to Project indicator 3 and indicators 7 and 13.
[68] Related to Project indicator 2.
[69] Related to indicators 10 and 15.

	• To what extent has the project improved the quality of life of the inhabitants in the intervention areas? • To what extent have there been unintended outcomes (positive or negative) and what have they been? Have there been indirect beneficiaries?	• Number of people (men and women) with improved quality of life due to proximity to improved ecosystems (air quality[70] , access to public space in MAIBC[71] , increase in diversification, stability and volume of income in ACLA-P[72]) • Examples of unintended, positive and negative outcomes (including indirect beneficiaries)		
6.2. Cross-cutting elements	• Did the project successfully integrate other UNDP priorities, such as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), poverty alleviation and generation of socio-economic benefits, governance improvement, climate change mitigation and adaptation, prevention and recovery from natural disasters, respect for social and environmental	• Contribution to the SDGs • Percentage of direct beneficiaries who are poor • Promotion of sustainable livelihoods (e.g. jobs created, income generated) • Evidence that project results contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation • Evidence that project results contribute to strengthening the capacity of communities to cope with natural disasters.	• Progress reports and monitoring • MRV system • Mid-term evaluation • Interviews MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU and SINAC, MAG, CORFOGA, municipalities and brigades.	• Document analysis • Interviews • If possible, field visits.

[70] Related to indicators 8, 9 and 14.
[71] Related to indicator 13.
[72] Related to indicator 12.

	safeguards and empowerment of women?	• Evidence of project compliance with social and environmental safeguards • Mainstreaming gender equality in project design and implementation (gender analysis and gender action plan)[73] • Linkages between project objective and gender outcomes[74] . • Proportion of implementing partners and participants in workshops, training courses or knowledge sharing who are women during implementation • Evidence of gender mainstreaming activities in planning or activities at community or national level as a result of the project		
6.3. Production of public goods	• Were new technologies and approaches promoted by the project?	• Examples of new technologies and approaches promoted and used during the implementation of the project	• Supervisory documents/data, progress and monitoring reports • Mid-term evaluation	• Document analysis • Interviews

[73] Corresponding to evaluation question 20 in the ToR.
[74] Corresponding to evaluation question 21 in the ToR.

			• Interviews with MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU and SINAC	
6.4. Demonstration	• Have measures been successfully taken to disseminate public goods, e.g. through the development of demonstration sites, information dissemination and training?	• Number and type of dissemination activities carried out • Number of demonstration sites • Number of trainings organised and number/type of participants in these trainings • Quality of activities for the dissemination of public goods	• Minutes, attendance lists and other documentation of workshops or training courses • Project communication documents • Progress reports • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU, SINAC MAG, CORFOGA, and municipalities.	• Document analysis • Interviews
6.5. Replication	• Are activities, demonstrations and/or techniques being replicated within or outside the project, nationally or internationally?	• Examples of activities/techniques used in the project and replicated in other projects/initiatives (other geographic areas and/or financed by other financial partners)	• Progress reports • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU, SINAC MAG, CORFOGA, and municipalities.	• Document analysis • Interviews
6.6. Scaling up	• Are some of the approaches developed through the project, which are being widely accepted, and perhaps legally required, being adopted at regional/national level?	• Examples of laws and regulations inspired by the project results • Examples of large-scale initiatives based on the project results or methods	• Progress reports • Interviews with UNDP, MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVU, SINAC MAG, CORFOGA, and municipalities.	• Document analysis • Interviews

5.2. List of reviewed documents

The documentation listed in Annex B of the terms of reference has been reviewed in detail.

1. Project identification form
2. UNDP Initiation Plan
3. UNDP Project Document (ProDoc)
4. Request for CEO approval
5. Social and environmental management procedure and related management plans
6. Start-up workshop
7. MTR and management response
8. Donor progress reports (PIR)
9. Progress implementation reports
10. Monitoring mission reports
11. GEF Monitoring Tools
12. Project financial information
13. Co-financing data
14. Project outputs
15. Communication materials
16. Data on website and social media activities
17. Summary list of formal meetings
18. Socio-economic data
19. List of contracts and procurement
20. List of project and related initiatives that contribute to the project's objectives.
21. Country Programme Document for UNDP in Costa Rica
22. Project site maps
23. Steering committee minutes
24. GEF 6 programming directions and GEF focus area monitoring instruments.

5.3. List of interviewed persons and institutions

Table 8. Interviewees

No.	Organization	Name	Date interviewed
1.	Productive Landscapes coordination	Miriam Miranda Quirós	5/10/2022
2.	UNDP Country Office	Kifah Sasa	10/10/2022
4.	Ministry of Environment and Energy(MINAE)/ National Center for Geo-environmental Information (CENIGA)	Rafael Monge	
5.	Productive Landscapes	Ana Lobo	
6.	Productive Landscapes	Francini Acuña	
7.	Productive Landscapes	Jairo Serna	
8.	PRIAS/ High Technology Center Foundation (FunCeNAT)	7 people	
9.	Community group Hatillo	6 people	11/10/2022
11.	Local committee MAIBC, including SINAC and INVU	Several interviewees: 11 face-to-face and 5 virtual	
13.	Alajuelita municipality (3 meetings)	3 people	12/10/2022
15.	ASANA		
16.	Tres colinas brigade	3 people	13/10/2022
17.	ASOMOBA/Biolley municipality	19 people	
18.	ASOPROLA/Biolley municipality	7 people	
19.	Alexander Skutch brigade	5 people	
20.	CGIZS	Yajaira Castillo	14/10/2022
21.	CGIZS	Marina Borbón	
22.	CGIZS	Carlo Ulcigrai	
23.	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG)	Pablo Rodríguez	
24.	ASADA Gutierrez Brown	4 people	

25.	Boruca Indigenous community	9 people	15/10/2022
26.	Ujarras and Salitre Indigenous community	26 people	
27.	ACLA-P	Gravin Villegas	17/10/2022
28.	ACLA-P	Ronald Chan	
29.	UNDP	Rafaella Sánchez	
30.	UNDP	Alejandra Martínez	
31.	Productive Landscapes technical unit	Darío Aramburo	
32.	Productive Landscapes technical unit	Fabricio Ballestero	
33.	Productive Landscapes technical unit	María José Elizondo	
34.	Productive Landscapes technical unit	Jairo Serna	
35.	Productive Landscapes technical unit	Marlon Alfaro	
36.	Productive Landscapes technical unit	Juan Manuel Herrara	
37.	Productive Landscapes environmental education	Elena Vargas	
38.	Productive Landscapes environmental education	Jorge Picado	
39.	MAIBC technical committee	Jossy Calvo	
40.	MAIBC technical committee	Carla Padilla	
41.	MAIBC technical committee	Adriana Moya	
42.	MAIBC technical committee	Francini Acuña	
43.	MAIBC technical committee	Ana María Soto	
44.	MAIBC technical committee	Ana María lobo	
45.	La Unión municipality brigade	11 people	18/10/2022
46.	Curribadat municipality	1 person	
47.	UNDP	Maureen Ballestero	
48.	UNDP M&E Officer	Jose Daniel Estrada	26/10/2022

5.4. Data collection mission itinerary

Table 9. Data collection mission itinerary

Day	Time	Activity	Theme	Place	Hosting
10/10/2022	9:00 am	Kick-off and logistical coordination meeting with UNDP		UNDP Office	Hotel San José
	9:30 am	Meeting with Jose Daniel Estrada	Monitoring and evaluation	UNDP Office	
	10:00 am	Kifah Sasa Meeting, UNDP ARR	Project at programme level	UNDP Office	
	11:00 am	Rafael Monge, MINAE - CENIGA Meeting	SINIA - MOCUPP	UNDP Office	
	1:00 pm	Meeting Ana Lobo, Francini Acuña, Jairo Serna	Project Component 1	UNDP Office	
	2:00 pm	Prias + Funcenat Laboratory Meeting	MOCUPP	CENAT Office	
11/10/2022	9:00 am	Hatillo 8 + Safe Schools Field Visit	Urban vegetable garden and rehabilitation of public space	Hatillo	Hotel San José

	11:00 am	Aimará Espinoza Meeting, SINAC - ACC	SINAC and CBIs	UNDP Office	
	1:00 pm	MAIBC Local Committee Meeting	CBI management and its relation to the project	Environmental Classroom Municipality of San José	
	3:00 pm	Meeting Ericka Calderón, INVU - CBIMA	CBIMA and actions from INVU	Environmental Classroom Municipality of San José	
12/10/ 2022	9:00 am	Alajuelita: Modesto Interview + Nursery + Family Reforestation Brigade	Involvement of local governments and actions implemented in Alajuelita	Municipality of Alajuealita	Hotel in Pérez Zeledón
	11:00 am	Los Yoses	Urban Ecological Rehabilitation	Montes de Oca	
	4:00 pm	Meeting with ASANA - Hotel	Environmental education ACLA-P (grantee)	Pérez Zeledon	
13/10/ 2022	8:30 am	Meeting with MAG + CORFOGA	MAG and CORFOGA involvement in project	SINAC ACLA-P Office	Cabins in Biolley
	10:30 am	Visit CB Alexander Skutch + AMACOBAS	Productive initiatives, women's group, participatory biological monitoring	Pérez Zeledon	
	3:00 pm	ASOPROLA Meeting	Productive initiatives	Biolley (Buenos Aires)	

	5:00 pm	ASOMOBI Meeting	Women's group and productive initiatives	Biolley (Buenos Aires)	
14/10/2022	8:00 am	Visit to livestock farms in Fila Tigre and interview with CGIZS and MAG	Implementation of LMT, grantees, partnerships with local entities and women's livestock groups	Fila Tigre, Coto Brus	Hotel in Coto Brus
	2:00 pm	ASADA Gutierrez Brown - Environmental Education	Environmental education ACLA-P (grantee)	Coto Brus	
15/10/2022	9:00 am	Boruca Indigenous Territory - Vivero	Productive IT initiative	TI Boruca	Hotel in San José
	11:00 am	Ujarrás and Salitre indigenous territories	Various IT initiatives	TI of Ujarrás and Salitre	
	2:00 pm	Trip to San José			
16/10/2022	AM	Working at the hotel - consolidation of information			Hotel in San José
	PM				
17/10/2022	8:00 am	Virtual meeting Gravin and Ronald Chan	Project implementation at ACLA-P	Virtual	Hotel in San José

	9:00 am	Meeting Rafaella Sánchez and Alejandra Martínez	Project gender plan	Virtual	
	10:00 am	Technical unit meeting: Darío Aramburo, Fabricio Ballestero, María José Elizondo y Jairo Serna	Productive initiatives - sustainable production		
	11:00 am	Technical Unit Meeting: Marlon Alfaro, Juan Manuel Herrara and Fabricio Ballestero	Forest Cadastre (outputs 2.6 and 2.7)		
	1:00 pm	Meeting Elena Vargas and Jorge Picado	Environmental education	Virtual	
	2:00 pm	MAIBC Technical Unit: Jossy Calvo, Carla Padilla, Adriana Moya, Francini Acuña, Ana María Soto and Ana María lobo	Project implementation at MAIBC	Virtual	
	4-5 pm	To be confirmed: Interview Vice-Minister Rafael Gutierrez	SINAC contributions to the project	Virtual	
18/10/ 2022	9:00 am	Visit La Unión: Environmental Classroom (biological monitoring brigade) + Monserrat + Parque Los Llanos	Environmental education, participatory biological monitoring, forestry production nursery	The Union	Hotel in San José

	1:00 pm	Visit Curridabat: Nursery + Interventions in the canton	Interventions in landscape rehabilitation and forest production nurseries	Curridabat	
	3:00 pm	Maureen Ballestero Meeting	Institutional arrangements and advocacy	PS	
19/10/ 2022	9:00 am	Debriefing	Initial findings	Virtual	
	PM	Evaluator's trip - consolidation of collected information			

5.5. Interview questionnaire

Table 10. Interview protocols

Questions	UNDP	MINAE, IGN, CENAT, INVY AND SINAC	Representatives of MAIBC and ACLA-P, MAG, CORFOGA	Municipal governments	Other projects	Beneficiaries
Introduction						
What is your position?	X	X	X	X	X	X
What is your relationship with the project and how long have you been involved?	X	X	X	X	X	X
1. Relevance						
1.1 To what extent is the project aligned with the objectives and targets of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)?	X				X	
1.2 How does the project contribute to the strategic priorities of the GEF?	X					
1.3 How does the project contribute to UNDP's intervention priorities in Costa Rica?	X					
1.4.1 How does the project contribute to the country's environmental and sustainable development strategies and priorities?		X			X	
1.4.2 What was the level of stakeholder involvement in the design and implementation of the project?		X				
1.5.1 To what extent does the project respond to regional and municipal needs in the project intervention area?			X	X	X	X
1.5.2 Have all relevant regional and municipal stakeholders been included during project implementation?			X	X		X
2. Project design						
2.1.1 Were the project's objectives, outcomes, outputs and activities well integrated?	x	X	x			
2.1.2 Were they realistic/feasible within the project's budget and timeframe?	x	X	x	X		
2.1.3 How effective was the monitoring and evaluation system for measuring project progress/results?	x	X	x			
2.2.1 Were the project assumptions and risks well identified in the Project Document?	X	X	X			

2.2.2 Did the assumptions and risks identified help determine the activities and planned outputs?	X	X	X			
2.2.3 Have externalities (such as climate change effects, etc.) that are relevant to the results been adequately taken into account?	X	X	X			
2.3 Were relevant lessons learned from other projects duly incorporated into the project design?	X	X	X		X	
2.4.1 Has the intervention been coordinated with other donors to seek complementarity and synergies?	X	X	X	X	X	X
2.4.2 To what extent does the project support (and not duplicate) activities and objectives not addressed by other projects or programmes?	X	X	X	X	X	X
3. Progress towards results						
3.1.1 To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives?	x	X	x	X		
3.1.2 To what extent did the project achieve its intended outcomes?	X	X	X	X		
3.1.3 What has been the quality of the outcomes achieved?		X	X	X	X	X
3.1.4 To what extent did the project achieve the planned outputs?	X					
3.1.5 What was the quality of the outputs provided?		X	X	X	X	X
3.2.1 How well were risks and assumptions managed?	X	X	X	X		X
3.2.2 What was the quality of the risk mitigation strategies developed and were they sufficient?	X	X	X	X		X
4. Efficiency						
4.1 Adaptive management						
4.1.1 Did the project undergo significant changes as a result of recommendations from workshop, the steering committee or other review procedures?	X	X	X			
4.1.2 What follow-up actions (if any) and/or adaptive management measures have been taken in response to progress reports (PPRs)?	X					
4.1.3 To what extent were the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation taken into consideration?	X	X	X			
4.1.4 How were lessons from the adaptive management process documented?	X					
4.1.4 How many lessons from adaptive management processes were shared with partners? Which partners?	x					
4.1.4 Did you receive any documentation on lessons learned from the adaptive management processes carried out by the project?		X	X	x	X	X
4.1.4 Could you give examples of how your organisation used these lessons?		X	X	x	X	X
4.2 Financing and co-financing						
4.2.1 Have there been any variations between planned and actual expenditure? If so, which ones and why?	x					

4.2.2 What co-financing (and how much) has the project mobilised? Has it evolved as planned?	x	X	X			
4.2.3 Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for the management of the project and the production of accurate and timely financial information?	X					
4.2.4 Is the project being implemented in a cost-effective manner? How? If not, why not?	x		x		X	
4.3 Project M&E system						
4.3.1 Is the M&E system in place and is it effective?	X	X	X			
4.3.1 Was the logical framework used as a management and monitoring tool during implementation?	X					
4.4 Institutional arrangements						
4.4.1. Are the roles and responsibilities of the parties clearly established?	X	X	X	X		
4.4.2 To what extent have effective partnership arrangements for project implementation been established with relevant stakeholders?	X	X	X	X	X	
4.4.2 How often do you interact/interchange with project staff/local partners?			X	X	X	X
4.4.2 On a scale of 1 to 4, how would you rate the quality of your interactions (1=poor; 2=somewhat; 3=good; 4=excellent)?			X	X	X	X
4.4.3 To what extent does the project use local skills, experience and knowledge in the design, implementation and evaluation of project activities?		X	X	X	X	X
4.5 Management/handling device						
4.5.1 On a scale of 1 to 4, how would you rate the quality of UNDP's implementation (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=excellent)?		X	x	X	X	X
4.5.1 Have there been any delays in implementation? If yes, could you describe the cause and how many months of delay occurred?	x	X	x	X		X
5. Sustainability						
5.1.1 Did the project devise a sound sustainability strategy? Did it include a specific exit strategy? Did it implement it?	X	X	X			
5.1.2 What governance frameworks/policies/structures/processes could affect the sustainability of the project benefits? How?	X	X	X	X	X	
5.1.3 What technical, social and/or political conditions could affect the sustainability of the project results? How?	X	X	X	X	X	X
5.1.4 Which activities would require financial support after the end of the project in order to sustain its results?	x	X	x	x	X	x
5.1.5 What results should normally be maintained without additional resources?	x	X	x	x	X	x
5.1.6 Are there biophysical factors that may affect the sustainability of the project results? How?	x	X	x	x	X	x
5.2.1 Could you tell me what are the expected results of the project and its activities?		X	X	X		X
5.2.2 What communication mechanisms or activities has the project implemented? Who has been targeted?	X	X	X			

5.2.3 How did you receive information about the project? Was this information useful?		X	X	X	X	X
6. Impact						
6.1.1 To what extent has the project reduced pressure on ecosystems in the intervention areas?	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.1.2 To what extent has the project improved connectivity between ecosystems?	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.1.3 To what extent has the project improved ecosystem health in the intervention areas?	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.1.4 To what extent has the project improved the quality of life of the inhabitants in the intervention areas?	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.1.5 To what extent have there been unintended outcomes (positive or negative) and what have they been? Have there been indirect beneficiaries?	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.2 Did the project successfully integrate other UNDP priorities, such as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), poverty alleviation and generation of socio-economic benefits, governance improvement, climate change mitigation and adaptation, prevention and recovery from natural disasters, respect for social and environmental safeguards and empowerment of women?	X	X	X	X		X
6.3 Were new technologies and approaches promoted?	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.4 Have measures been successfully taken to disseminate public goods, e.g. through the development of demonstration sites, information dissemination and training?	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.5 Are activities, demonstrations and/or techniques being replicated within or outside the project, nationally or internationally?	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.6 Are some of the approaches developed through the project, which are being widely accepted, and perhaps legally required, being adopted at regional/national level?	X	X	X	X	X	X
General						
What lessons can be learned from the design and implementation of this project?	X	X	X	X	X	X
Do you have any recommendations?	X	X	X	X	X	X

5.6. Output delivery

Table 11. Output delivery

Component	Output	Delivery	Comment
Component 1: Favorable enabling conditions (policies, technologies, markets and finance) for delivering multiple global	**1.** Interinstitutional agreement/Ministry Decree formalizes the establishment, management arrangements, and financial sustainability of the MOCUPP as part of the SIMOCUTE, including annual monitoring of forest cover change and land degradation within agricultural production landscapes and interurban biological corridors in Costa Rica, as well as the review of current national forest policy and regulations.	**Delivered**	Six (6) normative instruments were developed. Three of them were approved[75], while the other three are yet to be approved[76]. Three of them focus on the MOCUPP[77], while tree focus on forestry regulations[78].
	2. Agreements with 15 institutions to provide updated georeferenced information to MOCUPP through the National Territorial Information System's (SNIT) Geoportal and associated services on a yearly basis so imagery may be tied to land property records..	Not delivered	It was no longer relevant, as a reform to the SNIT removed this condition for uploading information to the platform.
	3. An agreed-upon long-term inter-institutional financial sustainability strategy to fund: i) forest cover monitoring services provided by the Council of State Universities (CeNAT-PRIAS) for the MOCUPP; ii) continuous updating of the national cadaster by the DRI so that land property records are visible through the SNIT, including gender-disaggregated data; and iii) the continuous updating of the SNIT web-tool by the IGN.	**Delivered**	Comprehensive reform to section II of the Biodiversity Law No. 7788, on SINAC and other partial reforms. Includes reform to Article 43 of the

[75] Guideline No. 006-2020. Prohibition of monocultures in Wildlife Protected Areas, Guideline No. 006-2021. Protocol for the Publication, Dissemination and Use of Information of the Monitoring System of Land Use Change in Productive Landscapes (MOCUPP), and Executive Decree No. 42886-MINAE-MAG-JP. Creation and operation of the National System for Monitoring Land Cover, Land Use and Ecosystems (SIMOCUTE).
[76] File No. 22391 "Law for the Management and Regularisation of the State's Natural Heritage and Environmental Utility Rights (DUA Law)"; File No. 22.604. Comprehensive reform to section II of the Biodiversity Law No. 7788, on SINAC and other partial reforms. Includes reform to Article 43 of the Forestry Law to allocate 4% of the timber tax to MOCUPP; and File No. 22401 "Partial reform to Forestry Law No. 7575. Addition of Articles 33 Bis and 33 Tris" to provide clarity on competences, uses and activities in PA.
[77] Executive Decree No. 42886-MINAE-MAG-JP, Directive No. 006-2021 and Expediente No. 22.604.
[78] Guideline No. 006-2020, Docket No. 22401 and Docket No. 22391.

environmental benefits in managed production landscapes and urban biological corridors			Forestry Law to allocate 4% of the timber tax to MOCUPP.
	4. 2000-2015 baseline study of total forest cover gains and losses within production landscapes	Not delivered	Layers were developed for the different periods, from 2016 to 2019, depending on the layer[79], but not for the period 2000-2015.
	5. 2015 baseline study of total land cover of pastureland for cattle grazing and pineapple and palm oil crops	**Delivered**	The number of layers was greater than planned (four layers instead of two, adding pineapple and forest cover). In addition to the baseline, gain and losses were analyzed. The baseline was in general 2018-2019 rather than 2015, because that data already existed. In addition, the MOCUPP website (https://mocupp.org/) was improved; 12 papers were published.
	6. CONARE-PRIAS staff trained in advanced satellite image classification techniques in conjunction with international scientific peers, and the computer development required in order to automate data processing for monitoring forest cover and land use trends.	**Delivered**	37 people were trained, based on an assessment of the situation regarding generation and communication of GIS data in SINAC. In addition, data was published in SNIT, GeoExplora and CONARE, 12 papers and a publication with GIZ were produced. In addition, partnerships have been developed with the Universtiy of

[79] Layer on the extent of pineapple at country level for the years 2016-2017-2018-2019; Layers on the extent of oil palm, cattle pasture and tree cover at country level for the years 2018-2019.

			Costa Rica, and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and the University of Montpellier. Furthermore, as discussed regarding output 1, directive MINAE 006-2021 was approved and protocols for field verification of MOCUPP data was developed.
	7. SNIT online map viewer is updated and enhanced with new applications for users.	Delivered by a counterpart (IGN)	
	8. National repository of information for participatory ecological monitoring implemented collaboratively between public, private and civil society actors, including women, and linked to the National Ecological Monitoring Programme (PRONAMEC).	**Delivered**	
	9. 25% of the agricultural, pineapple, and pasture production units verified as free of loss of forest cover by MINAE.	Delivered (but adjusted)	The output was modified and developed as a pilot within output 10.
	10. At least 1,000 international companies buying commodities from Costa Rica aware of the free of loss of forest cover verification.	Delivered (but adjusted)	The output was significantly modified from companies buying deforestation free products to companies being informed that it is possible to buy these products in Costa Rica
Component 2: Multiple	1. Twenty (20) nurseries for endemic and native plant species established to support LMTs.	**Delivered**	20 nurseries were delivered to 33 organizations including small, medium and large nurseries.

global environmental benefits (biodiversity conservation, reduced carbon emissions and increased carbon storage) are delivered in production landscapes in the ACLA-P buffer zone forest zone (Region 1) and Maria Aguilar Inter Urban Biological Corridor	2. Financing of socio-productive community initiatives in the ACLA-P support the implementation of LMTs.	**Delivered**	45 community-based organizations in ACLA-P received financial support through 27 grants (16 grants were allocated to individual COBs, while 11 grantees were allocated to CBO consortia). $917.124,20 was disbursed, and $2.391.627,87 mobilized in co-financing from these organizations.
	3. MRV system assesses the impact of LMT on biodiversity conservation derived from the financing of the socio-productive community initiatives in the ACLA-P..	**Delivered**	
	4. Risk mapping system for the prevention of forest fires includes the classification of vegetation to determine its combustion rate.	**Delivered**	
	5. Pilot project for the implementation of the PRONAMEC in ACLA-P includes an interactive online platform for the exchange of information.	**Delivered**	
	6. Land property registries, disaggregated by sex, for a 50-km2 area of production lands within the buffer zones of protected areas of the ACLA-P finalized and updated in the SNIT.	**Delivered**	Both cadastral and forest-related products were delivered
	7. Land suitability for forestry study for public lands or without registration ownership contributes to strengthening connectivity in landscapes of the ACLA-P..	**Delivered**	
	8. MINAE staff, municipal authorities, female and male judges, and female and male private producers informed about and trained in the MOCUPP and how to use it to enforce the Forestry Law.	**Delivered**	24 activities were conducted to build capacities on the use of MOCUPP and disseminate its results.

(Region 2)	11. Environmental education program led by ACLA-P in coordination with stakeholders associated with biodiversity and forest conservation in production landscapes.	**Delivered**	A 7-module education program was developed. Specific materials were developed for indigenous groups.
	12. Verification system for production units free of loss of forest cover designed and discussed in multi-stakeholder workshops and piloted within the ACLA-P. Local and institutional capacities for citizen participation and governance in production landscapes of the ACLA-P strengthened.	**Delivered**	Pilot conducted in 50 farms.
	13. Five municipalities in the MAIBC and other public entities sign joint action agreements for controlling solid waste and discharge into rivers and promoting the connectivity of urban green areas, conservation, and rehabilitation of riparian forests of the María Aguilar River and tributaries.	**Delivered**	Firma del Pacto por el María Aguilar
	14. Delimitation of protection zones in compliance with Article 33 of the Forestry Law and Regulation includes contour maps.	**Delivered**	
	15. Protocols for interinstitutional coordination to address issues related to discharges, elimination of solid wastes and illegal constructions on the banks of the María Aguilar River formalized.	**Delivered**	
	16. Environmental assessment of the MAIBC completed.	**Delivered**	
	17. Gains and losses of forest cover within the MAIBC for years 2017, 2018, and 2019.	Delivered (partially)	Development of the methodology and the baseline for 2019-2021. Data published in SNIT, GeoExplora, MIVAH and MINE, and used for reforestation purposes. As the methodology is new, gains and losses with other periods have not yet been assessed. I
	16. Baseline study of urban land and forest cover (2015) as part of the MOCUPP annual monitoring of urban encroachment on natural habitat.		
	17. Formalization and open audience of cadastral records by the DRI within the MAIBC.	Not delivered	It is not relevant, because it is the function of the National Register and not a project

	18. Government staff (MINAE, Ministry of Health, CENIGA, and INVU), authorities from five municipalities, male and female judges, women and men from the private sector, community members and other interested parties informed about and trained in the SNIT/MOCUPP and how to use it to enforce the Forestry Law and decision making in an urban environment.	**Delivered**	Same as output 8.
	19. Eight (8) nurseries established to support the LMTs.	**Delivered**	Including both municipal (7) and community (1) nurseries
	20. 16,000 individuals of endemic and native species of trees and shrubs planted in MAIBC.	**Delivered**	The project reports on ha rather than on individual trees. 225 ha were reforested in 2019-2021.
	21. Environmental education program led by SINAC for economic and social stakeholders associated with the conservation of biodiversity in the MAIBC.	**Delivered**	
	22. Communications strategy for the MAIBC.	**Delivered**	
Component 3: Knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation	1. The experiences and lessons learned from monitoring changes in land cover, biodiversity, carbon emissions and stocks, and gender equality and women's empowerment on production landscapes in ACLA-P systematized.	**Delivered**	Delivered for each of the outputs
	2. The experiences and lessons learned from monitoring changes in land cover, biodiversity, carbon emissions and stocks, and gender equality and women's empowerment in the MAIBC systematized in guideline documents and toolboxes to inform future urban policy.	**Delivered**	
	3. Thematic studies and other knowledge documented, and communication and public awareness materials with a gender perspective produced and available for dissemination.	**Delivered**	

5.7. Assessment of the results framework

Table 12. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of Outcomes against End-of-Project Targets)

Indicator system				**Reporting**	**Assessment of achievement of end of the project targets**	
					Rating[80]	**Justification**
Objective	**To mainstream biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and carbon sequestration objectives into production landscapes and urban biological corridors of Costa Rica**					
Description of Indicator	**Baseline Level**	**Midterm target level**	**End of project target level**	**Level at 30 June 2022**		
Mandatory Indicator 1 (UNDP): Number of people benefiting directly from solutions for managing natural resources and ecosystem	Direct: 0 - ACLA-P: 0 - MAIBC: 0	Direct: - ACLA-P: 160 (40 farms) - MAIBC: 25,000	Direct: - ACLA-P: 400 (100 farms) - MAIBC: 25,000	Direct: - ACLA-P: 5452 (574 farms) - MAIBC: 46,626	HS	The two targets have been exceeded (by 225% in aggregate). Women represent 62% of beneficiaries.

[80] The following scales have been used: highly satisfactory (HS), satisfactory (S), moderately satisfactory (MS), moderately unsatisfactory (MU), unsatisfactory (U), highly unsatisfactory (HU).

services, ensuring gender equality				A total of 52,078 people have been benefited in both areas: -32,125 women (62%) - 19,953 men (38%) In ACLA-P 5452 people (2875 men and 2577 women) have been benefited from actions implemented by the project related to the conservation of biodiversity in farms that produce under a sustainable production approach in agriculture and cattle farming. This includes also the population benefited from the environmental education program, the participatory brigades for biological monitoring, and topographic and property registration processes within areas prioritized for conservation purposes. In the MAIBC 46,626 people (29,548 women and 17,078 men) have been benefited directly from the activities developed by the project related to managing natural resources and ecosystem services in the urban context. These people are involved in different environmental education and		

				sensibilization activities such as reforestation campaigns, workshops, and others.		
Project Indicator 2: Area (ha) of avoided loss in forest cover in production landscapes by project end	- ACLA-P: 0 (699.9 ha of annual loss in forest cover) - MAIBC: 0 ha (Baseline and target of annual loss in forest cover for MAIBC will be determined during project implementation)	- ACLA-P: 287 ha - MAIBC: 148,94 ha	- ACLA-P: 1327 ha (ha of annual loss in forest cover) - MAIBC: 148,94 ha (ha of annual loss in forest cover) - Total project: 1475,94 ha (ha of annual loss in forest cover)	- ACLA-P: 4,228.48 ha. - MAIBC: 581.23 ha. - Total project: 4,785.08 ha. (ha. of avoided loss in forest cover) - ACLA-P: 4,228.48 ha. are under protection through the signature of memorandums of understanding with farm owners. These hectares are constituted by primary and secondary forests, within production landscapes, that form biological corridors with protected wilderness areas. These farms are a production model integrating biodiversity conservation. - MAIBC: Using the MOCUPP as a monitoring tool to control the deforestation (with a pilot exercise applying the MOCUPP methodology to	HS	The two targets have been exceeded (by 324% in aggregate).

				cities), the project has achieved avoided loss in forest cover at: 581.23 ha.		
Outcome 1	**Component 1: Favorable enabling conditions (policies, technologies, markets and finance) for delivering multiple global**					
Description of Indicator	**Baseline Level**	**Midterm target level**	**End of project target level**	**Level at 30 June 2022**		
Indicator 3: Interinstitutional agreement formalizes the National Monitoring System for Land Use Change in Production Landscapes (MOCUPP)	0	Draft of the Interinstitutional Agreement	Interinstitutional agreement published	The Interinstitutional agreement to formalize the National Monitoring System for Land Use Change in Production Landscapes (MOCUPP) has been confirmed through the decree that established SIMOCUTE. Additionally, this was officialized with the Executive Order N° 42886-MINAE-MAG-JP "Creation and operation of the National System for Monitoring the Coverage and Use of Land and Ecosystems (SIMOCUTE)" that was approved and published in the Official Journal of Costa Rica La Gaceta N° 94, on May 18th of 2021. SIMOCUTE includes data from MOCUPP for monitoring land-use changes. The executive decree that	HS	A more binding legal instrument (an executive decree) has been approved, and the system has been further formalized through a MoE internal directive. In addition a draft bill has been prepared and is waiting for approval.

				creates SIMOCUTE is a more binding legal instrument than an agreement. In addition, the Ministry of Environment has issued the internal directive number 006-2021 called "Protocol for the Publication, Disclosure and Use of Information from the Monitoring System for Land Use Change in Productive Landscapes (MOCUPP)" which defines MOCUPP as an early warning tool for changes in land use and loss of tree coverage and indicates that it is part of the SIMOCUTE. Regarding financial sustainability of MOCUPP, the project worked with SINAC on a draft bill to ensure that includes an amendment to the distribution of the timber tax so that 4% of the collected taxes are allocated to support the financing of GIS platforms for monitoring land-use change such as MOCUPP. The proposal was presented through the file number 22.604 to the Legislative Assembly in July 2021 and published in the Official Journal of Costa Rica La Gaceta No 155 on August 13th, 2021. It is currently in the government and administration commission for consideration and approval by the deputies.		

Indicator 5: Number of agreements established with international buyers for the acquisition of products verified as free of loss of forest cover	0	5	10	6 agreements were signed between organizations (APECH, ASADA División-APRODI, APROCOME, COOPECEDRAL, AMANABIF and the CGIZS Livestock Women's Program, the latter as direct support for exclusively female organizations), and regional companies (Supermercados La Flor, Agroferretería El Real and Subasta Ganadera Samaná), national companies (Comercializadora Guevara, PRONAINCA) and international companies (JAVA TAZA LLC). In each one, a commitment was created to guarantee the continuity in the application of landscape management tools (LMT) and use of MOCUPP data for informed purchases. Interventions were carried out with each group to characterize commercial maturity, strengthen design and brand registration, promotion, labeling, transition to biodegradable packaging, cattle registration and access to auction for livestock units led by women. More than 595 people from various key sectors in the production and commerce of agricultural products, part of the Green Commodities Program (coordinated by UNDP and the Discover Program coordinated by COMEX, MAG	MU	The target has largely not been met. While the target rereferred to 10 agreements with international buyers only one such agreement has been signed. In addition, the project has resulted in signing 3 agreements with regional companies and 2 agreements with national companies, for a total of 6 agreements, which is far from the expected total of 10.

				and PROCOMER), received information about the Deforestation-Free Productive Units scheme based on MOCUPP.		
Outcome 2	**Component 2: Multiple global environmental benefits (biodiversity conservation, reduced carbon emissions and increased carbon storage) are delivered in production landscapes in the ACLA-P buffer zone forest zone (Region 1) and Maria Aguilar Inter Urban Biological Corridor (Region 2)**					
Description of Indicator	**Baseline Level**	**Midterm target level**	**End of project target level**	**Cumulative progress since project start**		
Indicator 6: Area (ha) of landscape management tools that contribute to improving ecosystem connectivity and biodiversity conservation established at the end of the project	- Micro-corridors: 0 - Sylvopastoral systems: 0	- Micro-corridors: 300 ha - Sylvopastoral systems: 800 ha	- Micro-corridors: 700 ha - Sylvopastoral systems: 2,000	- Micro-corridors: 4,734.29 ha. - Sylvopastoral systems: 2,467.63 ha. 4,734.29 hectares in micro-corridors have been established in ACLA-P, improving connectivity between protected areas and biological corridors in the region. This was possible through signed agreements with farm owners, to ensure the protection of these areas. 2,467.63 hectares of silvopastoral systems are implementing practices that allow a delivery of environmental and economic benefits.	HS	One of the targets have been slightly exceed (by 23%), while the other target has been met.

Indicator 7: Increase in biomass reserves (tCO2eq) derived from landscape management tools	0 tCO2eq	35,121.5 tCO2eq	85,649.6 tCO2eq	231,976.68 tCO2eq Up until June 2022, the project has estimated a total of 231,976.68 tCO2eq increase in biomass reserves. This calculation is derived from primary and secondary forest within farms participating in the project, and landscape management tools that are implemented in ACLA-P, specifically the establishment of micro-corridors and silvopastoral systems.	HS	The target has been largely exceeded (by 270%).
Indicator 8: Reduction in CO2e emissions in project farms	28,465.0 tCO2e/year due to losses in forest plantations	14,232.5 tCO2e /year	14,232.5 tCO2e/year	125,416.09 tCO2e /year Up until June 2022, the project has estimated a total of 125,416 MgCO2e /year reduction in CO2e emissions in farms participating in the project. This calculation is derived from primary and secondary forests within these farms and landscape management tools that are implemented in ACLA-P, specifically the establishment of micro-corridors and silvopastoral system.	HS	The target has been largely exceeded (by 880%).
Indicator 9: Presence of key	Mammals	Mammals	Mammals	All indicator bird species have been confirmed in at least one monitoring site.	HS	The target has been met. It is worth noting that

bird species in the ACLA-P remains stable	Family Felidae (wild cats) - Jaguar (Panthera onca) - Puma (Puma concolor) - Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis) - Jaguarundi (Puma yagouaroundi) - Collared peccary (Pecari tajacu) Family Cervidae (deer) - Red brocket (Mazama americana) - White-tailed deer (Odoicoleus virginianus) - Baird's Tapir (Tapirus bairdii)	Family Felidae (wild cats) - Jaguar (Panthera onca) - Puma (Puma concolor) - Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis) - Jaguarundi (Puma yagouaroundi) - Collared peccary (Pecari tajacu) Family Cervidae (deer) - Red brocket (Mazama americana) - White-tailed deer (Odoicoleus virginianus) - Baird's Tapir (Tapirus bairdii)	Family Felidae (wild cats) - Jaguar (Panthera onca) - Puma (Puma concolor) - Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis) - Jaguarundi (Puma yagouaroundi) - Collared peccary (Pecari tajacu) Family Cervidae (deer) - Red brocket (Mazama americana) - White-tailed deer (Odoicoleus virginianus) - Baird's Tapir (Tapirus bairdii)	The most common specie was the Plain Chachalaca (Ortalis cinereiceps) representing 37 of all reports, followed by the Great Tinamou (Tinamus major) with 12, the Crested Guan with 11, and the Black-faced Solitaire (Myadestes melanops) with 10. The most commonly reported trogon was the Collared Trogon (Trogon collaris) with 5 of all reports. Among mammals the most common species reported by farmers was the Central American Agouti (Dasyprocta punctata) with 57 of all reports, the Spotted Paca (Cuniculus paca) with 22, the Collared Peccary (Pecari tajacu) with 8, the Baird's Tapir (Tapirus bairdii) with 4, and the Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis) with 3, which is the most widespread feline in the productive lands of ACLA-P.		other animals have also remained stable, and the project created an interesting participatory biological monitoring model.

	Birds Family Trogonidae (trogons) - Resplendent quetzal (Pharomachrus mocinno) - Black-throated trogon (Trogon rufus) -Baird´s trogon (Trogon bairdii) -Gartered trogon (Trogon caligatus) - Slaty-tailed trogon (Trogon massena) - Collared trogon (Trogon collaris) - Three-wattled bellbird (Procnias tricarunculata) - Black-faced solitaire (Myadestes melanops)	Birds Family Trogonidae (trogons) - Resplendent quetzal (Pharomachrus mocinno) - Black-throated trogon (Trogon rufus) - Baird´s trogon (Trogon bairdii) - Gartered trogon (Trogon caligatus) - Slaty-tailed trogon (Trogon massena) - Collared trogon (Trogon collaris) - Three-wattled bellbird (Procnias tricarunculata) - Black-faced solitaire (Myadestes melanops)	Birds Family Trogonidae (trogons) - Resplendent quetzal (Pharomachrus mocinno) -Black-throated trogon (Trogon rufus) - Baird´s trogon (Trogon bairdii) - Gartered trogon (Trogon caligatus) - Slaty-tailed trogon (Trogon massena) - Collared trogon (Trogon collaris) - Three-wattled bellbird (Procnias tricarunculata) - Black-faced solitaire (Myadestes melanops)			

	Family Tinamidae (tinamous) -Great tinamou (Tinamus major) -Highland tinamou (Nothocercus bonapartei) -Little tinamou (Cryturellus soui) Family Cracidae (curassows, guans and chachalacas) - Great curassow (Crax rubra) - Crested guan (Penelope purpurascens) - Plain Chachalaca (Ortalis cinereiceps) - Black guan (Chamaepetes unicolor)	Family Tinamidae (tinamous) - Great tinamou (Tinamus major) - Highland tinamou (Nothocercus bonapartei) - Little tinamou (Cryturellus soui) Family Cracidae (curassows, guans and chachalacas) - Great curassow (Crax rubra) - Crested guan (Penelope purpurascens) - Plain Chachalaca (Ortalis cinereiceps) - Black guan (Chamaepetes unicolor)	Family Tinamidae (tinamous) - Great tinamou (Tinamus major) - Highland tinamou (Nothocercus bonapartei) - Little tinamou (Cryturellus soui) Family Cracidae (curassows, guans and chachalacas) - Great curassow (Crax rubra) - Crested guan (Penelope purpurascens) - Plain Chachalaca (Ortalis cinereiceps) - Black guan (Chamaepetes unicolor)			

Indicator 10: Number of farms verified as free of loss of forest cover	0	25 farms	50 farms	69 farms have verified as free of loss of forest cover. The project has mapped the land use of 574 farms, in order to generate data and evidence to certify them as “free from forest cover loss”. In 18 of the 69 farms the MOCCUP approach was taken, comparing monitor readings from 2018, 2019 and 2021 (identifying 679.68 hectares) and no record of forest cover loss was found. In the other 51 farms, mapping of land use was done with drones’ aerial photography taken between 2021 and 2022 (identifying 363.17 hectares of forest and secondary forests) and no losses were found.	HS	The target has been exceeded (by 38%)
Indicator 11: Change in annual income per initiative and disaggregated by gender with verified increase in forest cover	For agricultural farms the average income is US$440.10 per month. In the scenario where this income remains stable for the next 12 months, the annual income is US$4,401. This income includes all productive activities.	- Men´s income: $437.45 per month ($5,249.4 by year). - Women´s income: $339.99 per month ($4,079.88 by year).	Men´s income: $481.19 per month ($5,774.34 by year) (10% increase). - Women´s income: $373.99 per month ($4,487.87 by year) (10% increase).	The project applied a socioeconomic study, to estimate changes over the annual income. - For agricultural farms the average income increased 10% on average. This income includes all productive activities. - The households monthly average income increased in 14.6%.	HS	The target of 10% increase in men’s and women’s income has been exceeded (as it increased 3 and 5 percentage points more than expected for men and women, respectively). In addition, this took place in a situation where the trend in the region was negative. Income increase are likely to be

	For the same farms the project estimated the income dis-aggregated by gender with the following results: - Men´s income: $437.45 per month ($5,249.4 by year). - Women´s income: $339.99 per month ($4,079.88 by year).			-The group of households are earned less than $150 per month decreased from 37.6% to 28.6%. For the same farms the project estimated the income dis-aggregated by gender with the following results: -Men's monthly income increased in 13%, while the trend for the region was -11.7%. -Women's monthly income increased in 15%, while the trend for the region was -14.9%. More than 80% of the beneficiaries of the Program assert that it has helped them increase their incomes. Additionally, they are aware that much of the aid will be received in the medium and long term, and they are grateful for the project's education and training, since it has allowed them to improve in the development of their productive activities.		more significant in the medium and long term.

Indicator 12: Area (ha) of landscape management tools (micro-corridors, protection zones*, urban green areas**) that contributes to improving ecosystem connectivity and biodiversity conservation at the end of the project * River and stream banks, spring buffers, groundwater recharge areas, and catchment areas or outlets for drinking water ** Urban parks, urban open space, tree-lined streets and avenues	- Micro-corridors: 0 - Protection zones: 0 - Urban green areas: 0	- Micro-corridors: 400 ha - Protection zones: 20 ha - Urban green areas: 500 ha	- Micro-corridors 1,000 ha - Protection zones (i.e., river banks): 50 ha - Urban green areas: 1,000 ha	- Micro-corridors: 1000 ha. - Protection areas: 204 ha. - Urban green areas: 1000 ha. The project has contributed to improving the urban landscape through the intervention of all available green areas in MAIBC implementing urban landscape management tools (273,84 ha in micro-corridors, 204 ha in protected areas and 215,01 green urban areas) which contribute to improve ecosystem connectivity and biodiversity conservation in the biological corridor. The interventions have increased the green areas of the city significantly.	HS	One target has been exceeded (by 400%) and two have been met.

Indicator 13: Increase in biomass reserves (tCO2eq)	0 tCO2eq	45,668.33 tCO2eq (Target will be confirmed during project implementation)	91,336.67 tCO2eq (Target will be confirmed during project implementation)	15,591 tCO2eq Up until June 2022, the project has estimated a total of 15,591 tCO2eq increase in biomass reserves. This calculation is derived from interventions in MAIBC through the establishment of micro-corridors, restoration of green urban areas, and protected areas for the recovery of riparian forest in Maria Aguilar basin.	U	The target has not been met by 80%.
Indicator 14: Presence of migratory bird species in the MAIBC remains stable	- Summer tanager (Piranga rubra) - Baltimore oriole (Icterus galbula)	Summer tanager (Piranga rubra) Baltimore oriole (Icterus galbula)	Summer tanager (Piranga rubra) Baltimore oriole (Icterus galbula)	Target achieved: Using the real-time monitoring program (APP INaturalist and Ebird) in alliance with MAIBC communities the presence of the Summer Tanager and Baltimore Oriole were verified and reported a higher relative abundance indicador compared to the anual counts in 2020. Other migratory and resident species were verified in the corridor. Since December 2020, the project has organized 5 bird counts in 15 representative sites of MAIBC.	HS	The target has been met. It is worth noting that other animals have also remained stable, and the project created an interesting participatory biological monitoring model

				-A total of 178 species were reported in MAICB last year, 45 of which are migratory. -A total of 33 Summer Tanager were observed in 79% of the sites. Relative abundance of 0.98% -A total of 90 Baltimore Oriole were observed in 89% of the sites. Relative abundance of 2.68 -A total of 5 endangered species were registered; including the The Yellow-naped Parrot, the Peregrine Falcon and the Cabani´s Ground Sparrow. -A total of 22 new species (non-reported before) were reported in the MAICB since the UNDP baseline inventory in 2019.		
Outcome 3	**Component 3: Knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation**					
Description of Indicator	**Baseline Level**	**Midterm target level**	**End of project target level**	**Cumulative progress since project start**		
Indicator 15: Number of documents on successful experiences about the incorporation of	0	5	10	The project has developed 35 documents which describe successful experiences about the integration of biodiversity conservation, land management, and carbon sequestration in sustainable production landscapes	HS	The target has been exceeded (by 350%).

conservation biodiversity objectives, land management, and carbon sequestration in sustainable production landscapes and interurban biological corridors in Costa Rica.				and interurban biological corridors in Costa Rica.		
Indicator 16: Change in the indices about Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP; indices will be defined at the beginning of the project) as a result of awareness and environmental education at the subnational and local levels	- ACLA-P: 0.702 - MAIBC: 0.757 (Baseline and targets discussed and agreed during review of 2020 PIR)	- ACLA-P: 0.702 - MAIBC: 0.757	- ACLA-P: 0.768 - MAIBC: 0.800	The KAP index has increased in both areas and shows the following results: - ACLA-P: 0.72 - MAIBC: 0. 80 To promote the change in Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices in environmental topics, the project has implemented an strategy in both regions that include workshops, webinars, and environmental education on biodiversity and forest conservation in production landscapes and a urban biological corridor.	MS	One target has been met, while the other has not been met.

				In ACLA-P, the environmental education and skill strengthening activities, developed up until June 2022, whether virtual, remote or in-person, add a total of 4615 people benefited (2241 men + 2354 women); including children, youth and adults. In MAIBC 788 environmental awareness activities were developed for the population of the María Aguilar Interurban Biological Corridor, whether virtual, remotely, or in-person. These activities strengthen the capabilities of communities around MAIBC. 9157 (2977 men + 6180 women) people are involved in this environmental education program.		

5.8. Rating scales of the terminal evaluation

Table 13. Rating scales

Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight, Execution, Relevance	**Sustainability ratings:**
6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings 5 = Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings 4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings 3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings 2 = Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings 1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe shortcomings Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment	4 = Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability 3 = Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability 2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability 1 = Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability

5.9. Statement of agreement of the evaluation consultant

Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender

equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.

6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated and did not carry out the project's Mid-Term Review.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:
Name of Evaluator: Jon Garcia

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed in London on December 1st, 2022

Signature: