

MONITORING REPORT

LACANDÓN – FOREST FOR LIFE

REDD+ PROJECT



Document Prepared By CB CARBONCONSULTING

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Project Proponent(s)	<i>Primary Project Proponent:</i> <i>Fundación Defensores de la Naturaleza</i> <i>Address: 4a. Avenida 23-01 Zona 14</i> <i>Phone (+502) 2310-2929 / 5323-2765</i> <i>Contact person: Javier Márquez: jmarquez@defensores.org.gt</i> <i>Other proponents:</i>

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	GHG Accounting/ Crediting Period (CCB) GHG accounting/(VCS) crediting period, February 1st 2012 to January 31st, 2042; 30 -years total period
	Monitoring Period of this Report August 25th, 2014 to December 31st 2018
History of CCB Status	Full Validation and first Verification Date: June 18th, 2016 CCB Standard. Third Edition & VCS Standard Version 3.
	Gold Level Criteria: Exceptional Climate, Community, and Biodiversity Benefits: Climate benefits: Diversification of employment and income beyond agriculture, such as identification of new NTFP. As standard practice, the project will monitor household income, class, and gender of any direct beneficiary of the project's activities. Improvement of agricultural practices with the aim of higher productivity and slowing the rate of hectares deforested (per year) Workshops on climate change, forest fires, community governance, and health. Also, in the biodiversity areas has been implemented
Gold Level Criteria	

agroforestry activities, community plots, enrichment, and conservation of forest.

Community benefits:

Reduction of poverty rates through the implementation of alternative productive activities such as agroforestry systems, trading of NTFP, technification of productive systems, and improvement of technical capabilities.

Microcredits for families with women as leaders of the householders benefited 29 people during the previous monitoring report and 26 people during the current monitoring report.

Biodiversity benefits

Three endangered species have been monitored in the period 2014 - 2018. These are the "Near Threatened" jaguar (*Panthera onca*), the largest feline in Latin America and part of Guatemalan culture for centuries, the "Endangered" tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*), the largest land mammal in the Neotropics, and the only living representative of the order Perissodactyla, a species considered nationally endangered, and the "Vulnerable" white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*). The results show the presence (quantity) and dynamics of fauna as well as the conservation status of the forest.

The registers for the threatened biodiversity during the previous monitoring report showed the presence of 39 jaguars, 114 tapirs, and 123 peccaries; higher record values than the baseline.

During this monitoring report, the data shows a considerable increase in this species: 44 jaguars, 216 tapirs, and 99 peccaries.

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1 SUMMARY OF PROJECT BENEFITS

1.1 Unique Project Benefits

Outcome or Impact	Achievements during the Monitoring Period	Section Reference	Achievements during the Project Lifetime
Access to credit by vulnerable and marginalized communities through the microcredit program.	26 microcredits granted (12 for women)	4.1.1	39 microcredits granted (20 for women) ¹
Protection of three HCV species: Jaguar, Tapir, and Peccari.	Jaguars: 44 Tapir: 216 Peccaries: 99	5.1.1 5.1.3 5.1.4 5.4	Jaguars: 44 Tapir: 216 Peccaries: 123

¹ 13 microcredits were granted during the previous monitoring period. See previous Monitoring Report, page 172.

1.2 Standardized Benefit Metrics

Category	Metric	Achievements during Monitoring Period	Section Reference	Achievements during the Project Lifetime
GHG emission reductions & removals	Net estimated emission removals in the project area, measured against the without-project scenario	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Net estimated emission reductions in the project area, measured against the without-project scenario	1.207.490 tCO ₂ e	3.2	1.577.470 tCO ₂ e ²
Forest ³ cover	For REDD ⁴ projects: Number of hectares of reduced forest loss in the project area measured against the without-project scenario	4.216,1 hectares	3.2.4	5.021.9 hectares
	For ARR ⁵ projects: The number of hectares of forest cover increased in the project area measured against the without-project scenario	N/A	N/A	N/A
Improved land	Number of hectares of existing production forest land in which	3.931 hectares ⁷	N/A	Data not available

² 369.982 tCO₂e were reduced during the previous monitoring report (section 6.4)

³ Land with woody vegetation that meets an internationally accepted definition (e.g., UNFCCC, FAO or IPCC) of what constitutes a forest, which includes threshold parameters, such as minimum forest area, tree height and level of crown cover, and may include mature, secondary, degraded and wetland forests (*VCS Program Definitions*)

⁴ Reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) - Activities that reduce GHG emissions by slowing or stopping conversion of forests to non-forest land and/or reduce the degradation of forest land where forest biomass is lost (*VCS Program Definitions*)

⁵ Afforestation, reforestation and revegetation (ARR) - Activities that increase carbon stocks in woody biomass (and in some cases soils) by establishing, increasing and/or restoring vegetative cover through the planting, sowing and/or human-assisted natural regeneration of woody vegetation (*VCS Program Definitions*)

⁷ 3.931 ha of forest were organized through a Forest Management plan developed for La Lucha Cooperative (See Management Plans).

managem ent	IFM ⁶ practices have occurred as a result of the project's activities, measured against the without-project scenario			
	Number of hectares of non-forest land in which improved land management has occurred as a result of the project's activities, measured against the without-project scenario	Data Available non-		Data Available not
Training	Total number of community members who have improved skills and/or knowledge resulting from the training provided as part of project activities	2.321	4.1.1	3.894 ⁸
	Number of female community members who have improved skills and/or knowledge resulting from the training provided as part of project activities of project activities	758	4.1.1	1165
Employme nt	Total number of people employed in of project activities ⁹ expressed as the number of full-time employees ¹⁰	9	2.13.14	23 ¹¹
	Number of women employed in project activities expressed as the number of full-time employees	Data available not	N/A	Data available not

⁶ Improved forest management (IFM) - Activities that change forest management practices and increase carbon stock on forest lands managed for wood products such as saw timber, pulpwood and fuelwood (VCS Program Definitions)

⁸ 1.573 training reported in the previous monitoring report

⁹ Employed in project activities means people directly working on project activities in return for compensation (financial or otherwise), including employees, contracted workers, sub-contracted workers and community members that are paid to carry out project-related work.

¹⁰ Full time equivalency is calculated as the total number of hours worked (by full-time, part-time, temporary and/or seasonal staff) divided by the average number of hours worked in full-time jobs within the country, region or economic territory (adapted from UN System of National Accounts (1993) paragraphs 17.14[15.102];[17.28])

¹¹ 14 people were employed during the previous monitoring report. See page 172

Livelihoods	Total number of people with improved livelihoods ¹² or income generated as a result of project activities	Per person, daily income was increased in 36 Q	4.4	Data not available
	Number of women with improved livelihoods or income generated as a result of project activities	Data non-available	n/a	Data not-available
Health	Total number of people for whom health services were improved as a result of project activities, measured against the without-project scenario	11.605 people benefited from the program for education and sexual health	4.1.1 4.4.3	11.636 people benefited from the program for education and sexual health (training) ¹³
	Number of women for whom health services were improved as a result of project activities, measured against the without-project scenario	11.605 women benefited from the program for education and sexual health	4.1.1 4.4.3	Data not available
Education	Total number of people for whom access to, or quality of, education was improved as a result of project activities, measured against the without-project scenario	45 ¹⁴ students benefited from the construction, and equipment of the Pozo Azul school.	4.1.1	45 students benefited from the construction, and equipment of the Pozo Azul school
	Number of women and girls for whom access to, or quality of, education was improved as a result of project activities, measured against the without-project scenario	Data not available	4.1.1	Data not available

¹² Livelihoods are the capabilities, assets (including material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living (Krantz, Lasse, 2001. *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction*. SIDA). Livelihood benefits may include benefits reported in the Employment metrics of this table.

¹³ 31 people corresponded to the previous monitoring period as stated in the previous monitoring report page 183

¹⁴ See Database_Health_Informe Salud y educación PNSL and Database_Education

Water	Total number of people who experienced increased water quality and/or improved access to drinking water as a result of project activities, measured against the without-project scenario	472 households benefited from the construction of two water supply systems. ¹⁵	4.1.1	Data available not
	Number of women who experienced increased water quality and/or improved access to drinking water as a result of project activities, measured against the without-project scenario	Data available not	N/A	Data available not
Well-being	Total number of community members whose well-being ¹⁶ was improved as a result of project activities	18,574 people participated in field visits, stakeholder consultations, health-related activities, microcredits, training, and workshops	See excel database	Data available not
	Number of women whose well-being was improved as a result of project activities	13,752 women participated in field visits, stakeholder consultations, health-related activities, microcredits, training, and workshops	See excel database	Data available not
Biodiversity conservation	Change in the number of hectares significantly better managed by the project for biodiversity	Data available not	N/A	Data available not

¹⁵ See Water-Access to water

¹⁶ Well-being is people's experience of the quality of their lives. Well-being benefits may include benefits reported in other metrics of this table (e.g. Training, Employment, Health, Education, Water, etc.), but could also include other benefits such as empowerment of community groups, strengthened legal rights to resources, conservation of access to areas of cultural significance, etc.

	conservation, ¹⁷ measured against the without-project scenario			
	Number of globally Critically Endangered or Endangered species ¹⁸ benefiting from reduced threats as a result of project activities, ¹⁹ measured against the without-project scenario	6 Critically Endangered and Endangered species benefited from the project activities	5.1.3	6 Critically Endangered and Endangered species benefited from the project activities

2 GENERAL

2.1 Project Description

2.1.1 Implementation Description

This report describes the results of the Climate, Community, and Biodiversity Monitoring of the Lacandón - Forests for Life REDD+ project. The monitoring period for both standards is August 25th, 2014 to December 31st, 2018.

The Lacandón - Forests for Life REDD+ Project focuses on reducing deforestation in Sierra del Lacandón National Park (SLNP) to ensure that ecosystem services continue over time, cultural and archaeological heritage is preserved and the emission of greenhouse gases from deforestation and degradation is avoided. Also, the project focuses on improving the living conditions of the communities located within and surrounding the park boundaries.

The Sierra del Lacandón National Park is one of the seven nuclei of the Mayan Biosphere Reserve (MBR), which represents almost 20% of the land area of Guatemala and about 60% of the area of the Guatemala System of Natural Protected Areas. The SLNP is the second largest National Park in Guatemala and it has been characterized, along with the Mirador-Rio Azul National Park, as the region of greatest plant diversity within the MBR. Within the borders of the PNSL, there are at least 29 archaeological sites from the Mayan Civilization, including the monumental city of Piedras Negras.

The presence of species listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and included on the Red List have been documented in the park. These

¹⁷ Biodiversity conservation in this context means areas where specific management measures are being implemented as a part of project activities with an objective of enhancing biodiversity conservation.

¹⁸ Per IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species

¹⁹ In the absence of direct population or occupancy measures, measurement of reduced threats may be used as evidence of benefit

species include Jaguar - *Panthera onca* (Near Threatened), Tapir - *Tapirus bairdii* (Endangered), and White-lipped peccary - *Tayassu pecari* (Vulnerable) for fauna and cedar - *Cedrela odorata* (Vulnerable) and mahogany - *Swietenia macrophylla* (Vulnerable) for flora.

During the current monitoring period were executed several workshops, training sessions, meetings, and events aimed at improving the skills of the communities in the sustainable management of forests and identification of alternative productive systems that can support the family income.

Some of the most important outcomes of this monitoring period include the reduction of deforestation, the signature of cooperation agreements with communities inhabiting the project area and with different organizations; the delivery of microcredits to vulnerable communities; the increase of family income due to the diversification of agricultural activities; the development of management plans for NTFP and for the productive forest of La Lucha cooperative; the execution of more than 400 monitoring patrols that helped to prevent leakage; the installation of water irrigation systems, the increase in the number of species of HCV associated with the Jaguar, the Peccari and the Tapir; the distribution of birth control tools; the creation of a new school in Pozo Azul; the strengthening of pymes and community enterprises about the production and trading of cocoa; the implementation of agroforestry systems; the development of business plans for tourism; the improvement of beekeeping facilities; the elaboration of handcrafts and the improvement of carpentries.

The GHG emissions reduced during this monitoring period is **1.207.490** tCO₂e. No new instances were added to the project area. Likewise, no changes in the management structure of the project were made during this reporting period

2.1.2 Project Category and Activity Type

This is an AFOLU REDD+ grouped project that aims at reducing GHG emissions from unplanned deforestation.

2.1.3 Project Proponent(s)

The project proponents are the Fundación Defensores de la Naturaleza (FDN), owners of Naranjitos and Centro Campesino lands, and the Cooperatives Unión Maya Itzá, La Lucha and La Técnica Agropecuaria, all of them with legal ownership/management rights over their lands.

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2.1.4 Other Entities Involved in the Project

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Alliances:

Carbon monitoring and measurement:

CB CARBONCONSULTING oversees the development of the monitoring report in line with the guidelines of the CCBS and the VCS.

FDN has an agreement with CEMEC/CONAP, the institution responsible for deforestation and carbon monitoring of Lacandón – Forest for life REDD+ Project.

FDN has a long track record in working with natural resources in the project area. The professionals working for FDN have an average experience of 17 years. Defensores de la Naturaleza's extensive track record includes environmental impact assessments, environmental management mandates, socio-economic, archaeological, and historical assessments.

Community engagement:

FDN is very experienced in working with communities all over Guatemala. Most of the experience related to the SLNP was gathered during community extension and development work as well as in the investigation undertaken for determining the drivers and agents of deforestation present in the project sub-national region. FDN developed a substantial part of the social assessment to determine drivers and agents of deforestation and develop the community monitoring plan.

Biodiversity assessment:

The project's biodiversity assessment is designed and developed by FDN. FDN has several field teams specialized in biodiversity monitoring and that have already produced relevant results in the past regarding the monitoring of biodiversity in the area. The project includes the communities in the process of biodiversity monitoring.

2.1.5 Project Start Date (G1.9)

February 1st, 2012.

2.1.6 Project Crediting Period (G1.9)

GHG crediting period: February 1st, 2012 - January 31st, 2042. (30 years)

2.1.7 Project Location

Reference region:

Guatemala is divided into five specific regions with similar physical, social and economic characteristics (see the following figure). These are regions with different deforestation, landscape, ecosystem, economic and socio-cultural conditions, and dynamics. The reference

region for this project corresponds to the sub-national region “Tierras Bajas del Norte” (Northern Lowlands), which covers the entire department of Petén and portions of the departments of Huehuetenango, Quiché, Alta Verapaz, and Izabal. Northern Lowlands presents the largest extensions of remaining forest in Guatemala, and also presents the highest level of deforestation:

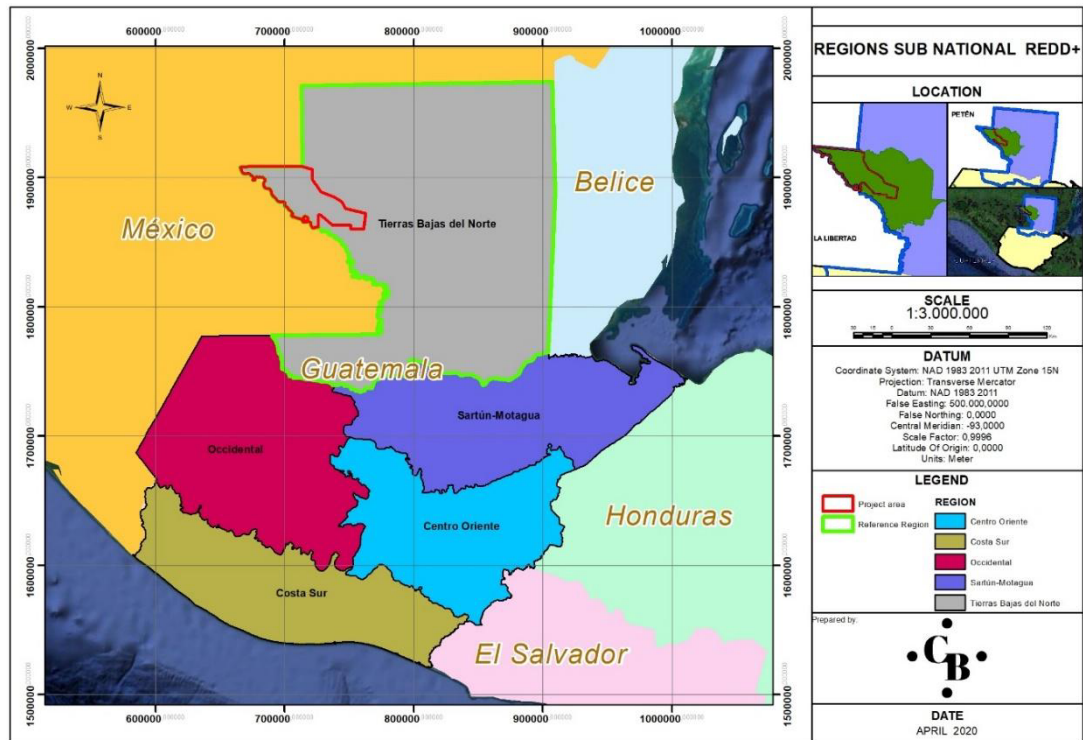


Figure 1 Reference Region

This region has the highest proportion of forest in the country (57% of the total) and the highest deforestation from 1990 to 2000 (43% of the total). The dynamics of deforestation are influenced by altitude and topographical characteristics. The reference region is located in the terrestrial ecoregion denominated as “Petén-Veracruz moist forest”. This ecoregion is considered to be the most extensive wooded tropical formation in Mesoamerica and functions as the natural northern boundary for tropical vegetation. The most significant impacts on this ecoregion are evident in the extensive areas of forests that have disappeared, mainly due to agriculture and livestock raising activities.

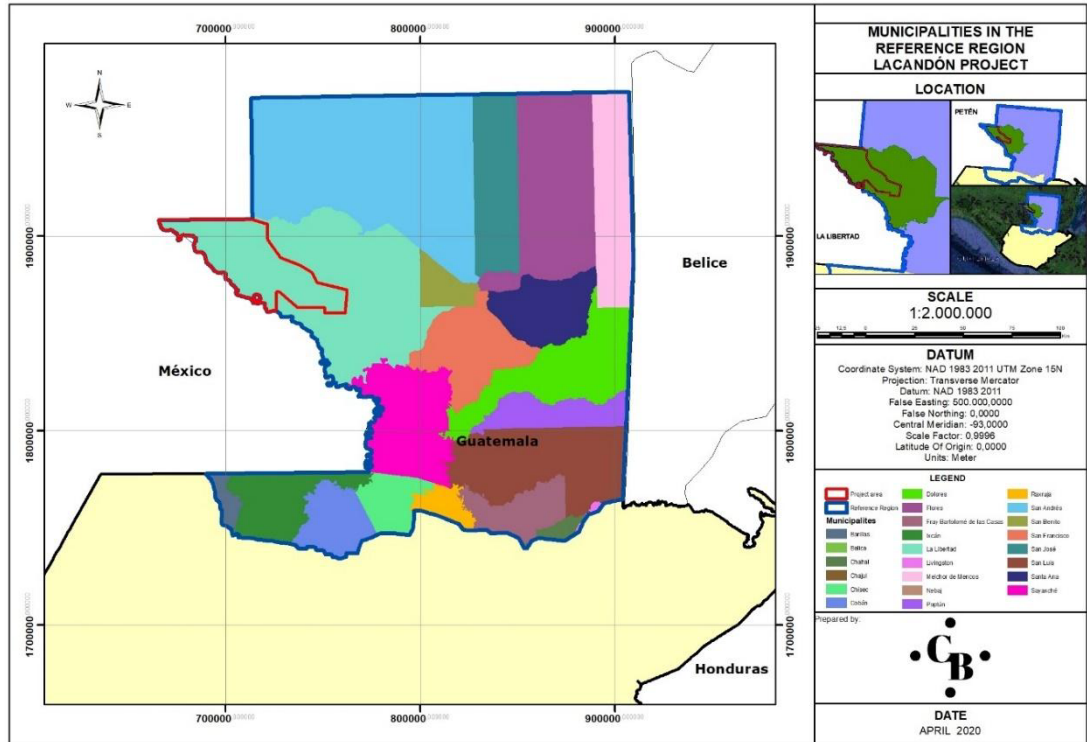


Figure 2 Municipalities in the Reference Region

Project zone:

The Lacandón REDD+ Project is located in the northwest of the Petén Department in Guatemala. The project zone is the total area of the National Park Sierra de Lacandón (PNSL), where La Lucha cooperative is located, plus the areas of the cooperatives Unión Maya Itzá and La Técnica Agropecuaria, which are located partially and fully outside the National Park area, respectively. The total project zone encompasses 206,268.71 ha.

About half of its boundaries are international border with the Mexican states of Chiapas and Tabasco. The northeast border is the multiple-use zone of the MBR, the northern limit is with the state of Tabasco (Mexico), in the west, it is the Usumacinta River natural border with the state of Chiapas (Mexico), and the southern and eastern boundaries are the buffer zone of the MBR within the municipalities of La Libertad and Las Cruces.

Project Area:

According to the methodology VM0015 used for this project, the project area is the area of forest within a given region. For the project first (I) instance, the project area corresponds to the total forest area of Unión Maya Itzá, La Técnica Agropecuaria, and La Lucha cooperatives, all with legal land tenure, and the private properties of Fundación Defensores de la Naturaleza: Naranjitos and Centro Campesino areas. The total project area for the first instance is 45.289 ha.

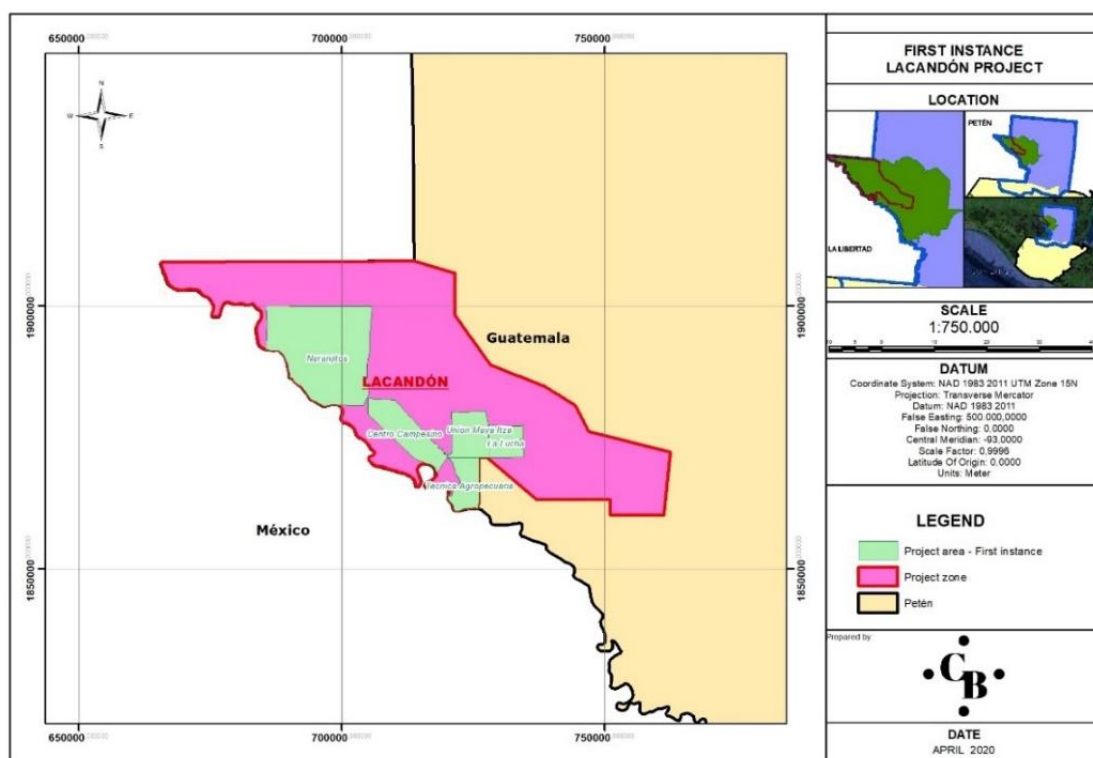


Figure 3 First Instance – Project Area

The coordinates of the project area (the first instance) are shown in the following table

Table 1 Coordinates of the first instance

Cooperative (C)/ Private property of FDN	Map area (ha)	Centroid coordinates			
		UMT coordinates		Geographic coordinates	
		X	Y	X	Y
La Técnica Agropecuaria (C)	4,642.03	723,634.36	1,866,217.55	-90.90	16.87
Unión Maya Itza (C)	6,086.24	724,404.11	1,875,457.29	-90.89	16.95
La Lucha (C)	3,974.03	731,252.31	1,874,259.56	-90.83	16.94
Private Property					
Centro Campensino- FDN	8,392.72	712,185.22	1,876,092.83	-91.01	16.96

Naranjitos – FDN	30,807.2	696,651.53	1,891,676.93	-91.15	17.10
Total	53,884.22				

The total area of the properties that conform to the first instance (forest+non-forest) is 53.884 hectares (project zone).

2.1.8 Title and Reference of Methodology

- VCS Methodology for Avoided Unplanned Deforestation (VM0015 v1.1)
- Tool for the demonstration and assessment of additionality in VCS Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (AFOLU) project activities
- VCS AFOLU Non-permanence Risk Tool: VCS Version 3.2
- Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards (CCBS) 3rd edition.

2.1.9 Other Programs (G5.9)

- Emission Trading Programs and Other Binding Limits:

GHG emission removals generated by the project will not be used for compliance with another emissions trading program or to meet binding limits on GHG emissions. Given that to the date of verification Guatemala does not have any international agreement concerning emission caps under any compliance scheme, no double counting issues are applicable in this case.

Guatemala has indeed presented a Subnational REDD program to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) operated by the World Bank. However, there is no overlap between the emissions to be claimed at the subnational level by the FCPF and the VCUs from the project, since the crediting period of the FCPF has not started yet because it begins only until the signature of the Emission Reduction Payment Agreement (ERPA) and only when the nested approach can ensure that the program is developed in accordance with principles of environmental integrity (FCPF, 2019).

The Guatemalan FCPF program began in 2008 when the country decided to start with the readiness phase that consisted of receiving funding and technical support from the Carbon Fund to design a REDD program covering a big portion of Guatemala.

Large-scale programs require the coordination of different stakeholders, for that reason, the government policies were that the responsibilities of the Government of Guatemala in terms of forest management and administration are shared between the National Institute of Forests (INAB), the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP), the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARN) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA).

On June 1, 2011, the four (4) institutions mentioned above signed a "Technical Cooperation Agreement for the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources", which aimed to establish coordination and harmonization mechanisms for policies led by each institution, to make actions more effective in the territory; The agreement led to the creation of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group (ICG) for natural resource management, which coordinates and supports actions at the political level of government during Guatemala's preparation for REDD+ (FCPF, 2019).

The ERPA is expected to be signed at the end of 2020 (FCPF, 2019). For that reason, it is highly likely that for the subsequent monitoring period the project will have to be nested into the subnational program.

- Other Forms of Environmental Credit:

Carbon credits are currently the only environmental credit being generated from this project. No other environmental credits will be generated or sold

- The project has not sought or received any other GHG-related environmental credits:

This project has not sought or received any other GHG-related environmental credit

- Participation under Other GHG Programs:

This project is not participating under any other GHG Program

- The project is not registered under any other GHG programs:

This project has not been registered under any other GHG Program

2.1.10 Sustainable Development

The contribution of the project objectives to the achievement of sustainable development goals has been summarized in the following table. The table relates the seven strategies previously defined for the project (See PDD and previous monitoring report) and the SDGs potentially impacted. Six SDGs were identified as being positively (directly or indirectly) impacted by the project: Life of land (15), Climate Action (13), zero hunger (2), Decent Work and Economic Growth (8), good health and wellbeing (3), Clean Water and Sanitation (6).