

# **Validation Statement For**

## **RECOVERY OF DEGRADED AREAS WITH AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS IN COLOMBIA**

ICONTEC has been commissioned by Corporación Carbono & Bosques to evaluate the Project Description (PDD) prepared by South Pole Carbon and Corporación Carbono & Bosques for the project titled RECOVERY OF DEGRADED AREAS WITH AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS IN COLOMBIA Version 03 (November 15, 2015) according to the criteria set forth by the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Project Design Standards – Third Edition, December 2013.

The Project Proponent for Instance El Silencio is Fundación Natura, and for the Instance Guacamayas is AGROFUTURO – Proyectos Agropecuarios de Colombia S.A.S. The validation process was conducted between November 2014 and April 2016.

ICONTEC conducted desk review and on-site visit activities in its evaluation of the project and uses the PDD and additional information supplied by Corporación Carbono & Bosques and South Pole Carbon as the basis for its evaluation.

The project's climate benefits are achieved through the capture and storage of 74,554 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (around 974 tCO<sub>2</sub>e yr<sup>-1</sup>) resulting from the establishment and management of forests that serve both conservational and productive purposes.

Among the project's positive community impacts are socioeconomic benefits through the creation of more than five direct and indirect jobs, around 2,000 annual wages, and training programs in environmental education and tree planting which to date have involved more than 300 participants.

The project has stimulated the local economy through the purchase of tree-planting inputs (including more than 130,000 native trees produced in local nurseries) and payments for services such as food, housing, and local transportation (vehicles, horses, and mules) by those who visit the project.

In addition, the project has expanded inclusion in community decision making processes, enabling broad participation from different community groups such as women, youths, those displaced by violence, and those who have demobilized (people who formerly participated in illegal armed groups during historic national political conflicts).

Positive biodiversity impacts have emerged from the project, especially due to the sustainable use of goods and the ecosystem services derived from the recovery, conservation and connection of the forest relicts of the El Silencio and Guacamayas reserves. The project hopes to reforest a total of around 220 hectares using twenty-nine

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native and commercial species (e.g. *Gmelina arborea*) in sustainable production systems, which will contribute to the connectivity and protection of sixty-three hectares of remaining forest. Sustainable production of goods derived from agroforestry systems act in concert with conservation and the enrichment of biological corridors within these watersheds.

In the El Silencio refuge, conservation efforts hold special importance due to the presence of high Andean forest ecosystem, which will be protected by the project's activities. This ecosystem is of strategic conservation value, as it shelters important fauna such as the endemic Guacharaca (*Ortalis columbiana*), the endangered red-bellied grackle (*Hypopyrrhus pyrohypogaster*), and the vulnerable whitecapped tanager (*Sericossypha albocristata*), as well as vulnerable flora including oaks, palms (*Geonoma undata*), "cedrillos" (*Brunellia* spp.), and "guamos" (*Inga* spp.). An additional 100 individuals of the Magnoliaceae family were planted, notable as this family is threatened due to habitat loss and its primitive evolutionary character.

Based on the results of our validation activities that include: scope, criteria, cross check of references, project description and stakeholders interviews, it is our opinion that the project RECOVERY OF DEGRADED AREAS WITH AGROFORESTRY SYSTEMS IN COLOMBIA is complete and meets the requirements of the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Project Design Standards – Third Edition, December, 2013.

The project PDD was posted to the CCBA website for the formal 30-day public comment period 30 April – 30 May 2015 and no significant changes have been made to the PDD since the public comment period.

Report No. VCSVA-14 -004

Project Location: The instance El Silencio is located in the municipality of El Retiro, department of Antioquia. The instance Guacamayas is located in the municipality of Necoclí, department of Antioquia, Colombia

Issued Date: April 13, 2016

Expiration Date: April 12, 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mónica Vivas'.

**Mónica Vivas**

Conformity Assessment Director

**ICONTEC**