

VERIFICATION STATEMENT

OF THE CCBA-PROJECT

LACANDÓN-FOREST FOR LIFE REDD+ PROJECT

Verification Report nº AENOR VER CCB/20160909 version 01

AENOR

CCB Project name: Lacandón- Forest for Life REDD+ Project	
Primary project proponent: Fundación Defensores de la Naturaleza	Project location: La Libertad and Las Cruces Municipalities, North West of Petén Department, Guatemala
Date of issuance of verification statement: 6 October 2016	
Date of verification: 6 October 2016	
First PIR dated on 18/02/2016	Final PIR dated on 27/09/2016
Project Implementation Period covered: 1/02/2012 to 24/08/2014	
Verification Team Leader: Jose Luis Fuentes Pérez	
Verification Team Member: Manuel García Rosell	
CCB Standard and level applied: The project was verified in conformance with the CCB Standard Third Edition.	
Gold Level Criteria: Exceptional Climate, Community and Biodiversity Benefits	
<p>Summary of the CCB project benefits</p> <p>The Project has achieved net positive climate, community and biodiversity benefits.</p> <p>The climate objectives are covered through the implementation of activities to reduce deforestation and forest degradation by decreasing illegal timber extraction and assuring legality of land use through sustainable forest management. These activities contribute to reduce GHG emissions and increase carbon stocks over time. Twenty (20) workshops on forest fires were realized by FDN in different communities in order to reduce deforestation. The VCU's tradable for the monitoring period are 369 985.0 tCO₂-e in a project area of 45,288.81 ha corresponding to the forest area of Unión Maya Itzá, La Técnica Agropecuaria and La Lucha cooperatives; and the private properties of Fundación Defensores de la Naturaleza, Naranjitos and Centro Campesino.</p> <p>The community objectives take into account the strengthening of local governance; developing timber and non-timber forest management plans, environmental education and technical workshops. One of the main activities is to invest in education that reduces the necessity for deforestation, which is covered by the strategy of "Community dialog, education and capacitation". Additionally, the project activities consider the transfer of knowledge to the communities in aspects related to health and welfare and their relation with daily practices, like the awareness about sexual and reproductive knowledge and facilitate access to means of family planning and water management, including the management of human waste and use of latrines. There has been active participation of women in the project and also are beneficiaries of the microcredit program (seven (7) women and six (6) men), which has had a return rate of 100%.</p> <p>For the monitoring period, eleven (11) agroforestry promoters were trained, and La Lucha cooperative achieved its Forest Management Plan. By 2014, fourteen (14) persons had permanent contracts for the Sierra del Lacandón Natural Park Management. Thirty-one (31) lectures on family planning were developed, as well as fourteen (14) workshops on environmental education and sustainable production. These were complemented with workshops on climate change and REDD+ projects.</p> <p>The biodiversity objectives focus on the identification, prioritization and implementation of actions for the</p>	

sustainable management of natural and cultural resources. This objective is achieved through the main strategies of "Forest protection and biodiversity programs" and "Diversification and use of communal forestry resources", where the development of sustainable forest management plans for small holders and communities is important.

Monitoring of jaguar (*Panthera onca*), tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*) and white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*) was performed, quantifying and detailing the presence of these species as indicators of forest status in the SLNP. In addition, through the use of a camera trap sampling method, it has been possible to identify other species in the project area.

768 patrols have been performed to avoid illegal logging, hunting and potential invasions. Twenty-three (23) people were caught conducting some type of illegal activity. The record of threatened species shows the presence of 39 jaguars, 114 tapirs and 123 peccaries, higher values than were recorded in the baseline.

By reducing deforestation, the environmental functioning of the diverse ecosystems will be maintained, the tangible cultural heritage will be preserved, and greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and degradation processes will be prevented.

Climate benefits: Guatemala is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. It is expected that by 2050, there will be an average temperature increase of nearly 2 °C due to deforestation that leads to lower rainfall and higher temperatures.

Climate benefits are being achieved through the implementation of activities to reduce deforestation and forest degradation. The project explicitly addresses scenarios that are predicted to occur with future climate change, such as selecting agricultural techniques that conserve moisture and soil fertility.

Some project activities beneficial to climate change adaptation include:

- 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 household per year).

FDN has worked directly with the cooperatives of the first instance and other communities in the project zone. FDN has also carried out workshops on climate change, forest fires, community governance and health. In addition, in the biodiversity areas has been implemented agroforestry activities, community plots, enrichment and conservation of forest. These measures contribute to the communities adapt to climate change.

Community benefits: The population of the three cooperatives of the first instance, according to the baseline assessment has a high poverty rate. Project activities are designed and implemented to reduce these rates and produce benefits through alternative activities such as agroforestry, improving the non-timber products value chain (i.e. xate), enriching plots and increasing productivity per hectare. Strengthening management capabilities contributes to community empowerment and the achievement of sustainable forest management in these areas.

The project activities benefit women through the establishment and reinforcement of a program of micro-credits. In the first phase, the program has achieved a total of 16 beneficiary families with women as leaders who conducted business activities with a return rate of 100% (investors in buying poultry and basic grains, in books, and pharmaceuticals, among other activities). Moreover, the project activities build and strengthen the management capabilities of the Women's Committee of Ramon (*Brosimum alicastrum*), comprised by 17 women of the La Lucha cooperative. In addition, the project strengthens decision-making and capabilities of communities, especially the operational capacity of forest adaptation through the workshops developed.

Finally, members of the cooperatives have formed a project committee, acting as both private owners and project partners. Cooperatives are represented by two (principal and auxiliary) representatives in the REDD+ Governance Committee, where the principal representative has voice and vote in all decisions regarding the project.

Biodiversity benefits: Three species of conservation classified in the Red List of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has been monitored in the period 2012 - 2014. 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 show the presence of 39 jaguars, 114 tapirs and 123 peccaries; higher record values than the baseline.

Forest conservation has been possible through forest incentives and reforestation with native species, also included in the IUCN, such as Mahogany - *Swietenia macrophylla* and Cedar - *Cedrela odorata*.

Summary of Verification Results

	Criterion	Required/ Optional	Conformance (Y/N, N/A)
G1	Original Conditions in the Project area	Required	Y
G2	Baseline projections	Required	Y
G3	Project design and goals	Required	Y
G4	Management capacity and best practices	Required	Y
G5	Legal Status and property rights	Required	Y
CL1	Net positive climate impacts	Required	Y
CL2	Offsite climate impacts	Required	Y
CL3	Climate impact monitoring	Required	Y
CM1	Net positive community impacts	Required	Y
CM2	Offsite Stakeholder impacts	Required	Y
CM3	Community impact monitoring	Required	Y
B1	Net positive biodiversity impacts	Required	Y
B2	Offsite biodiversity impacts	Required	Y
B3	Biodiversity impact monitoring	Required	Y
GL1	Climate change adaptation Benefits	Optional	Y
GL2	Exceptional community benefits	Optional	Y

GL3	Exceptional biodiversity benefits	Optional	Y
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Verification Conclusion:

The review and cross-check of explanations and justifications in the PIR dated on 27 September 2016 with sources detailed in the report have provided AENOR with sufficient evidence to determine the accomplishment of all stated criteria of the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Standard Third Edition. The summary of Climate, Community and Biodiversity benefits that has been generated by the project included on the cover page of the Project Implementation Report is accurate.

In opinion of AENOR, the project implementation meets all relevant requirements for the CCB Standards Third edition. Hence, AENOR considers the project implementation in accordance with the CCB Standards Third Edition at Gold Level verified.

Madrid, 2016-10-06



Luis Robles Olmos
Authorized Person



Jose Luis Fuentes Pérez
Verification Team Leader