



CONSERVATION LANDSCAPE PROGRAM
CONSERVATION OF DRY FOREST ECOSYSTEMS IN THE CARIBBEAN
QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

1. PROJECT FACT SHEET

NAME OF THE PROJECT:

1.1. Conservation Landscapes Program - CLP Dry Ecosystem
Conservation in the Caribbean.

1.2. DATES (START/FINISH)

AGREEMENT/CONTRACT

4/12/2013 TO 9/12/2015

REPORT PERIOD

01/01/2014 TO 03/31/2014

1.3. PRIME

1.4. NAME OF PROGRAM MANAGER: INÉS CAVELIER

E-MAIL: icavelier@patrimonionatural.org.co

1.5. NAME OF USAID AGREEMENT OFFICE REPRESENTATIVE
(AOR): Ximena García

1.6. NAME OF ALTERNATE AOR: Christopher Abrams

1.7. USAID MECHANISM NUMBER: AID-514-A-09-00004

1.8. OVERALL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: The Caribbean region (13 million hectares), encompasses more than six million ha. of tropical dry forest ecosystem (TDFE) in Colombia, of which 82% has been affected by deforestation. TDFE conservation is a priority for USAID and Colombia, thus, the CLP objective is improving TDFE's governance, biodiversity and the preservation of natural resources in the Caribbean region and strengthening environmentally sustainable livelihoods for the associated communities. Remaining forest patches coupled with existing protected areas and communities will be the center of conservation efforts. The focus will be to implement land use management tools at the landscape level, restoring connectivity with a biodiversity-friendly productive matrix and ecological corridors. Improved smallholder agroforestry practices, installing connectivity tools in larger agricultural areas, implementing silvo-pastoral systems and sustainable use of natural resources will guarantee ecological integrity by enhancing connectivity, covering soils to prevent erosion, promoting watershed protection and maintaining species diversity. GOC's regional environmental authorities will be strengthened through the Regional Protected Area System - SIRAP Caribe. Main beneficiaries are the indigenous, campesino communities and local organizations associated with the target areas. NGO's will develop proposals combining economic, environmental and social components, addressing the main threats on TDFE with community participation and capacity-building. Public/private alliances will be fostered for sustainable production and other public stakeholders will be engaged for better decision-making related to TDFE conservation. Caribbean TDFE will benefit from improved management of protected areas and especially from connectivity strategies to counter fragmentation as main tools for conservation. Improved access to water and production systems' management seek to enhance productivity and livelihoods, especially for women in charge of obtaining water for daily use. Involving the private sector through off-setting mechanisms, Social Corporate Responsibility programs or green economy measures will benefit TDFE conservation by protecting ecosystem services.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS OVERVIEW

Last quarter, implementation partners were selected according to the locations of the work plan, agreements were signed, and participatory diagnostics were made in Nodo Kankuamos, Nodo Colorados, Nodo Pioj6, and Nodo Guajira. This quarter, planning and characterization at the farm level was done with each of the families selected in the regions mentioned above, in order to define implementation activities. This has allowed for improved territory planning at a broader landscape level, since the sum of the conservation agreements that will be signed with each farm owner will define the connectivity corridors and its associated production systems. In addition, implementation activities have started at Nodo Colorados, Nodo Pioj6, Nodo Guajira. Moreover, this quarter an additional agreement was signed for work in the Gaira river basin in the department of Magdalena (Map 1).

Following CLPs strategy of conservation through sustainable production systems, the program started projects that aim for this goal. First, there is the corozo palm value chain innovation project. After careful examination, the appropriate organizations in this development have been selected and the principal needs have been defined seeking to improve corozo harvester's livelihoods. Second, regarding the clean stove project, this quarter the methodology to design clean cook stoves based on the context of the TDFE was finished, and designs will be completed by next quarter.

Finally, palm tree species research and information systematization with Universidad Nacional to produce economic alternatives for communities living in or close to dry forest have initiated.

In the first quarter of 2014, one of the main challenges has been coordinating meetings with each of the families to formulate the work plans for the farms due to their occupied schedules. This has been addressed through intensive telephone calling in order to schedule meeting times with families. This has allowed solving doubts participant families have regarding the purpose and scope of each project as well as in refining the list of beneficiaries. Another challenge that CLP had last quarter was that it had no proposals for the Piedras River Call. Due to the Life of the Program and results from the call for proposals it was decided to abandon the option of working in this river basin. As a learning experience from all this initial work, it has become clear the number of organizations in the Caribbean with technical knowledge in conservation projects and with the possibility of adequate leveraging resources is low, thus giving organization strengthening even more relevance.

2.1. COMPONENTS

2.1.1. Component 1 –Improved licit and Sustainable Livelihoods

Production-conservation corridors are the main conservation strategy of the program; it uses production and improved livelihoods as an incentive to free space for conservation. There are four locations where the development of production-conservation corridors are taking place: Nodo Colorados, Nodo Guajira, Nodo Kankuamos, and Nodo Pioj6. Last quarter the initial agreements were signed and this quarter characterization and planning activities at the territorial and farm level have started. In addition, this quarter another agreement was signed at Nodo Magdalena in Gaira basin at Santa Marta, department of Magdalena.

In Nodo Colorados, a grant for COP 378.470.713 finishing on April 2015 has been granted to Fundaci6n Herencia Ambiental Caribe, which seeks to connect Los Colorados Fauna and Flora Sanctuary with Cerro Maco in the department of Bolivar. The main achievement regarding TDFE conservation has been signing conservation pre-agreements with 56 families in which they agree to develop sustainable farming practices and to free space for conservation areas, while the project agrees to develop the farm plans for each of the families, implement the isolation of the communal conservation zones and establish sustainable production systems. Following the conservation pre-agreements, implementation activities have begun with the isolation of 10.08 hectares of two important connectivity areas (Figure 1) in two zones: vereda Raicero where 400 lineal meters parallel to a spring and its surrounding gallery forest have been isolated, and in vereda Media Luna where 350 lineal meters have been isolated for the protection forest next to the farms. It is important to notice that the beneficiaries are returning farmers previously displaced by conflict.



Figure 1. Pictures of isolations made on Nodo Colorados.

In Nodo Guajira, Paladines and Pasito river micro-basins, a grant for COP 378.400.000 finishing on February 2015 has been approved for Fundación Cerrejón Agua para La Guajira which seeks to increase the connectivity of forest patches in this region and create a link between Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and the Ranchería River, with the campesino and indigenous communities of these basins. At this point, farm characterization has begun, as well as the formulation of the farm plans. For the farm plans, productive arrangements have been developed according to the different ecosystems found in the basins. These plans have resulted in 7 conservation pre-agreements to date. Finally, implementation activities have started with the completion of one water reservoir with capacity for 130 cubic meters of water and the initiation of the construction of another one (Figure 2).



Figure 2. 130m² Reservoir build in Paladines and Pasito basins.

In Nodo Kankuamos, a grant for COP 178.089.000 finishing on September 2014 was granted to the Kankuamos indigenous association Asoprokan in order to link El Santuario de Vida Silvestre Besotes with the region of Murillo in the Cesar department. The main achievements have been to start the farm planning with each of the families (Figure 3) and to develop the arrangements of the silvo-pastoral systems.

At Nodo Pioj6, which pursues to link the forest reserve El Palomar with the regions of Guaybana and Macondal, an agreement was signed with Fundaci6n Ecosistemas Secos de Colombia for COP 67.728.000 finishing in July 2014 to establish the connectivity corridor local promoters were trained, and a plant nursery, with lost and rare species in the region and fruit trees for the production conservation corridors, was build.

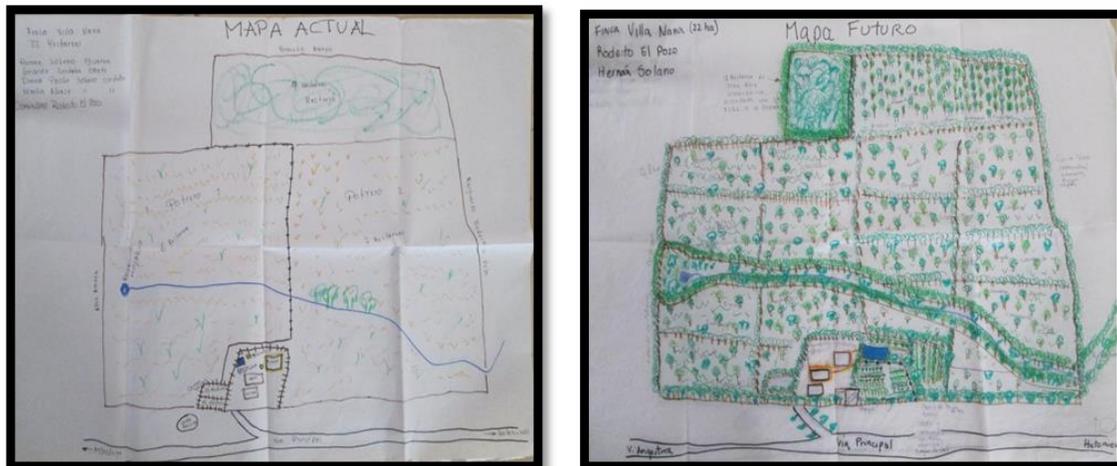


Figure 3. Example of a farm plan actual and future map.

Finally, another agreement for COP 155.027.148 finishing on April 2015 has been signed to develop another production-conservation corridor in Gaira river middle basin, in Santa Marta City, Department of Magdalena. This river is an important source of water for Santa Marta as well as other ecosystem services for the city, and provides a great opportunity of conservation of the TDFE. This project has been signed with Fundación Estación Biológica Bachaqueros, which attempts to improve the connectivity of the river basin through ecological restoration and sustainable productive systems with an emphasis on agroforestry.

On the other hand, Minka-Dev, which seeks to develop an inclusive business around the corozo palm tree, chose the Cabildo Menor de San Antonio as the base organization to structure the business, after mapping and screening an initial list of 180 Caribbean organizations (Figure 4). In April, Minka-Dev will launch the platform to find business opportunities and partners, in a methodology called open innovation (<http://minka-dev.com/>). This business pilot is expected to increase awareness of the value of this TDFE palm in the Caribbean as a part of productive arrangements (i.e. silvo-pastoral, agroforestry) and used for connectivity purposes. This project is a part of the Caribbean region promissory palm strategy that will be explained below.

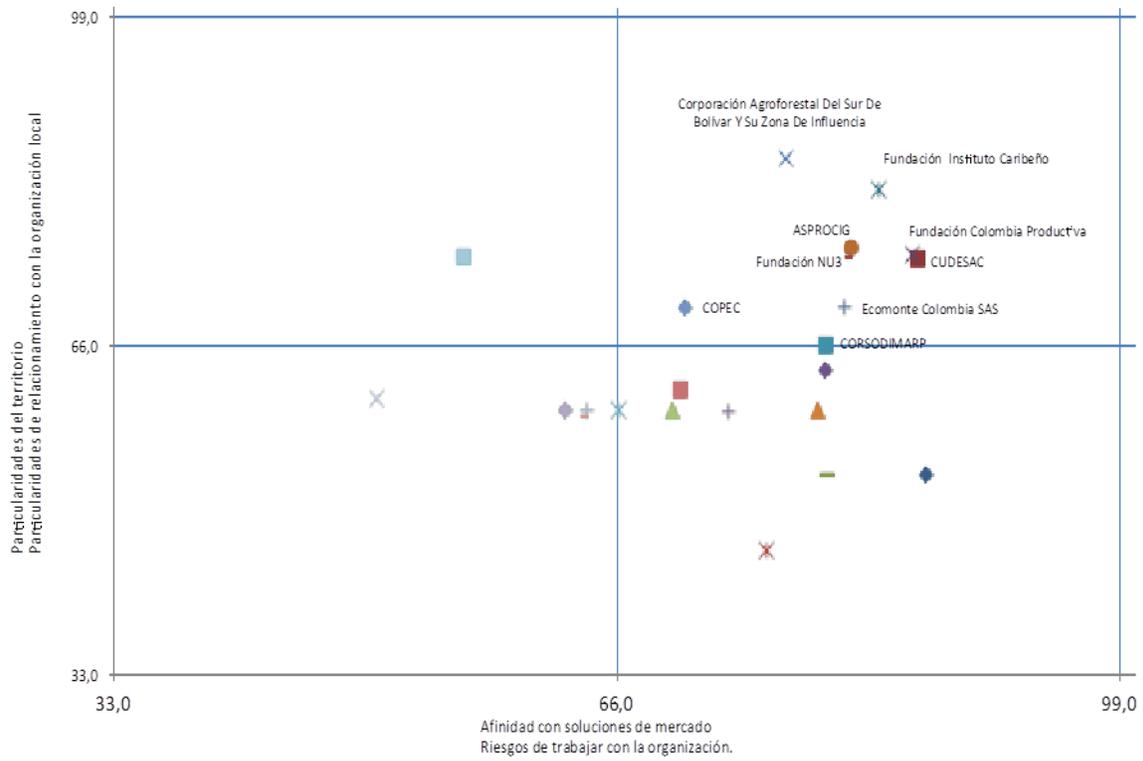
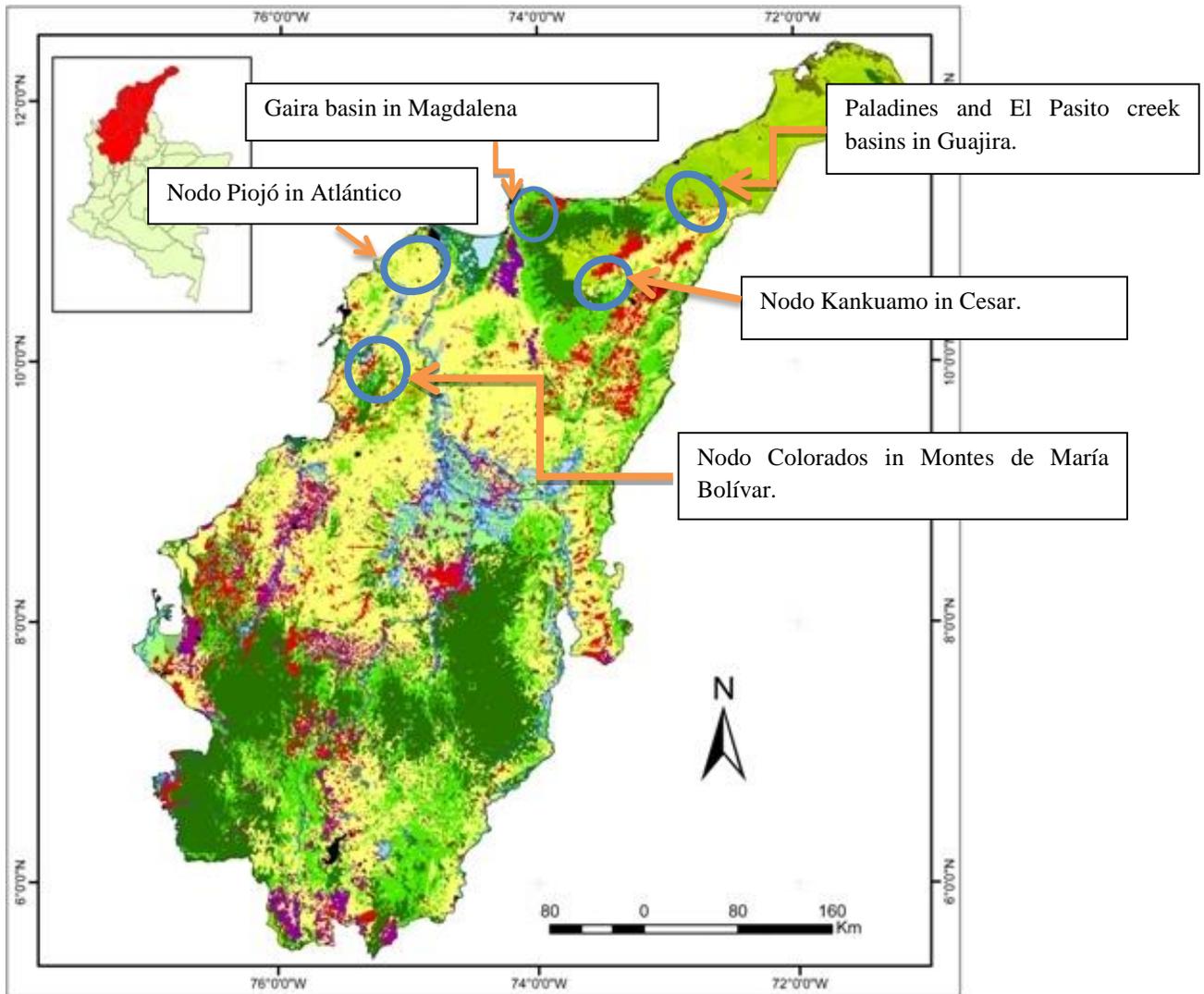


Figure 4. Mapping of organizations for the inclusive corozo business.



Map 1. Locations where agreements were signed and activities have started.

2.1.2. Component 2- Institutional Strengthening and Governance

After signing the agreement to update TDFE cartography in some of the key Caribbean zones at a 1:100.000 scale, new windows have been proposed at a finer scale (1:25.000). The first window that will be delivered by Fundación para la Conservación y el Desarrollo Sostenible will cover Atlántico and a part of Bolívar departments, allowing better decision making in these zones.

Additionally, the second and part of the third sections of the Diplomado en Gestión Integral de la Biodiversidad for the Caribbean SIRAP members, was completed, however only 6 of the 14 participants advanced over 50% in the program contents. Another workshop covering the subject of connectivity

corridors in alliance with the US Forest Service will be done on June 2014. This workshop will be a face to face short course, a better participation rate and more interaction between participants is expected with this modification.

As an initiative to strengthen the governance over natural resources related to TDEF, a promissory palm strategy has been structured with Universidad Nacional to develop the necessary studies to support the sustainable use of the following four promissory palms species: estera palm (*Astrocaryum malybo*), sará palm (*Copernicia tectorum*), amarga palm (*Sabal mauritiiformis*), and corozo palm (*Bactris guineensis*). This technical data will allow the articulation of exploitation initiatives across the Caribbean region. This quarter Universidad Nacional has found the sites for the investigations on amarga palm (*Sabal mauritiiformis*), and corozo palm (*Bactris guineensis*), it has also chosen the students to make the necessary investigations to create the management plans of these palms, socialized the project with the stakeholders, and has started to obtain data (Figure 4). The chosen location for the studies are the municipality of Pioj6, Atl6ntico department for amarga palm, and the La Pastora farm property of the indigenous people from el Cabildo Menor de San Antonio in San Antonio, department of Sucre for corozo palm.



Figure 4. Above: Finca la Pastora, corregimiento de San Antonio, Sucre. Below: municipality of Piojo, Atl6ntico.

2.1.3. Component 3 – Social Capital and Community Participation

Community participation is in the heart of the program since territorial and farm planning, conservation strategies, and the clean stoves strategy are built with local communities.

The clean stoves strategy is moving forward in two ways. The first is at the institutional level where bonds have been strengthened with other organizations working with clean cook stoves such as EnDev Peru, the Global Alliance for Clean Cook Stoves GACC, and the Ministry of Environment (participating in the Interinstitutional Table of Clean Cook Stoves). On the other hand, workshops were made with Nodo Kankuamo and Nodo Colorados communities with the objectives of training the participants on the benefits of clean cook stoves, introducing the basic concepts and parts of clean cook stoves, and gather information for the design based on the needs of the communities. This last information will allow stove designing on the next quarter.

Given that the connectivity corridors proposed by the program are mainly through private land (mainly small farms), community consensus around the corridor is critical for the successful implementation of the mentioned corridors. To achieve consensus the main tool of the program has been participatory territorial planning. To improve organizations and community knowledge, concept leveling between participants, sharing information and experience the second territorial planning workshop was made with the technicians and local promoters of all the locations of the project. Strengthening these organizations and communities on this subject is key for TDFE conservation and can be used for other issues such as basin planning.

Finally, systematization of the knowledge and success stories developed in the program is key to give continuation and spread the benefits achieved. For this matter, an agreement for COP 56.780.000 finishing on June 2014 has been signed with Tropenbos. The objective of this agreement is to propose a strategy for the systematization of the production-conservation experiences developed in the connectivity corridors of the program and for its inclusion in the curriculums of the learning institutions of the Caribbean region. The strategy will be delivered on the next quarter.

3. SUMMARY

3.1. ACHIEVEMENTS

- Starting planning and characterization at a farm and landscape level in four of the chosen zones of the work plan.
- Finding the base organization for the inclusive business for the conservation of corozo palms.
- Signing an agreement for the Gaira river basin in the city of Santa Marta, Magdalena.

3.2. CHALLENGES AND ADJUSTMENTS

- Piedras River call for proposals had no proponents. Given the program schedule and agreement finishing dates, it was decided the program would no longer pursue work in this area.