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Fondo para la Biodiversidad y Áreas Protegidas

# USAID/COLOMBIA FUNDED CONSERVATION LANDSCAPES PROGRAM

## COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

**AID-514-A-09-00004**

**First Quarterly Report**

**(July 1 – September 30, 2009)**



Parque Nacional Natural El Cocuy. Fotos: David Paez. Archivo Parques Nacionales Naturales

**October 2009**



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**This report was produced by *Patrimonio Natural – Fondo para la Biodiversidad y Áreas Protegidas*, for review by the United States Agency for International Development**

**Prepared for the United States Agency for International Development, USAID –  
Patrimonio Natural Cooperative Agreement AID-514-A-09-00004**

**By:**

**Patrimonio Natural – Fondo para la Biodiversidad y Áreas Protegidas**

**Calle 72 No. 10 – 70,**

**Edificio Centro Avenida Chile, Torre A.**

**Oficina 1005 – 1006**

**Bogotá, D.C, Colombia**



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Report prepared for the

United States Agency for International Development – USAID

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND
2. SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD
  - 2.1 CLP's technical approach
  - 2.2 Building upon local advances
  - 2.3 FPN role as a facilitator
3. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS
  - 3.1 Major constraints faced during the reporting period
  - 3.2 Challenges expected for the next quarter
4. DETAILED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES DURING REPORTING PERIOD
  - 4.1 Definition of the Conservation Landscapes Program Work plan
  - 4.2 Preparation of the Program's national launching
5. LESSONS LEARNED DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD
6. LOOKING FORWARD:PROGRAM ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT QUARTER



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## ACRONYMS

CA	Cooperative Agreement
CAR	Regional Environmental Authority
CC	Community Council
CDB	Convention on Biological Diversity
CIPAV	Sustainable Agricultural Production Systems Research Center
CLP	Conservation Landscapes Program
COP	Chief Of Party
CTC	Technical Consulting Committee
FPN	Patrimonio Natural - Fondo para la Biodiversidad y las Áreas Protegidas
MAVDT	Ministerio de Ambiente, Vivienda y Desarrollo Territorial
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PA - SINAP	SINAP Action Plan
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
NNP	National Natural Park
NPU	National Parks Unit
POA	Annual Operative Plan
REM	Special Management Regime
RFA	Request for Appraisal
RRFRA	Request for Final Revised Application
RESNATUR	Colombian Association of Civil Society Reserves
SIAC	Colombian Environmental Information System
SIDAP	Departmental Protected Areas System
SILAP	Local Protected Areas System
SINA	National Environmental System
SINAP	Sistema Nacional de Areas Protegidas
SIRAP	Sistema Regional de Areas Protegidas
SNSM	Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta
SNNP	National Natural Parks System
ToR	Terms of Reference
UAESPNN	Unidad Administrativa Especial del Sistema de Parques Nacionales Naturales
USG	United States Government
WB	World Bank



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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Conservation Landscapes Program (CLP) funded by USAID is a very important venture for Colombia for two main reasons. In first place, it is one of the initial programs of a hopefully long-term commitment of USAID to biodiversity conservation in the country. In second place, it is the first time that a program that seeks to integrate the alternative-development objectives of providing legal and sustainable economic opportunities to vulnerable populations with protection of Colombia's biodiversity will be implemented by a Colombian organization, Patrimonio Natural – Fondo para la Biodiversidad y Áreas Protegidas (FPN).

FPN is a very young organization, created four years ago with the main objective of serving as a tool for achieving the long-term financial sustainability of the SINAP by identifying potential donors, carrying out fund-raising activities, administering, providing financial resources and developing sound economic and financial instruments for: i) the Colombian protected areas of various categories (i.e. national parks, public or private regional or local reserves, protected areas in indigenous territories, among others); ii) the development and implementation of environmentally sound territorial planning and administration strategies to promote the conservation, sustainable use and management of biodiversity; iii) the strengthening of the institutional capacity of the organizations that are part of the SINAP. During its short life FPN has proven to be a very useful and much needed tool for SINAP: over the last four years it has implemented one GEF/World Bank project and provided administrative and technical support to over 22 other projects and programs.

The Colombian National Parks Unit (NPU) was the main promoter in the creation of FPN and in its negotiations with USAID for the establishment of a biodiversity conservation program in Colombia, it also promoted FPN as the organization that could implement the program. Naturally, for Patrimonio Natural it is not only an honor but a very enriching challenge to have been invited as USAID's partner, in close collaboration with NPU.

Work for the design of the CLP started in the last months of 2008. Since then, the process has encompassed three main aspects: a) the design of the CLP; b) FPN institutional capacity strengthening; and c) the convergence of the first two aspects in the establishment and implementation of the program's USAID – FPN Cooperative Agreement. In fact, one of the first steps taken by USAID for implementation of the CLP was the contracting of ARD, Inc. for the purpose of establishing the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), which has had, among other responsibilities, that of providing technical assistance to the FPN in order to improve its long-term institutional capacity, including its internal practices and financial management capability, so it may qualify to receive and manage USAID funds through a cooperative agreement arrangement.

This report does not include detailed narrative of the processes and activities implemented prior to the subscription of the Cooperative Agreement No. AID-514-A-09-00004 on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 2009. However, the following table (Table 1) summarizes the main aspects and products achieved in the first semester of 2009. The following sections of this report focus



mainly on the processes, activities implemented and results obtained after the signature of the cooperative agreement. In the first section, we highlight significant achievements during the reporting period; the second section addresses challenges and constraints faced and expected challenges for the next quarter. The detailed description of the program activities implemented is included in the fourth section, while in the fifth we analyze lessons learned. In section 6 we list the planned activities for the next quarter. The final section summarizes the financial information for the quarter.

**Table 1.** Summary of pre-Cooperative Agreement activities

Aspect	Activity	Institutions involved/responsible	Results and Products
<b>1. Conservation Landscapes Program design</b>	1.1 Definition and delimitation of CLP clusters, based on proposal presented by NPU	USAID, NPU, FPN/PIU (The Program's <i>Comité Técnico Consultivo - CTC</i> )	6 clusters identified. The communities around Sanquianga decided not to participate in the CLP and this cluster was eliminated; Utría National Park was included in the Program. The six clusters include 14 protected areas of national level, six of which have been prioritized for CLP implementation.
	1.2 Definition of preliminary operative structure: CTC, PIU and local work teams' roles and responsibilities;	CTC members	Description of main components of operative structure: members, role and responsibilities in CLP implementation.
	1.3 Design and implementation of National Workshop	FPN/PIU	National Workshop report, including recommendations for CLP design and implementation.
	1.4 Exploratory visits to selected clusters/prioritized national parks	CTC members. NPU coordinated	First hand information of the localities, local actors, prioritized national parks' management plans; other activities, projects and/or programs being implemented in the areas; definition of potential participants and topics of regional workshops.
	1.5 Regional workshops in Cocuy (24 – 27 April, 2009), Alto Fragua (10 – 12 June 2009), Catatumbo-Bari (24 – 26 June 2009), Utría (June 29 – 1 July, 2009) and Katíos (14-16 July, 2009). Regional workshop in Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta took place in October 2009.	CTC members. NPU convoked and coordinated logistics; FPN/PIU coordinated and facilitated	Draft regional workshop reports. Socialization of CLP among local actors (institutions, organizations, etc.). Identification of main actors and stakeholders, pressures on biodiversity, constraints and opportunities for protected areas and problems faced by local inhabitants.
	1.6 Definition of main activities for each CLP component	CTC members	Draft matrix with main general activities for each of the Program's components.
	1.7 Discussion of CLP with Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta Indigenous Cabildos' Technical Council ( <i>Consejo</i> )	CTC members: FPN/PIU coordinated	Initial approval by the Council for the design of CLP in SNSM.



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	<i>Técnico de Cabildos)</i>		
<b>2. FPN institutional capacity strengthening</b>	2.1 Implementation of FPN's Institutional Capacity Diagnosis	PIU and FPN staff	
	2.2 Design and establishment of Memorandum of Understanding between ARD, Inc. and FPN (signed 13 <sup>th</sup> of March 2009)	FPN/PIU and FPN	Memorandum of Understanding
	2.3 Implementation of workshops: "Rules and Regulations Governing USAID Funded Programs" (15 <sup>th</sup> April 2009); "Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients" (22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2009); "OMB Circular A-133" (30 <sup>th</sup> April 2009). An assessment was made on April 2009 to review and validate the Indirect Cost Rate that FPN charges for the implementation of projects.	FPN/PIU and FPN personnel	Training in USAID procedures and regulations
<b>3. Establishment of USAID – FPN Cooperative Agreement</b>	3.1 Based on the Request for Application of the 6 <sup>th</sup> of April, 2009, elaboration of Technical Proposal RFA No.: RFA 514-09-000001	FPN with support from FPN/PIU	Technical Proposal RFA No.: RFA 514-09-000001
	3.2 Elaboration of Request for Final Revised Application 001	FPN/PIU	RFRA 001
	3.3 Elaboration of Request for Final Revised Application 002	FPN/PIU	RFRA 002
	3.4 Signature of Cooperative Agreement No. AID-514-A-09-00004 (24 <sup>th</sup> of July 2009)	USAID and FPN	Cooperative Agreement No. AID-514-A-09-00004



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## 2. SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD

FPN considers the establishment of the USAID – FPN Cooperative Agreement as a significant institutional achievement. However, in this section FPN would like to highlight three other aspects of CLP’s design and initial implementation which it defines to be of significant importance for the program’s future development and for strengthening SINAP.

In first place, the **technical approach imprinted on the CLP** (which is summarized in the conservation landscape definition) enhances and strengthens NPU’s social participation in conservation policy. Even though there are different levels of implementation of this policy in the CLP prioritized national parks, as was observed during the exploratory visits and regional workshops, the possibility of strengthening its implementation through the CLP will enhance the effective *in situ* conservation of biodiversity and its sustainable use by local inhabitants.

Related with the above point is the fact that for the **definition of the CLP’s work plan in each cluster the program built upon the prioritized national parks advances** in implementing its management plan and on the social and inter-institutional arrangements of each area. This has two advantages over other similar projects: i) even though the implementation of the program will be responsibility of national parks inside the protected area and of the local operators outside, the focus is on the whole landscape and not on the separate portions, thus seeing and managing both the protected area and its adjacent buffer zone as an ecological continuum. ii) The program has been integrated into the consensus building and decision making processes of the actors that manage the landscapes. Consequently, its implementation will respond to each of the landscapes particular dynamics and not to outside points of view which can only understand up to some point what is happening in a given area.

The third aspect that FPN would like to highlight is the role as a facilitator that it played during the program’s design and definition of the work plan. The initial discussions between USAID and National Parks two years ago led the NPU to have big financial expectations with regard to the program, which were different to what USAID envisioned as a balance of resource investment inside and outside the prioritized national parks. FPN played a very important role in the budget negotiation and definition, tactfully, frankly and openly discussing budget issues with all CTC members to finally reach a balance acceptable to all of them.



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## 3. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

### 3.1 Major challenges and constraints faced during this period

For the program to contribute to the consolidation of SINAP at the local, regional and national levels, it had to be designed with respect to NPU's policies and strategic plan, as this institution is SINAP's national coordinator and promoter. However, it is not easy to understand this institution's day to day management and dynamics, and it is even harder if you are unfamiliar with the recent and rapid developments (over the last five years) regarding the establishment of SINAP and the Colombian social, political, institutional and environmental context, as was the case of the ARD contracted Project Implementation Unit (PIU). For all the institutions involved, this PIU weakness represented an additional time-consuming challenge as it was necessary to accompany and advise this team in each of the steps and activities in the program's design and initial implementation.

Additional difficulty arose from the fact that during CLP's design and initial implementation, the technical sub-directions of the NPU and Patrimonio Natural were both in transition. In one hand, the NPU Technical Sub-direction was facing several personnel changes, including that of the Technical Sub-director. As a consequence, all of the responsibility of technically contributing and internally coordinating the program fell on the International Projects Office. This represented a major effort for all of its staff and especially for its head officer.

A second constraint faced during the elaboration of CLP's work plan was the limited access to the reports produced by FPN/PIU on the exploratory visits and regional workshops. Hard copies of the draft regional workshops' reports were only made available during the two day workshop implemented in August (see section 4 – definition of CLP's Work Plan) and during the reporting period neither NPU or FPN had access to these reports, even in the draft versions. As a consequence, our capacity to analyze all the information generated for the program's design and effectively contribute with the definition of the work plan (a task that PIU undertook mostly by itself) for each of the five areas was greatly limited.

### 3.2 Challenges expected for the next quarter

The next quarter will have the following challenges in this phase of operation of the CLP:

1. Begin the implementation of the Program by the UPN, based on clear acquisitions rules and procedures. Capacity building on such procedures for relevant officers and personnel, as needed, will be in effect.
2. Structure the APS for each cluster in clear and pertinent terms.



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3. Select the best available local operators from proposals submitted according to each APS.
4. Implement the APS and Fast Track in Alto Fragua.
5. Carry out a detailed revision of the general work plan and those for each cluster and adjust the indicators through joint work with the NPU, FPN team and ARD consultants, in order to verify that targets established are coherent, measurable and feasible, clearly defined and included in the Performance Monitoring Plan for its approval and implementation.
6. Complete the FPN team with the necessary specialists, according to workplan and budget.
7. Focus decision-making regarding the CLP in the FPN team, while ARD Inc. directs its efforts to institutional strengthening of FPN in the terms previously arranged.

## **4. DETAILED PROGRAM ACTIVITIES DURING REPORTING PERIOD**

### **4.1 Definition of the Conservation Landscapes Program Work Plan**

- In May 2009 a CTC meeting was held to define the specific structure of the CLP Work Plan and to assign responsibilities to the inter-institutional (NPU, PIU and FPN) work team members in the elaboration of the plan.
- Most of the two day regional workshops were carried in June and July, except for Cocuy (implemented in April, 2009) and Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, that took place in October (Table 1). In all cases, Patrimonio Natural participated in the design of the agenda, gave a general presentation of the Program during the opening session and participated in the discussion sessions.
- During July and August, NPU – International Projects Office coordinated the internal review, adjustment and elaboration of the work plans for each of the National Parks involved in CLP, as well as for the cross-cutting (national) element of their work plan.
- After all the regional workshops had been carried out, PIU convened a workshop with the participation of NPU (Central office: Financial and Administrative Sub-direction, Technical Sub-direction, Thematic Coordinators; the Territorial Directors and National Park Managers involved in the Program) and Patrimonio Natural. This workshop took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of August in Bogotá and the preliminary work plans for each



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cluster and cross cutting elements of NPU work plan were reviewed and adjusted. The specific work plans for each national park were finalized.

- Based on the final versions of the national parks work plans, Patrimonio Natural worked with NPU in the definition of their proposed budget for USAID funding. Detailed budgets were consolidated for Cocuy, Utría, Alto Fragua, Catatumbo-Bari and Katiós.
- The CLP work plan was approved by USAID in October. Previously, Patrimonio Natural had carried out adjustments and additions to the initial version submitted in September, according to the comments made by USAID.
- FPN and NPU also worked together in the preliminary design of the program's communication strategy. The strategy will include the general objective and work topics, a list and characterization of audiences, resulting products and potential alliances to be established for its implementation.

## 4.2 Preparation of the Program's national launching

The national launching of the Program was programmed for the 20<sup>th</sup> of October. In preparation for this event, Patrimonio Natural participated in several meetings, the first of which took place in July, with USAID, ARD Inc, NPU for definition of a joint work plan, discussion of agenda and related communication products, among other aspects. National Parks and FPN were responsible for the elaboration of the communication materials to be presented in the event: a CLP brochure, banners and a 5 minute audiovisual. During the report period the communication officers of the two institutions worked in the design and production of these materials.

## 5. LESSONS LEARNED DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD

We very respectfully wish to share with USAID what we consider to be the two most important lessons learned during this period.

1. It is not enough for a Project Implementation Unit to have good knowledge of USAID's procedures and regulations. It is absolutely necessary for it to have a clear understanding of the institutional, political, social, cultural, financial and technical context in which the USAID initiative will be designed and implemented. In those cases where this knowledge is lacking, the willingness and open mind to learn from and listen to the other institutions involved becomes even more necessary.
2. Any work team involved in the design and implementation of a program such as CLP must take time to share, analyze, discuss and make decisions based on all



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available information, especially if some of the team members have the weakness already discussed. Furthermore, it is crucial that this information is compiled or produced and shared in a timely manner, so that each of the work team's decisions is made based on all the available and relevant information.

## 6. LOOKING FORWARD: PROGRAM ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT QUARTER

Table No. 1 - Schedule of activities (October – December 2009)

Area	Activity	Product	Date
1. PIU team	Select and hire the necessary team members according to workplan and budget	Team members hired	20-Nov-09
2. Implementation by local operators	Presentation APS Fragua in Florencia	APS Fragua presented and questions cleared with local operators	11-Nov-09
	Fast track Fragua	Fund. Esawá Fast Track in operation	20-Nov-09
	Fund. Esawá: institutional strengthening	Structured APS documents for the next four clusters	Dic-09
3. Performance Monitoring Plan	1. Review and analysis of scientific, technical and planning data as the base line to define indicators for the CLP and include in the PMP. 2. Meetings with UPN technical team, ARD consultants and FPN for review and adjustment of indicators for PMP. 3. Support ARD consultants for structuring the PMP.	PMP document adjusted, submitted for approval	07-Dic-09
	1. Dissemination and adjustment of PMP with UPN teams for the PLC. 2. Theoretical and methodological capacity building for procedures of data retrieval and compilation related to selected indicators in the PMP.	Report of activities related to PMP adjustment and implementation.	05-Ene-10
4. NPU implementation of activities in workplans	See Table 2.	Acquisitions manual adjusted and in operation	13-Nov-09
	Budget review and adjustment	Budget adjusted	20-Nov-09
	Acquisitions processes initiated	Processes initiated	15-Dic-09
	Report preparation	Report liason officer oct-dec 2009	05-Ene-09
5. Strengthening institutional capacity in FPN (see Table No. 2)		Detail in Table No. 2	



6. Communications strategy	1. Consolidate final proposal for the communications strategy for CLP and presentation to the Steering Committee.	Communications strategy presented and approved.	20-Nov-09
	2. Begin implementation of the communications strategy with university and community radio networks related to the geographical areas in the CLP clusters.	Work plan agreed with the selected radio networks.	30-Dic-09

**Table No. 2 – FPN’s Institutional Capacity Strengthening Schedule**

(Activities with priorities 3 and 4 will be developed in this quarter, as well as pending activities priority 2)

Strengthening Area	Specific Objectives	Priority	Activities to be Performed	Activities Achieved
1. Rules and Regulations governing the implementation of assistance programs financed with U.S. federal resources.	1.1. To train FPN staff in rules and regulations governing the implementation of assistance programs financed with U.S. federal resources through Grants and/or Cooperative Agreements.	1	Workshop - Rules and Regulations governing the implementation of assistance programs financed with U.S. federal resources	OK
		1	Workshop – Instruments used to transfer federal resources, characteristics and restrictions.	OK
		3	Workshop – Proposals’ approval process, Project implementation, projects closeout and liquidations (Roles and Responsibilities)	Activity pending as proposals are beginning approval process.
		1	Workshop – Financial processes, accounting and internal audits to projects financed with federal resources.	OK
		2	Workshop - Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients	OK
		1	Workshop – acquisitions processes and regulation	OK
	1.2. To develop and implement the Grants Management Manual	3	Development of the Grants Management Manual for FPN according to the terms and conditions of the Cooperative Agreement between USAID and FPN	Delivered by ARD to Patrimonio. Annexes according to USAID Package will be completed in January 2010
	1.3. To train FPN in acquisition’s procedures with federal resources	3	To update the FPN acquisition manual	OK
	1.4. To train FPN and sub-recipients in Environmental requirements for USAID funded programs.	3	Workshop – Environmental Guide	7 January 2010
			Workshop - 22 CFR 216 “Environmental Procedures”	8 January 2010
1.5. To implement the USAID Branding and Marking procedures	3	Harmonization between FPN’s communication strategy and USAID Branding and Marking procedures	This activity was a responsibility of ARD -PIU in their role as	



				program coordinators and with the new PAU arrangements will need redefining.
		2	Development of CA Branding and Marking Implementation Plan.	OK
		1	Development of USAID/ARD-PIU Branding and Marking Implementation Plan.	OK
	1.6. To train CA's sub-recipients in USAID requirements.	3	Grants management manual	OK
2. Improvement of technical capabilities	2.1. The development and implementation of a Monitoring and Evaluation system for project implementation in FPN	2	1. Revision of ARD's M&E system and adaptation to FPN requirements. 2. Analysis of FPN data collecting system for projects 3. Design the M&E system according to CLP needs and other programs being implemented by FPN.	ARD delivered a first version of the PMP and examples of environmental and M&E sheets. Patrimonio will deliver the list of indicators and targets the 15th January 2010 and the PMP the 24th February 2010.
	2.2. To train FPN and sub-recipients in the use of USAID/SIGA.	3	To train FPN and sub-recipients in the use of USAID/SIGA.	8 January 2010
	2.3. To train FPN and sub-recipients in the use and implementation of the PERSUAP.	3	Workshop - PERSUAP 1. Safe use of pesticides. 2. Plagues control 3. Plagues integral control	7 January 2010
	2.4. To develop a standard model in order to establish the Pre-award Responsibility Determination according to ADS-303.	3	To develop an standard methodology to perform the PARD and PAS	Ok
3. FPN Financial Sustainability	3.1. To improve FPN capability regarding the monitoring of investments vs. expenses	3		
	3.2. To develop a Fundraising unit in FPN in order to reach more resources for projects implementation	2	1. Determination of a legal and fiscal framework.	January 2010, ToR in process for two consultancies.
		3	2. Development of a FUNDRAISING Strategy	Consultancy by John Shores OK
		4	3. Launching of the Fundraising Strategy	TBD
		4	4. FPN travels for international contacts	
	3.3. To develop new financial instruments in order to diversify FPN's financial resources.	4	1. Strengthening of current sources	Consultancy by John Shores OK
4		2. Advice and development of new financial instruments	Consultancy by John Shores OK	



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	3.4. To establish a fair indirect cost rate to be charged by FPN to the different projects in implementation.	1	1. Revision of current indirect cost rate (7%)	OK
		2	2. Definition or validation of the rate	OK
		4	3. NICRA certification process	TBD – The process begins after the first PLC audit
4. Communications and Outreach.	4.1. To develop an institutional communication strategy directed to new stakeholders which may be interested to invest in biodiversity and environmental activities.	4	1. Revision of FPN’s communications strategy 2. Revision of MIDAS and ADAM communications strategy 3. Improve or complement FPN’s current communications strategy 4. Strengthening of FPN institutional image 5. CLP’s Web Site design.	This activity was a responsibility of ARD -PIU in their role as program coordinators and with the new PAU arrangements will need redefining. Web site design and translation of the work plan to Spanish were activities to be developed by ARD. The communications strategy will be revised and complemented by Patrimonio with the communications specialist hired as part of the program coordination unit in February 2010.
	4.2. To strengthen FPN institutional image.	3		
	4.3. To develop CLP’s Web Site linked to those of the different program actors.	3		
	4.4. To use English as a second language in FPN’s communications	5		
	4.5. To use communications as a tool in the Project implementation processes.	3	Revision and harmonization of FPN communication strategy in the field, including the new USAID requirements for local operators.	
5. Security Issues	5.1. To train FPN in USAID guidelines regarding security issues.	2	To train FPN staff and local operators in security issues according to USAID requirements.	January 2010
6. Preparation for natural disasters	6.1. The development of a “Fast Reaction” action plan to support from FPN, USAID Emergency Plans in disasters moments.	4		This activity was a responsibility of ARD -PIU in their role as program coordinators and with the new PAU arrangements will need redefining. Patrimonio has not planned this activity.
7. Social Responsibility	7.1. Baseline definition and analysis by Program region (culture, community knowledge and stakeholders)	3		This activity was a responsibility of ARD -PIU in their role as program coordinators and with the new PAU arrangements will need redefining. Patrimonio has not planned this activity.



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