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PARAMOS & FORESTS

Promoting sustainable economic development while reducing emissions, deforestation and forest degradation.

OVERVIEW

The Paramos and Forests activity helps the Government of Colombia (GOC) meet its landscape-based climate change mitigation goals and strengthens local economic development. The activity reduces emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+), and improves local actors' capacities to measure, report, and verify (MRV) emissions. The activity also supports the creation of sustainable income revenue streams for participating Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities and encourages the adoption of sustainable land uses and businesses that protect high mountain ecosystems. This activity is implemented in 35 municipalities and runs from March 2018-March 2023.

COMPONENTS

PREVENTING DEFORESTATION

Paramos and Forests helps Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities implement Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) projects. These projects protect 500,000 hectares (Ha) of tropical forests on the pacific coast and generate carbon credits to sell to companies looking to reduce their carbon tax liabilities. Income earned through these projects is reinvested in community infrastructure, social services, and governance activities.

CONSERVING ECOSYSTEMS

Paramos and Forests encourages rural and indigenous communities to adopt green businesses and sustainable agricultural practices that protect paramos and high mountain ecosystems, and that reduce carbon emissions. The activity also works with communities, public and private sector actors to restore and protect these ecosystems through mechanisms like Payment for Environmental Services (PES).

PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Paramos and Forests helps Colombian institutions, like the Ministry of Environment and the Environmental Studies Institute, develop and implement policies and regulations related to the domestic carbon market. The activity also supports the establishment of a Monitoring, Reporting and Verification System for Colombia's land use sector.

RESULTS

- Generated 6.2 million Verified Carbon Units, worth USD \$24 million, from REDD+ projects;
- Designed four PES mechanisms to protect and restore over 20,000 hectares of paramos and high-altitude forests;
- Implemented natural resources management practices on 221,000 hectares of paramos, tropical and high mountain forests;
- Awarded 16 grants to Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities to develop environmentally friendly and productive projects;
- Awarded five grants to civil society and indigenous organizations to reduce forest degradation and greenhouse gas emissions in high mountain ecosystems;
- Implemented a Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the Territorial Renovation Agency to strengthen 14 rural communities' capacities to design and implement REDD+ projects; and
- Facilitated five MOUs between REDD+ communities and private sector actors to commercialize sustainable products like cacao, sweet potato, coconut oil, and timber from sustainable forestry.