



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/B.33-34/5
17 April 2019

Adaptation Fund Board

**REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF PROJECT COMPLETION
DATE: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
(CUBA)**

Background

1. The Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) at its nineteenth meeting, approved a five-year project titled “Reduction of Vulnerability to Coastal Flooding through Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the South of Artemisa and Mayabeque Provinces”, submitted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for a requested amount of US\$ 6,067,320 (decision B. 19/10).

2. The objective of the project is to reduce the vulnerability of communities in coastal areas of Artemisa and Mayabeque provinces in southern Cuba from climate change related phenomena including coastal erosion, flooding and saltwater intrusion. The project focuses specifically on an 84 km long stretch of coastline between Punta Sucia and Punta Mora in the western provinces of Artemisa and Mayabeque, covering 6 municipalities. This coastline, which lies on the Gulf of Batabanó, is comprised of a large coastal wetland area based on clay and terrestrial deposits, dominated by mangroves. This is one of the most vulnerable regions in the country to tropical storms and hurricanes, and associated storm surges. The project will rely on a combination of natural regeneration and artificial regeneration (planting) to achieve the recovery of structure, function and ecosystem services in mangroves and other associated coastal ecosystems.

3. As mandated by the decision, an agreement was prepared and signed between the Board and UNDP, and the first tranche of disbursement for the implementation of the project was released following signature of the agreement in March 2014.

4. The first project performance report (PPR) for the project was submitted in December 2015 and cleared by the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat (the secretariat) in January 2016. The second and third PPRs were cleared by the secretariat respectively in April 2017 and in August 2018. The fourth PPR was submitted in April and is currently under review by the secretariat. As of April 2019, US\$ 5,354,994 had been disbursed to the project by the trustee, corresponding to 88.2% of the total project funding.

5. This is the first request for an extension of the project completion date. As outlined in the Adaptation Fund Project/Programme Delay Policy (AFB/B.29-30/3/Rev.1) amended by the Board in October 2017 (Decision B.29-30/15), a request for an extension of project completion date must be submitted by the implementing entity at least six months prior to the official completion date. UNDP had submitted such request through the secretariat on 8 April 2019, thus complying with the Policy, for an extension of the completion date until September 2020 (see Annex 1).

6. The reasons for this request for an extension of project completion date, as outlined by UNDP, include the fact that:

- The mid-term review (MTR) conducted in February 2018, recommends that the project undertakes specific actions, such as: i) Improve the monitoring of coastal ecosystems’ rehabilitation; ii) Introduce impact verification methods for all and not anticipated outcomes, as a result of the project’s interventions; iii) Knowledge management products’ systematization and development of a communication strategy (not originally planned); and iv) Develop intervention protocols to facilitate replicability and scale-up; and
- An expert’s evaluation of the rehabilitation interventions (conducted in November 2018) advised on a new methodology to accelerate the resilience process of mangroves (i.e.

enhance the pollination process of the forest species in the rehabilitation and restoration sites, and measures to ensure the maintenance of rehabilitation actions after the project's finalization). UNDP, therefore, recognizes the importance of building the capacity of the National Forestry Service on this new rehabilitation methodology.

Secretariat's review of the request

7. Following a review of the request, the secretariat finds that this request of a twelve-month extension is justified, in order to ensure that the project's impacts are effective and to yield lessons learned and a potential for replication and scale-up. The implementing entity has also submitted to the secretariat a revision of budget allocation (which does not constitute a material change) to put in place the recommendations stemming from the MTR. Finally, the secretariat acknowledges that this no-cost project extension request has been agreed with the Executing Entity and the Designated Authority has been notified, in accordance with the Adaptation Fund Policy for Project/Programme Delays, as specified in Annex 1.

Recommendation

8. Therefore, the Board may consider and decide to approve the request for a twelve-month extension of the project completion date for the project "Reduction of vulnerability to coastal flooding through ecosystem-based adaptation in the south of Artemisa and Mayabeque provinces" as requested by UNDP, from 11 September 2019 to 11 September 2020.

Annex

1. Request for an extension of the project completion date from UNDP.

Annex 1: Request for an extension of the project completion date from UNDP

Request for extension of project/programme completion date

AF Project/programme ID: CUB/MIE/Coastal/2012/1			
Project/programme Title: Cuba-PIMS 5090 "Reduction of vulnerability to coastal flooding through ecosystem-based adaptation in the south of Artemisa and Mayabeque provinces".			
Country: Cuba			
Project/Programme Approval (date)	20 February 2014 (project launched on 11 September 2014)		
Expected Project/programme Completion (date)	11 September 2019	Proposed Revised Completion (date):	11 September 2020

Reasons/justifications for the extension of project/programme completion:

- ✓ Delays in project implementation
- ✓ Other reasons: The recommended actions in the MTR (Feb. 2018) and an expert's evaluation of the rehabilitation interventions (November 2018) need additional time for completion.

The recommended actions in the Mid-Term Review, or MTR (dated February 2018) and a recent expert's evaluation of the rehabilitation interventions (December 2018) need additional time for completion.

The MTR recommendations include:

- a) Individual marking of propagules to improve monitoring of the effectiveness of the interventions and ensure full transparency at terminal evaluation stage. The procurement of high-resolution satellite images is needed for the verification of rehabilitation actions (this procurement takes approximately six months).
- b) Archiving of all documentation produced by the project - including verification methods for all outcomes achieved in the project- and documenting impacts and results not originally anticipated, but which are a result of the interventions;
- c) Systematization of knowledge management products and development of a communications strategy based on recommendations of the MTR (not originally planned in the project document);
- d) Development and official intervention protocols to ensure replicability and scale-up;
- e) Ensure that the project is established as an instrument of implementing *Tarea Vida* (national sustainable development strategy document).

In addition to this, a technical expert recruited to evaluate the progress on rehabilitation interventions advised on a new methodology to accelerate the resilience process of mangroves. Applying this methodology has delayed the impact evaluation and cost-benefit analysis of the rehabilitation interventions, which require at least 2 years to yield lessons and results.

These new techniques include:

- Enhance the pollination process of the forest species in rehabilitation and restoration sites using the *Melipona becherii* bee. This will be implemented jointly with APICUBA (national beekeeping and honey-processing entity). APICUBA will support building the beehives in the selected sites and provide capacity building to the coastal communities.

- Ecosystem-based Adaptation measures for coastal forests to ensure maintenance of the intervened areas, beyond the project's lifetime. These measures will be taken up by the local authorities, through co-financing. (Output 3.2)

Lastly, it is important to build the capacity of the National Forestry Service in regards the new rehabilitation methodology and the lessons and good practices that it will yield, to improve the quality of the certification it will provide to the project's intervention. The extension requested will also allow for this additional capacitation to take place.

Remaining Project Funds as of 31 December, 2018

Origin	Approved prodoc budget	Total expenditure	Balance
AF grants	5,592,000	3,972,734	1,619,266
UNDP	-	-	-

Implementing Entity certification

This request has been prepared in accordance with Adaptation Fund policies and procedures, has been agreed by participating executing entities, and the designated authority (DA) has been notified.



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