

Inception Workshop Report

“Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River (Argentina - Uruguay)”

August 2021

Abbreviations

AF Adaptation Fund

CC Climate Change

CAF Andean Development Corporation

CND National Development Corporation (Uruguay)

DINABISE National Direction of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services - MAU

ENSO El Niño Southern Oscillation

MAU Ministry of Environment Uruguay

MAYDSA Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development Argentina

NTC National Technical Committee

PRODOC Project Document

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

OP Operational Plan

PP Procurement Plan



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1. Executive Summary

The Project “Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River” financed by the Adaptation Fund (AF) and implemented by CAF Development Bank of Latin America, is aimed at promoting resilience in these communities and ecosystems, and reducing their vulnerability by means of developing instruments, tools and shared experiences for planning and adapting to climate change.

The promoting and beneficiary entities are the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Argentina (MA y DSA) and the Ministry of Environment of Uruguay (MAU) and has the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), executing agency of regional activities and compiler of the information generated by national executing agencies. The Nacional executing entities are the MMA y DSA, for the activities in Argentina; and the National Development Corporation (CND) for the activities in Uruguay.

The program implementation area is located in the lower Uruguay River. Cities and riparian protected areas of significant importance are located along this river corridor, which are shared by Argentina and Uruguay. River floods are becoming increasingly frequent and severe due to the effects of climate change, thus causing serious damage to the infrastructure, generating economic losses and affecting the population in both countries. Consequently, it is important to manage and guide an adaptation process that includes strategies designed at the regional level and implemented at the local level, by means of policies and plans that consider the climate change perspective in communities and riparian ecosystems.

This four-year project was approved on 16 July 2019.

The agreements for the execution of the Project were signed on:

FA - CAF	12th December 2019
CAF – CND – MAU CAF - MAyDSA	9th October 2020 (see Annex 01)
CAF - PNUD	18th March 2021

In December 2020, the National Coordinator of Argentina was hired and in January 2021 the rest of the Argentinian technical team.

In July 2021 the National Coordinator of Uruguay and the Regional Coordinator of the Project were hired.

On December 4, 2020, the National Technical Committee of Argentina was held and had the first meeting, and on July 27, 2021, the Operational Plan (OP) and the Procurement Plan (PP) for Year 1 were approved.

On July 28 the National Technical Committee in Uruguay was held to present and approve the OP and the PP for Year 1 (see Annex 2 and 3).

In addition, on August 3, the first Binational Steering Committee was held to present to the project’s committee members the (i) Project Management Arrangements, (ii) the Operational Plan and the Procurement Plan for the Year 1 for the whole project (Aug 21 – Jul 22). (See the program in Annex 4).

Besides, on August 4, was held the Inception Workshop by invitation to the public. In this opportunity the Project with its Outputs and Activities, the management arrangements and the entities involved, and the main activities for the first year were presented (see Annex 5).

All these meetings were held online in attention of the health care COVID 19 protocols.

2. Inception Workshop Objective

The objective of the workshop was to facilitate those partners and beneficiaries understand and take ownership of the project's objectives and goals in general and for the first year, their governance arrangements and roles of the execution agencies.

3. Project Overview

River floods are becoming increasingly frequent and severe because of climate change, thus causing serious damage to the infrastructure, generating economic losses and affecting the population in both countries. Consequently, it is important to manage and guide an adaptation process that includes strategies designed at the regional level and implemented at the local level, by means of policies and plans that consider the climate change perspective in communities and riparian ecosystems.

The international agenda identifies local governments as relevant agents to be empowered to deal with climate change adaptation, the reduction of disaster risks and to achieve sustainable development objectives. Working on a combination of these three frameworks of action has the common objective of reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience (UNFFCC, 2017).

a. Project Objective

The program "Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River" focuses on building resilience in local riparian governments and the ecosystems of the lower Uruguay River and on reducing climate change vulnerability.

b. Project Description

In line with the proposal approved by the AF, the Project has four components:

Component 1 focus on Territorial Planning and Risk Management. Two outcomes will be generated by strengthened national, subnational, and local governments by means of the development of instruments, the Exchange of experiences and the inclusion of climate change in their planning and managements instruments; and by strengthened and consolidate the sub national and local risk management strategies and community-based early warning systems (EWS) for floods in a coordinated manner.

Component 2 focus on priority measures to increase resilience in flood-prone cities. The outcome will be the increasingly of the resilience of coastal cities through the implementation of structural and non-structural measures.

Component 3 focus on priority measures for the adaptive conservation of the vulnerable coastal ecosystems of the Uruguayan River. The outcome will be the implementation of adaptive conservation measures in vulnerable ecosystems on both Banks of the Uruguay River, including the identification and evaluation of their ecosystem services.

Component 4 focus on priority measures to increase resilience and reduce social vulnerability. The outcome will be to increase the resilience of communities and social organizations in the framework of climate change adaptation and risk management of hydro-climatic disasters.

4. Inception technical meetings and workshop

Inception technical meetings and workshop were prepared to facilitate those partners and beneficiaries understand and take ownership of the project's objectives and goals, and to set up the main governance committees, provided for the management agreement of the Project.

a. National Technical Committees

On July 27, the meeting of the National Technical Committee of Argentina was held in order to present and approve the OP and the PP.

The resolutions taken at the meeting recommended the approval of the OP and the PP for the National Activities for the Year 1 (See minute in Annex 2).

On July 28, the meeting of the National Technical Committee of Uruguay was held. At this meeting there were presented the (i) Project Management Arrangements, (ii) the Operational Plan and the Procurement Plan for the Year 1 in Uruguay (See the program and the minute in Annex 3).

The resolutions taken at the meeting were:

- i. Recommend the approval of the OP and the PP of Year 1 of Uruguay;
- ii. Validate the changes proposed by the Municipalities of Paysandú and Río Negro and recommend the approval for the budget reallocation between the Outputs 7 and 8.
- iii. The MAU, CND and CAF will analyze how to include other institutions in the National Technical Committee.
- iv. The MAU and CND will send a formal letter to CAF, asking to consult to the Adaptation Fund the requested purchase of a vehicle by the National Direction of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

b. Binational Technical and Steering Committee

On August 3 the inception meeting of the Binational Technical and Steering Committee was held.

This meeting was held by Carolina Cortés, Principal Executive of CC of CAF. On this occasion and as an exception, the Institutions that are members of the Technical Committee and the Steering Committee were invited since the members of the Technical Committee had not yet been appointed. For future meetings, UNDP will ask a written designations for the representation of each institution.



At this meeting there the (i) Project Management Arrangements, (ii) the Operational Plan and the Procurement Plan for Year 1 for all Project Activities were presented. (See the program and the minute in Annex 4).

The resolutions adopted were:

- i. Approve the OP and PP of Year 1 of the whole project.
- ii. Approve the proposed changes and the budget reallocation raised by the NTC of Uruguay to carry out works in the Río Negro Department between the Outputs 7 and 8.
- iii. Take note that the MAU, CND and CAF will analyze how to include new institutions to NCT of Uruguay.
- iv. Take note that the MAD and CND will present a letter to CAF, to request the proposal of the DINABISE to incorporate the purchase of a vehicle before the Adaptation Fund.
- v. Entrust UNDP the organization of the next binational technical committee meeting, prior written communication from each of the agencies, designating their representatives.

c. Regional Inception Workshop

On August 4 took place the Inception Workshop.

The purpose of this inception activity was communicating and disseminating the Project in general, its objectives and outputs, its governance, the main institutions and roles, and the planned activities for the first year.

It was an opportunity to introduce both National Coordinators – Lautaro Viscay for Argentina and Luciana López for Uruguay- as well as the Regional Coordinator Myrna Campoleoni.

The target audience were the technicians from different institutions and local partners involved in the project, civil society actors, beneficiary groups and the general public.

For this end, the previous days a wide dissemination was carried out through the websites of the Ministries and other social media of the institutions involved. Invitations were mailed to everyone involved in one way or another with the project.

A registration form was sent attached to the invitation in order to obtain a list of people to consider for future project activities. All the registered people were sent the link to the activity by zoom platform. A simulcast was also featured on You Tube.

The workshop program consisted of an opening panel by institutions authorities, a Project presentation (outputs, governance, and activities for the first year), and a panel of invited civil actors who exposed from two triggering questions.

The Project presentation, their objectives, governance and participating institutions was presented by Carolina Cortés, Principal Executive of CC of CAF while their outputs and activities for the first year by Myrna Campoleoni, Regional Coordinator of the project.



The event had wide coverage by the ministries¹ and the media of both countries.

Four people were invited to the panel to discuss over two triggering questions:

1. What, in your opinion, are the main challenges in terms of climate change and resilience in the lower basin of the Uruguayan River?
2. What would be the main contribution of this project to advance in overcoming them?

The people who participated in the panel were:

- Fernando Raffo, Civil Engineer, specialist of Environmental Engineering, teaching researcher of the Regional Faculty of Concepción del Uruguay of the National Technological University (FRCU-UTN) in environmental issues and renewable energies, and consultant in the public and private sector.

He made a presentation from the point of view of the productive sector. In particular, the importance of agriculture for the project region and how climate hazards could affect this important sector of the regional economy.

- Angelina Graziano, Degree in Integrated Design, researcher and extensionist of the North Regional Department of Architecture and member of the Territorial Studies Group of the North Regional University Center (CENUR Litoral Norte) of the University of the Republic of Uruguay (Udelar).

She stressed the importance of the academy's participation in the project. Both in its role of generating new applied knowledge, and in the role of training new professionals and people interested in these topics.

- Daniel Macías, Agronomist Engineer, Magister in Planning and Management in Environment and Natural Resources, founder member of the Group for the Active Environmental Protection of Bella Unión - GRUPAMA. Is reference of Environmental Issues of the Uruguay River Basin Committee (CCRU), Integrates the Directive Commission of the Uruguayan Network of environmental NGOs and the Cross-border Movement of NGOs of the Triple Border.

His intervention focused on the importance of the conservation and regeneration of riparian ecosystems threatened by extreme events and by the lack of planning and consideration in development plans.

- María de los Ángeles “Cielo” Petit, Lawyer, Magister in Direction and Control of Publics Politics, Diploma in Gender Violence, president of the Argentine and Latin American Municipal Studies Center (CEMAL), Gender and Youth Referent for the Committee for the Development of the Uruguayan River Basin (CCRU).

¹ [Se lanzó el proyecto "Adaptación al cambio climático en ciudades y ecosistemas costeros vulnerables del Río Uruguay" | Ministerio de Ambiente \(www.gub.uy\)](#)
[Se lanzó el proyecto binacional "Adaptación al cambio climático en ciudades y ecosistemas costeros vulnerables del Río Uruguay" | Argentina.gob.ar](#)

She referred to the importance of social participation in the processes, to the relevance of considering different social groups, vulnerable sectors, considering gender and generational differences.

The number of people registered to participate in the virtual workshop were 187, 73 from Argentina and 114 from Uruguay; while 95 persons participated through YouTube, 88 from Argentina and 7 from Uruguay. (See attached the program, the invitations, the list of assistants and the presentation in Annex 5).

The effective participants in the virtual activity were 180 persons from both countries.

Then some questions from the public were answered. The questions related to which institutions will be convened, how will work be done to develop methodological instruments from the regional agenda in which both countries have a different legislative and regulatory framework, on the possibility of incorporating other departments into the project activities and some suggestions on dealing with some specific topics in future workshops or project activities.

Finally, the Regional Coordinator thanked the participation and interest shown by the attendees and highlighted that this activity was the Inception Workshop of a project that will last 4 years. As exposed in the meeting, other more specific activities will be carried out on specific project topics and that, based on the workshop's contact list, those interested in participating in future events will be convened and invited.

5. Conclusions

- a. In July 2021, the National Coordinator for Uruguay and the Regional Coordinator were hired, joining the previous hired Argentinian National Coordinator.
- b. On July 27 and 28, 2021 the National Technical Committees of Argentina and Uruguay took place respectively. The integration of these governing bodies was established, and the National Operation Plans and Procurement Plans for Year 1 – August 2021 to July 2022- for each country were approved.
- c. On August 3, 2021, the meeting of Binational Technical and Steering Committee of the project were held. There were approved the Operation Plan and the Procurement Plan for the whole project for the year 1 – August 2021 to July 2022.
- d. On August 4, 2021, the Inception Workshop was organized in order to present to the beneficiaries and the general public their objectives, governance schedule and the main activities of the project for the first year. There was a very good level of participation from people from both countries.

6. Annexes

- Annex 1.- Agreement signing event program
- Annex 2.- Minute National Technical Committee of Argentina
- Annex 3.- Minute National Technical Committee of Uruguay
- Annex 4.- Binational Steering Committee
- Annex 5.- Inception Workshop
 - Inception Workshop program



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- List of people registered for the zoom meeting:
 - List of people registered for the YouTube activity:
 - Exposed presentation by CAF – UNDP
 - Exposed presentation by Fernando Raffo - Civil Society Panel
 - Exposed presentation by Daniel Macías - Civil Society Panel
 - Exposed presentation by María de los Ángeles Petit – Civil Society Panel
- Annex 6.- Operational Plan and Procurement Plan, Year 1