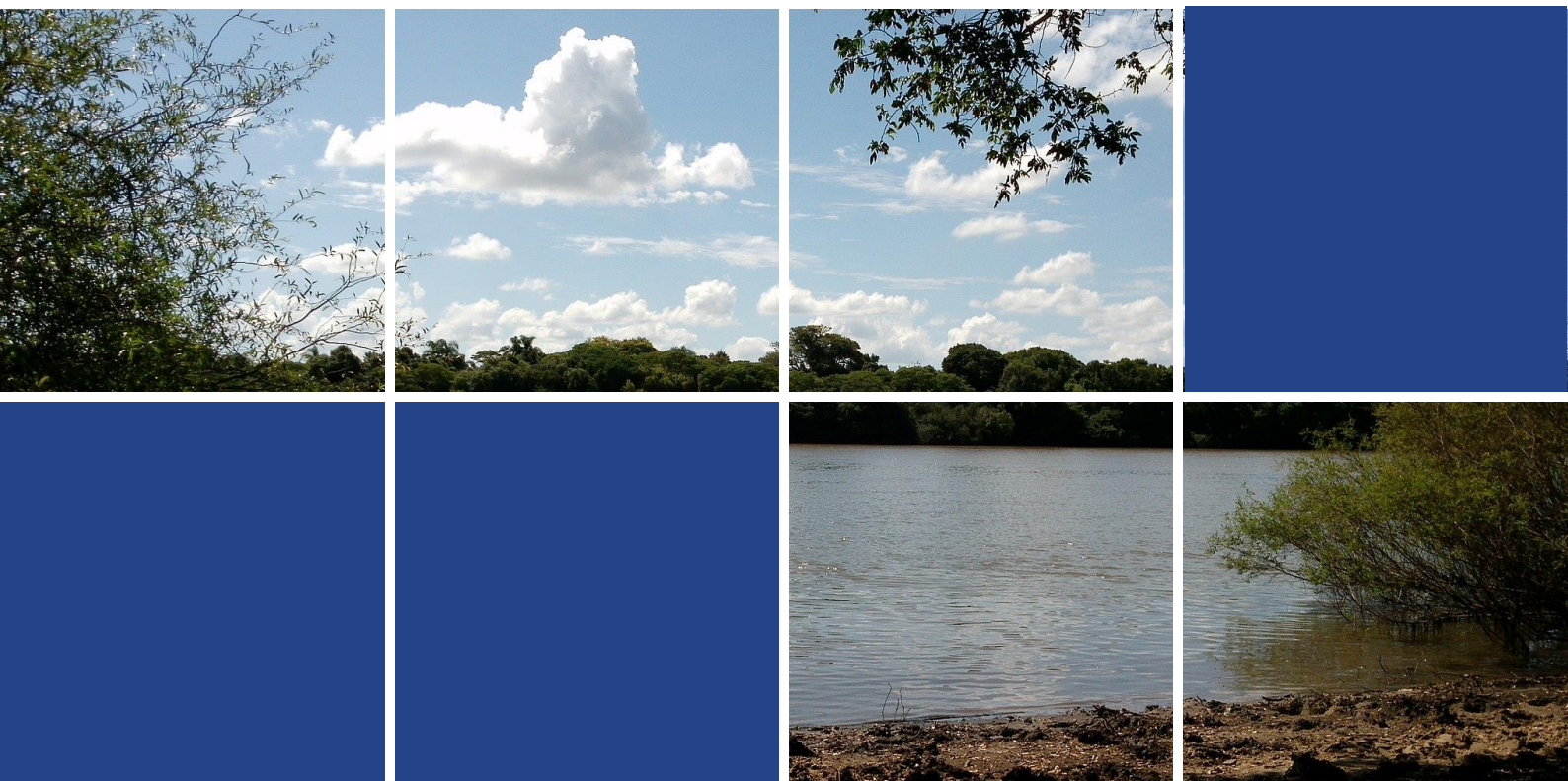


## Mid Term Evaluation of the Regional Project Argentina – Uruguay: “Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River”



Prepared for:



**Consultancy:**

Consulting for the MTE of the Argentina – Uruguay Regional Project: “Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River”

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## Index

Index.....	1
Table index .....	3
Figure index .....	4
Acronyms and abbreviations .....	5
Executive summary .....	6
I.    Project Information Table .....	6
II.   Project description .....	7
III.  Summary of the progress of the Project.....	8
IV.  Summary table of MTE-P qualifications and achievements .....	9
V.   Summary of conclusions .....	11
VI.  Summary table of recommendations.....	12
1.    Introduction .....	14
1.1.  Purpose of MTE-P and objectives.....	14
1.2.  Approach, methodology, scope and limitations of MTE-P .....	14
1.3.  Structure of the MTE-P report.....	15
2.    Project description and regional and local context.....	17
2.1.  Context of the development of the Project.....	17
2.2.  Problems the Project aims to solve, threats and barriers .....	17
2.3.  Project description and strategy: objective, effects and expected results .....	18
2.4.  Project governance and implementation arrangements .....	20
2.5.  Project schedule and milestones.....	21
2.6.  Main actors and stakeholders .....	22
3.    Results .....	23
3.1.  Project strategy .....	23
3.1.1.  Project design.....	23
3.1.2.  Results Framework Analysis .....	24
3.2.  Progress towards results.....	25
3.2.1.  Analysis of progress towards results .....	25
3.2.2.  Remaining obstacles to achieve the Project objective.....	30
3.3.  Project Execution and Adaptive Management.....	31
3.3.1.  Work management and planning arrangements .....	31
3.3.2.  Funding and co-funding .....	31
3.3.3.  Monitoring and evaluation systems.....	32
3.3.4.  Stakeholder Engagement.....	35
3.3.5.  Environmental and social policy and principles of the Adaptation Fund (safeguards) .....	36
3.3.6.  Knowledge management: information and communications .....	36
3.4.  Sustainability of the Project's actions .....	37
3.4.1.  Financial risks.....	37
3.4.2.  Socioeconomic risks .....	38
3.4.3.  Institutional and governance risks .....	38
3.4.4.  Environmental risks.....	38
4.    Conclusions and recommendations .....	40
4.1.  Conclusions .....	40
4.2.  Recommendations.....	41
Annexes .....	1
Anexo A. Matrix of Progress towards the Analysis of Results .....	1

Annex B. Project Results Rating Table.....	6
Annex C. Evaluation Matrix .....	1
Annex D. Code of Conduct for Intermediate Examination Assessors/Consultants .....	1
Annex F. Interview questionnaire applied .....	1
Annex G. Mid-Term Evaluation Activity schedule .....	3
Annex H. List of interviewed actors.....	4
Annex I. List of documents .....	1
Annex J. Uruguay mission report.....	2
Annex K. Argentina mission report.....	5

## Table index

Table 1. Summary of proposed recommendations for the MTE-P .....	12
Table 2. Project schedule .....	21
Table 3. Meetings held up to MTE-P .....	32

## Figure index

Figure 1. Components and outcomes of the Project .....	8
Figure 2. Project Organizational Chart .....	20
Figure 3. Project milestones .....	21
Figure 4. Visit to the completed work in La Esmeralda Park – Fray Bentos .....	4
Figure 5. Poor state of the public services infrastructure of the La Esmeralda complex – Fray Bentos.	4
Figure 6. Visit to the Esteros de Farrapos e Islas del Río Uruguay National Park .....	4
Figure 7. Progress of the work on the Arroyo La Esmeralda basin.....	4
Figure 8. Visit of the CAF, UNDP and Environment Undersecretariat teams to the PNEP .....	7
Figure 9. Visit of the CAF, UNDP and Environment Undersecretariat teams to the materials collection area for the works in the Municipality of Colón.....	7
Figure 10. Visit to the coastal works of the water treatment plant in the city of Concordia .....	7
Figure 11. Tour to El Palmar National Park .....	7

## Acronyms and abbreviations

<b>AF</b>	Adaptation Fund
<b>MTE-P</b>	Mid Term Evaluation of the Project
<b>OP</b>	Operational Plan
<b>PP</b>	Procurement Plan
<b>BC</b>	Binational Committee
<b>NTC</b>	National Technical Committee
<b>CND</b>	National Development Corporation
<b>CAF</b>	Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>EWS</b>	Early warning systems
<b>PNEP</b>	El Palmar National Park
<b>PNEFIRU</b>	Esteros de Farrapos e Islas del Río Uruguay National Park

## Executive summary

### I. Project Information Table

Project title			
“Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River”			
UNDP Project ID (PIMS#)		Approval date PIF:	
AF Project ID	AF00000118	Approval date AFB:	July 16th, 2019
ATLAS Business Unit, Award #Proj.ID	n/a	Date of signature of the agreement IE-AFB	December 12th, 2019
Countries:	Argentina Uruguay	Project Manager Contract Date:	
Region:	LAC	Inception Workshop date	August 4th, 2021
Focus area:	Disaster risk reduction and early warning systems	Date of the end of MTE:	Aug, 2023
AF Strategic area Objective:		Planned date of closure:	Aug, 2025
Trust Fund	AF / CAF	In case of revision, proposed new closing date:	
Regional Implementation Entity Executing Entity:	Development Bank of Latin America – CAF  United Nations Development Programme - UNDP		
Partners in the implementation	Argentina: Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS) <sup>1</sup> , El Palmar National Park, Entre Ríos Government Uruguay: Ministry of Environment, National Development Corporation (CND), Ministry of Housing, Territorial Planning and Environment of Uruguay (MVOTMA), National Emergency System (SINAE), Rio Negro Departmental Intendancy, Artigas Departmental Intendancy, Salto Departmental Intendancy.		
Project funding	Endorsed by the AFB (USD)	To the Mid-Term Evaluation (USD)	
(1) Funding AF/CAF	13,999,996.00		
(2) Co-funding	without co-funding	without co-funding	
Total Project Cost (1+2)	13,999,996.00		

<sup>1</sup> Undersecretariat of Environment of the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports – Ministry of Interior.



## II. Project description

The regional project ‘Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River’ (hereinafter ‘the Project’) originates as a binational initiative that brings together Uruguay and Argentina in the common objective of generating resilience and mitigating the vulnerability of the regions to extreme flooding events intensified by climate change.

The Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), with funding from the Adaptation Fund (AF), has agreed with the governments of Uruguay and Argentina to carry out a project aimed at developing resilience in vulnerable cities and coastal ecosystems in the lower section of the Uruguay River, both in Argentine and Uruguayan territory, through the development of instruments, tools and planning and implementation experiences for adaptation to climate change, as well as climate risk management. For this purpose, under the initiative of CAF, the governments of Uruguay and Argentina decided to develop actions with these approaches in the departments of Artigas, Salto, Paysandú and Río Negro in the case of Uruguay and in the Province of Entre Ríos in Argentina.

The project is aimed at developing tools and exchanging planning and management experiences in both countries in order to contribute to the reduction of vulnerabilities and the comprehensive management of risks, focusing on adaptation to climate change along with a perspective of gender, generations and human rights.

The Project implementation strategy was established based on the following elements:

- Incorporate climate risks into urban spatial planning policies through an integrated strategy (territorial, infrastructure and public services, housing and protected areas, among others), integrating medium- and long-term climate policies. This includes (i) reviewing land use plans to include adaptation to climate change and (ii) designing the methodology for assessing impacts, damage and losses. These actions will help prioritize adaptation actions on both sides of the lower Uruguay River.
- Strengthen coordination, communication and forecasting for an early warning system for floods.
- Recover flood-prone areas in the form of 'linear parks' with the aim of avoiding informal settlement of vulnerable groups in these areas, also resignify these spaces as social integration zones.
- Implement adaptive conservation measures in vulnerable ecosystems: (i) mapping of ecosystem services, (ii) restoration of significant ecosystems and natural river dynamics through coastal recovery, (iii) protection of environmental services, and (iv) Measures to reduce health problems in cities
- Building social resilience and sustainable territorial management through (i) vulnerability analysis and social risk perception, (ii) generation and strengthening of networks and organizations, and (iii) development of communication strategies.

The Project design to implementing the strategy includes the following components and outcomes:

Figure 1. Components and outcomes of the Project

	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4
Component name	<b>Territorial Planning and Risk Management</b>	<b>Priority measures to increase resilience in flood-prone cities</b>	<b>Priority measures for the adaptive conservation of the vulnerable coastal ecosystems of the Uruguay River</b>	<b>Priority measures to increase resilience and reduce social vulnerability</b>
Expect results of the component	<p><b>Outcome 1.</b> National, subnational and local governments have been strengthened by means of the development of instruments, the exchange of experiences and the inclusion of climate change in their planning and management instruments.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2.</b> Se han fortalecido las estrategias subnacionales y locales de gestión de riesgos y se han consolidado de manera coordinada los sistemas comunitarios de alerta temprana (SAT) para inundaciones.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 3.</b> The resilience of coastal cities has been increased through the implementation of structural and non-structural adaptation measures.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 4.</b> Adaptive conservation measures have been implemented in vulnerable ecosystems on both banks of the Uruguay River, including the identification and evaluation of their ecosystem services</p>	<p><b>Outcome 5.</b> Communities and social organizations increased their resilience in the framework of climate change adaptation and risk management of hydro-climatic disasters.</p>

Source: Elaborated by the consulting firm

The project’s planned implementation period is four years. It began in August 2021 and should end in August 2025. The mid-term evaluation (MTR) contained in this document refers to the period from the start of the Project until August 2023.

The planned investment amount is USD 13,999,996 financed by the Adaptation Fund.

The group of partners in the execution of the project is made up of various public institutions at national and subnational levels (See organizational chart in section 2.4 of the body of this report). On the other hand, the beneficiaries of the Project are the Governments of Uruguay and Argentina, through their respective ministries of the environment. The Project expects to generate a direct positive impact for the benefit of around 650 thousand people<sup>2</sup> in the cities of intervention that are highly vulnerable to climate impacts.

### III. Summary of the progress of the Project

Summary (narrative) of the results matrix updated by MTE-P, with comments and justification for the progress rating in each result and product, according to the table prescribed by the ToR.

<sup>2</sup> Full Proposal CAF, pp. 6

## IV. Summary table of MTE-P qualifications and achievements

Parameter	Valuation <sup>3</sup>	Description of the achievement
Project strategy	N/A	
Progress in achieving outcomes	<b>Project objective</b>  <b>MS</b>  The Program seeks to build resilience in the vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the lower Uruguay River, both in Argentinean and Uruguayan territories, by developing instruments, tools and experiences for climate change adaptation planning and implementation as well as climate risk management.	<p>Overall, a delay has been identified in the Project execution schedule with regard to risk reduction in the aspects it covers. However, to date, progress has been made in the construction of a park next to La Esmeralda stream, with the purpose of redefining a vacant flood zone in Fray Bentos, Uruguay. This park directly benefits approximately 7,000 people who live in the Las Canteras neighborhood, and indirectly the entire Fray Bentos community, which comprises around 25,000 people, by providing a recreational space and a buffer area against heavy rains.</p> <p>In addition, with regard to the training, capacity-building workshops, exchange experiences and courses carried out up to the mid-term, around 2,300 people have benefited. Therefore, it is observed that the Project objective is progressing in a Moderately Satisfactory manner, and it is expected that the final goal will be achieved in the remaining execution time.</p>
	<b>Outcome 1</b>  <b>S</b>  National, subnational and local governments have been strengthened by means of developing instruments, exchanging experiences and including climate change in their planning and management instruments	<p>Consultancies were carried out to update the land use and planning instruments in the cities involved in the Project, both in Argentina and Uruguay. By the mid-term of the Project, 67% progress has been made in covering the project area with instruments tailored to address climate change. Although the Full Proposal does not establish a specific mid-term goal, the final goal of the Project indicates that 100% of the area must be covered by these instruments. In this sense, significant progress has been observed since the beginning of the Project, with progress on Outcome 1 being rated as Satisfactory (S).</p>
	<b>Outcome 2</b>  <b>MS</b>  Sub-national and local risk management strategies have been strengthened and community-based, early warning systems (EWS) for floods, have been consolidated in a coordinated manner.	<p>Three meetings were held, bringing together 277 people from the target institutions, and although the Full Proposal does not foresee a mid-term goal, it is estimated that it has been achieved given the number of people involved.</p> <p>Regarding the early warning system, no progress has been made in the implementation of this system until the mid-term. It was mentioned that the consultancy “Technical support for strengthening and consolidating the Early Warning System for Floods in the Uruguay River” was in the process of being contracted for Uruguay, so it is expected that the final goal of the Project can be achieved during the remaining execution period.</p> <p>In addition, in Uruguay, the departmental emergency protocols have been updated in Salto, Paysandú, Río Negro and Artigas,</p>

<sup>3</sup> The Achievement Assessment Table has the following scale: HS=Highly Satisfactory; S=Satisfactory; MS=Moderately Satisfactory; MU=Moderately Unsatisfactory; and U=Unsatisfactory.

In the case of Sustainability risks: L=Likely; ML=Moderately Likely; MU=Moderately Unlikely; and U=Unlikely.

		which is a significant advance in the number of plans reviewed and implemented until the mid-term.
	<p><b>Outcome 3</b></p> <p><b>MS</b></p> <p>The resilience of coastal cities has been increased through the implementation of structural and non-structural adaptation measures.</p>	<p>The mid-term goal of re-signified surface area was not met in Paysandú, Salto, and Bella Unión, in Uruguay, or in Colón, in Argentina, with a total of 0 m<sup>2</sup> of re-signified surface area in these areas. The only progress recorded was 13,800 m<sup>2</sup> in Fray Bentos, Uruguay. There are also 2 protection works carried out up to the mid-term period of the Project.</p> <p>In addition, regarding the progress of the financial mechanism, the revolving fund was designed for the adaptation of housing in areas of medium risk of flooding, according to the Risk Map, a pilot case in Paysandú. A workshop was also held to include citizen participation in the design of this instrument, but its implementation is still pending.</p> <p>Overall, it can be seen that the average progress of Outcome 3 is Moderately Satisfactory (MS).</p>
	<p><b>Outcome 4</b></p> <p><b>U</b></p> <p>Adaptive conservation measures have been implemented in vulnerable ecosystems on both banks of the Uruguay River, including the identification and evaluation of their ecosystem services.</p>	<p>The Full Proposal does not set a mid-term target for this indicator, but it is estimated that it has not been achieved since there is no progress in hectares covered by conservation measures until the mid-term:</p> <p>In Uruguay, materials necessary for the implementation of control actions, such as capsules and spears, were imported. In addition, preparatory activities for conservation measures were carried out, including the PNEFIRU Tourism Strategy and its action plan, the strategy for the control of exotic plant species, and the guidelines for light infrastructure in protected areas.</p> <p>In Argentina, the consultancy "Agent-based mapping of exotic invasion" in El Palmar National Park is in the process of being contracted.</p>
	<p><b>Outcome 5</b></p> <p><b>S</b></p> <p>Communities and social organizations increased their resilience in the framework of climate change adaptation and risk management of hydro-climatic disasters.</p>	<p>The progress of a designed methodology is acknowledged, being half of what was expected for the end of the Project. The identification of local actors and initiatives was carried out for the implementation of the 'methodology for identification and estimation of social perception of risk' that was used in the case of Fray Bentos as a pilot. In addition, communication campaigns were carried out aimed at local communities in order to raise awareness about the effects of climate change, the importance of adaptation and EWS at the community level, local, national and regional social networks were strengthened on issues such as awareness and sensitivity regarding the role played by coastal systems and vulnerable ecosystems in adaptation to climate change. Overall, it is seen that the average progress of Outcome 5 is Satisfactory (S).</p>
<b>Project Execution and Adaptive Management</b>	<b>MS</b>	<p>The project has been executed in a moderately satisfactory manner. There are delays in the development of some activities, especially those related to the implementation of protection infrastructure and areas to be redefined.</p>

Sustainability	S	Likewise, difficulties have been perceived in governance due to the complexity involved in the interaction of multiple entities in both Argentina and Uruguay, which has affected the fluidity of coordination.
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Source: Elaborated by the consulting firm

## V. Summary of conclusions

### *Project design and formulation*

- The Project is considered relevant because it highlights the binational problem of flooding due to the effects of climate change on the Uruguay River at a regional level
- The project objectives are aligned with local needs, such as adaptation to climate change. For example, it seeks to develop sustainable and resilient urban infrastructure in communities.

### *Progress towards results*

- Considerable progress has been made in the Project in the priority measures to increase resilience and reduce social vulnerability through communication campaigns and social and labor training.
- The other components are projected to advance towards the results as soon as the preparation and consultancy phases, as well as the construction of the planned works, are completed.

### *Project Execution and Adaptive Management*

- Although the Project has faced difficulties in governance due to the complexity of coordination, the monitoring and support provided by CAF to the executing entities and the collaboration of key actors in its development such as SINAIE, DINAVI, DINAGUA and the National Parks Administration of Argentina are recognized.
- The Project is progressing in a moderately satisfactory manner in results 2 and 3, satisfactorily in results 1 and 5, and unsatisfactorily in result 4.
- Emphasis is placed on the importance of proper management of deadlines, which is crucial for meeting goals, especially in contexts of change of government, as experienced in Argentina.

### *Sustainability of the Project's actions*

- Risks that threaten the sustainability of the Project are identified, such as the need for involvement of national, regional and local governments to ensure maintenance and investment in the activities promoted by the Project.
- Awareness-raising actions regarding the risks associated with installation in these areas of potential impact are essential.
- Economic instability, particularly in Argentina, is a factor that can delay activities, as well as hinder communication between institutions and actors involved.

- The importance of correctly managing the structures to be developed by the Project in the face of risks associated with flooding and coastal erosion is highlighted, since they can affect thousands of people and threaten protected areas.

## VI. Summary table of recommendations

**Table 1. Summary of proposed recommendations for the MTE-P**

Rec #	Recommendations	Responsible entities <sup>4</sup>
<b>A. On the implementation strategy</b>		
A1	Review and strengthen the project design phase, ensuring that all key stakeholders are thoroughly identified from the start. It is crucial that the participation of these stakeholders is planned in a comprehensive and coherent manner, avoiding fragmentations that may weaken the process. These adjustments in the design phase will contribute to greater impact and sustainability of the Project, by ensuring that the needs and perspectives of all those involved are considered from the beginning.	CAF
A2	Adjust the Project results framework to improve the specificity and usefulness of indicators and targets. Specifically, it would be beneficial to disaggregate results, indicators and targets by country (Argentina and Uruguay) to more accurately reflect the individual progress and specific challenges of each nation.	CAF
A3	Reformulate the indicators to meet SMART criteria (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound), which will facilitate more rigorous monitoring and a clearer assessment of expected results.	CAF
A4	Establish more consistent intermediate goals for all outcomes, not just some, which would allow for continuous monitoring and adjustments to Project implementation as needed.	CAF
<b>B. On progress towards results</b>		
B1	Establish stronger coordination mechanisms between local and national governments in Uruguay, especially in the components of the project that are of a local nature. In addition, it is also useful to develop a flexible framework that allows the adjustment of project actions to local specificities, while maintaining coherence with national objectives, which could improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.	CAF
B2	Implement community education and awareness programs in the intervention areas, focused on the relationship between the floods of the Río Negro and climate change, to facilitate understanding of the need for adaptation measures.	CAF
B3	Conduct a detailed analysis of the project schedule, with the aim of identifying and prioritizing critical activities that can be completed within the remaining time frame. Considering an extension of the project or a readjustment of the goals could be necessary to ensure the fulfillment of the objectives.	CAF
B4	Improve the planning of financial resources and ensure that funds are aligned with the real needs of the project. Establishing more agile communication with the Adaptation Fund, as well as thoroughly understanding its regulations beforehand, could avoid future delays in approving changes and ensure smoother project execution.	CAF

<sup>4</sup> Although CAF is the implementing entity, some of these recommendations can be achieved with the support of the territorial entities

B5	Strengthen internal and external project communication, with regular reports and follow-up meetings, could help keep all stakeholders informed and aligned with project objectives.	CAF
<b>C. On project implementation and adaptive management</b>		
C1	Formalize an adaptive management approach that includes the creation of a rapid response protocol that allows for the agile reallocation of funds and resources when delays or changes in the priorities of the different activities are identified, as well as to carry out periodic evaluations that anticipate possible contingencies, facilitating preventive planning.	CAF
C2	Establish a more solid collaboration framework between the executing entities, including the standardization of certain procedures where possible, and the creation of an inter-institutional coordination committee that oversees the necessary adaptations in real time. This can mitigate operational challenges and ensure that changes in regulations and procedures do not negatively affect execution.	CAF
C3	Expand the mechanisms for convening to ensure that a broader spectrum of relevant actors, including those who are not part of the Specific Advisory Commission (CAE) or are not recognized as formal referents, have the opportunity to participate in the Project activities. This could be achieved by using more inclusive communication tools and organizing open forums in communities to identify and engage important local stakeholders who may have been overlooked.	CAF
<b>D. On the sustainability of the project's actions</b>		
D1	Strengthen the development of education and training programs focused on community members to manage and maintain the infrastructures and processes introduced by the project, promoting resilience and autonomy with the aim of actively involving local communities in all phases of the project, from design to implementation and monitoring.	CAF
D2	Strengthen partnerships with local governments, NGOs, the private sector, and other relevant institutions, creating collaborative networks that can support the sustainability of the project once external funding ends. These partnerships should include clear agreements on long-term accountability and financing, ensuring that the benefits of the project are maintained and expanded in the future.	CAF
D3	Establish specific sustainability indicators and conduct periodic evaluations to measure progress and make necessary adjustments in real time. Including local stakeholders in this process can increase the accuracy and relevance of assessments to identify and quickly address any emerging risks and ensure that interventions are producing the expected results.	CAF

Source: Elaborated by the consulting firm

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose of MTE-P and objectives

The purpose of the Project Mid-term Assessment (MTE-P), according to the Terms of Reference (ToR), is “Assess progress towards the **achievement of the project’s objectives and outcomes**, based on the Full Proposal approved by the Adaptation Fund, as well as **assessing the first indicators** of the project, to identify the modifications needed to steer the project towards achieving all originally planned results. In addition, **review the project implementation strategy and its risks** to project sustainability.

In this regard, to achieve these objectives, the evaluation team has reviewed the project strategy, progress towards results, project implementation, the risks to the sustainability of their actions and the achievement of the results projected in the Project Document (Full Proposal) and the complementary instruments, as well as means of verification, Project Performance Report (PPR) and all follow-up documentation for implementation.

A fundamental purpose of the MTE-P is to identify changes that have been incorporated as adaptive management needs to achieve desired outcomes, and the main barriers that have prevented the development of these outcomes.

The MTE-P evaluates the overall performance of the Project based on the benchmarks established at inception. Also reviews the implementation strategy and risks as change drivers, which play a key role in supporting accountability.

## 1.2. Approach, methodology, scope and limitations of MTE-P

The methodological approach of MTE-P is focused on meeting the purposes and guidelines set out in the terms of reference of the order, thus facilitating an effective follow-up of the development of the service. To this end, clear milestones have been established for the implementation of activities at each stage of the process. The evaluation has therefore been conducted in four main blocks, as described in the ToR and expanded on in this report and the previously approved initial report.

- Project design and results framework, in terms of relevance to the development context in the areas of intervention.
- Progress towards results through documented and reported activities during implementation to date of evaluation in terms of process effectiveness.
- Project implementation assessment and adaptive management to date, in terms of demonstrated efficiency, by analyzing its execution track, adaptive management and alignment with the guidelines and process rules originally established in the project.
- Assessment of the future sustainability of the Project’s actions in the medium and long term, in political and institutional, financial, socio-economic, geo-physical and environmental terms.

The work methodology was developed in three stages. The first stage focused on broadening the consulting team's knowledge of the details and scope of the Project; the second stage included semi-structured interviews to interact with the main stakeholders and explore their views on how the project has developed from its design to its sustainability. In the third stage, an independent summary of the consulting team's implementation of the Project was formulated and presented, based on evaluative



criteria, in order to generate a critical discussion of the conclusions and recommendations for the continuation of the Project.

In the process, the following documents obtained by the Project Unit were examined:

- a) Full Project Proposal document approved by the AF, project document (Full Proposal) and annexes;
- b) Execution agreements between CAF, UNDP, CND and the designated national authorities of Uruguay and Argentina;
- c) Project start-up workshop and annexes;
- d) Minutes of the Binational Committee, National Project Committee and National Technical Committee;
- e) Means of verification;
- f) Quarterly reports, including annual Project Performance Reports (PPR).

In addition, and to review the findings, semi-structured interviews were conducted, both in-person and online, with the main actors and stakeholders of the Project in Uruguay and Argentina. These interviews were carried out using specific guide questionnaires by type of actor and included visits to the sites of implementation of works or activities in Uruguay, including Fray Bentos and San Javier; and in Argentina, Colón and Concordia.

As reported at the closing meeting of the evaluation mission with CAF and UNDP (July 25, 2024), the evaluation team has carried out a series of interviews and, as of the delivery of this report, a total of 40 people have been interviewed. Among those interviewed are members of the executing entities, the regional project team, the operational teams in Argentina and Uruguay, as well as the implementation team, project partners and representatives of civil society. 25 virtual interviews and 15 in-person interviews were conducted, with 48% participation of women in the total. (See details in Annex H of this document).

The main limitations in the execution of the MTE-P were caused by the delay in responding to requests for virtual interviews with various actors. This forced the extension of the time initially planned for carrying out these interviews, making it difficult to collect responses from all the actors required for the preparation of this report. Additionally, there were delays in the dates initially proposed for the mission due to reasons related to the availability of the actors involved in the visits.

### **1.3. Structure of the MTE-P report**

The structure of this report is in accordance with the indications set out in the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the contract, which are based on the respective AF and CAF guidelines for project evaluations. The report includes the basic information of the Project, an executive summary, this introduction, and subsequently the analysis of the following aspects:

- Background, development context and brief description of the project
- Problems and barriers the project is trying to solve
- Analysis of the strategy and design of the Project in terms of its objective, components and indicators, and expected outcomes

- Project implementation and governance arrangements
- Findings of the evaluation of actions
- Analysis from the gender perspective and women’s involvement as actors, stakeholders and beneficiaries
- Conclusions and recommendations; and
- Annexes prescribed in the guides and ToR of the MTE-P

## **2. Project description and regional and local context**

### **2.1. Context of the development of the Project**

Climate change has, over time, had increasingly severe effects in various parts of the world. One of the most notable impacts is the increase in the frequency and intensity of flood events associated with river overflows, causing serious damage to infrastructure, generating significant economic losses and significantly affecting nearby populations. This is precisely the case of the lower Uruguay River, a river shared by Argentina and Uruguay, where cities and protected coastal areas of great ecological and socio-economic importance are located.

In view of this situation, the urgent need to manage and guide an adaptation process that incorporates strategies designed to be implemented at both regional and local levels has been identified. These strategies must be articulated through policies and plans that take into account the perspective of climate change, thus ensuring that riparian communities and ecosystems can effectively address present and future challenges.

The objective is to develop a comprehensive approach that not only addresses mitigation of immediate impacts, but also promotes long-term resilience of coastal cities and ecosystems. This involves active collaboration between various actors, including governments, local communities, non-governmental organizations and international cooperation.

Through the implementation of resilient infrastructure, restoration of natural ecosystems, sustainable urban planning and community education, it seeks to strengthen the region’s capacity to adapt.

### **2.2. Problems the Project aims to solve, threats and barriers**

In summary, the problems that the Project aims to solve and the respective strategies for achieving them are:

- Strengthen the integrated planning and risk management tools for climate change in the coastal areas of the Uruguay River in both countries.
- Reduce the exposure and vulnerability of coastal cities, where 15-20% of the population is in flood prone areas.
- Improving the adaptation of coastal ecosystems vulnerable to climate change and human activities affecting them
- Increase resilience and reduce vulnerability of the population to climate impacts, especially floods.

To this end, a collaboration has been established between Uruguay and Argentina, and the selection of coastal cities where there is the largest number of inhabitants that are representative for this problem (approximately 600,000 inhabitants); are affected by climate risks in the region such as recurrent floods, and face challenges related to the socially and economically vulnerable population that need to strengthen their adaptive capacities. The selected cities were Salto, Paysandú, Bella Unión and Fray Bentos in Uruguay; and Colón, Concordia and Concepción del Uruguay in Argentina.

## 2.3. Project description and strategy: objective, effects and expected results

The strategy of the Project, according to the respective Full Proposal, is based on the following elements and actions in the cities of intervention:

- a. Incorporate climate risks into urban spatial planning policies through an integrated strategy (territorial, infrastructure and public services, housing and protected areas, among others), integrating medium- and long-term climate policies. This includes (i) reviewing land use plans to include adaptation to climate change and (ii) designing the methodology for assessing impacts, damage and losses. These actions will help prioritize adaptation actions on both sides of the lower Uruguay River.
- b. Strengthen coordination, communication and forecasting for an early warning system for floods.
- c. Recover flood-prone areas in the form of 'linear parks' with the aim of avoiding informal settlement of vulnerable groups in these areas, also resignify these spaces as social integration zones.
- d. Implement adaptive conservation measures in vulnerable ecosystems: (i) mapping of ecosystem services, (ii) restoration of significant ecosystems and natural river dynamics through coastal recovery, (iii) protection of environmental services, and (iv) Measures to reduce health problems in cities
- e. Building social resilience and sustainable territorial management through (i) vulnerability analysis and social risk perception, (ii) generation and strengthening of networks and organizations, and (iii) development of communication strategies.

To implement the strategic actions, the project has been structured as follows:

### **Component 1: Territorial Planning and Risk Management**

Component 1 focuses on strengthening the tools for integrated planning and risk management in the face of climate change. Two results will be generated by reviewing and updating territorial planning, urban, rural, among others, implementing a methodology for assessing climate-related impacts, damage and losses and strengthening existing early warning and response systems.

Outcome 1      National, subnational and local governments have been strengthened by means of developing instruments, exchanging experiences and including climate change in their planning and management instruments

Outcome 2      Sub-national and local risk management strategies have been strengthened and community-based, early warning systems (EWS) for floods, have been consolidated in a coordinated manner.

### **Component 2: Priority measures to increase resilience in flood-prone cities**

Component 2 focuses on implementing priority actions to increase resilience in flood-prone cities

Outcome 3      The resilience of coastal cities has been increased through the implementation of structural and non-structural adaptation measures.

### **Component 3: Priority measures for the adaptive conservation of the vulnerable coastal ecosystems of the Uruguay River**

Component 3 focuses on implementing priority measures for adaptive conservation of the ecosystems of the vulnerable coastal zone of the Uruguay River.

Outcome 4      Adaptive conservation measures have been implemented in vulnerable ecosystems on both banks of the Uruguay River, including the identification and evaluation of their ecosystem services.

### **Component 4: Priority measures to increase resilience and reduce social vulnerability**

Component 4 seeks to implement priority actions to increase resilience and reduce social vulnerability. Community-based adaptive measures will be designed and implemented that can be implemented on both banks of the Uruguay River and that can generate resilience in social practices.

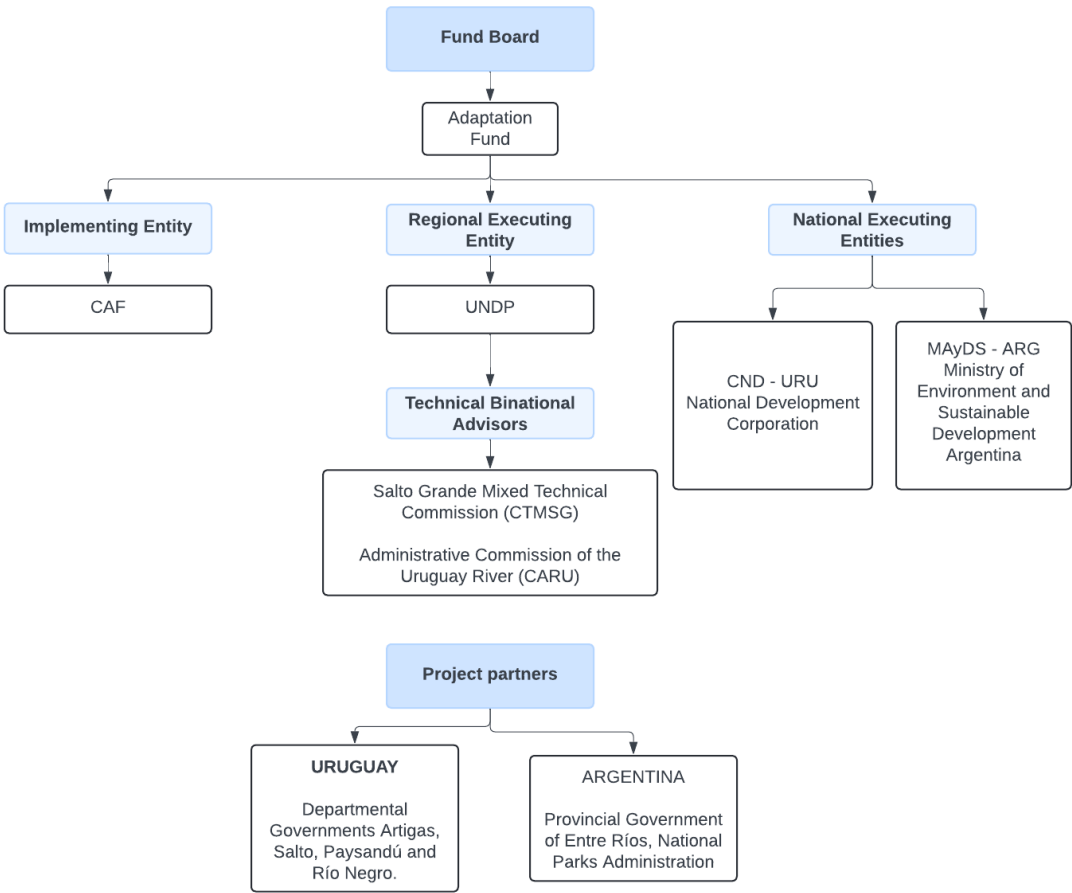
Outcome 5      Communities and social organizations increased their resilience in the framework of climate change adaptation and risk management of hydro-climatic disasters.

## 2.4. Project governance and implementation arrangements

The Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) is the entity responsible for the implementation of the Project under the name of the Adaptation Fund (AF), and for this act as a guarantor to the AF by designating an official of its Climate Action and Positive Biodiversity Directorate as focal point to supervise the Project.

The beneficiaries of the Project are the Argentina and Uruguay National Governments. The executing agency of regional activities is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), responsible for supporting the implementation of regional coordination activities, collecting information and monitoring all activities in both Argentina and Uruguay, as it is responsible for preparing the follow-up reports for the entire project. The entities entrusted with the implementation of activities at the national level by Uruguay are the National Development Corporation (CND) and Ministry of Environment of Uruguay, and on the part of Argentina is the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAYDS)<sup>5</sup>.

Figure 2. Project Organizational Chart



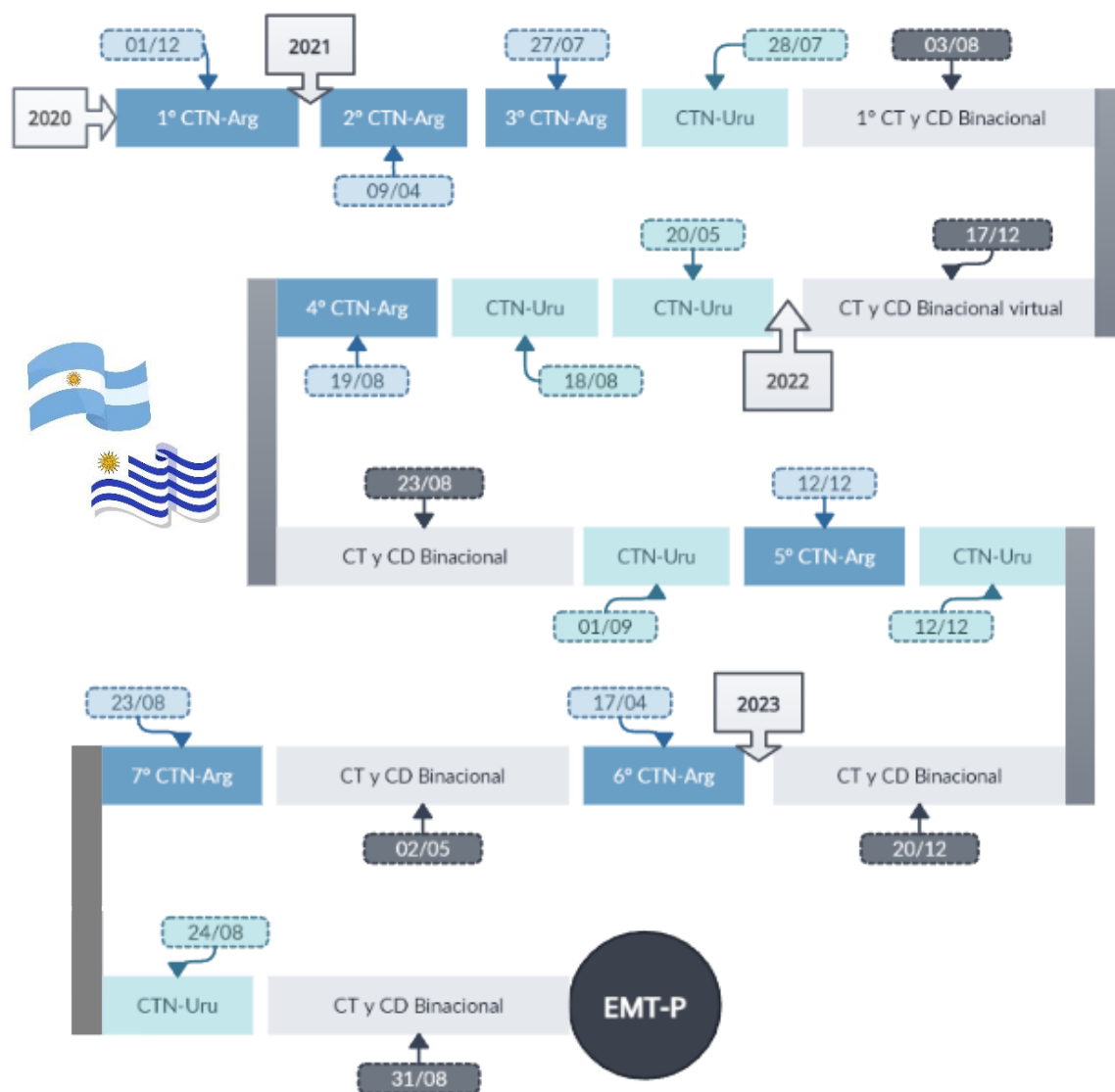
Source: Elaborated by the consulting firm

<sup>5</sup> Undersecretariat of Environment of the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports – Ministry of Interior.

## 2.5. Project schedule and milestones

During the development of the Project, meetings were held between the Binational Technical Committee (TC) and the Binational Steering Committee (SC), in which issues relevant to both Argentina and Uruguay were discussed and resolved. In addition, meetings of the National Technical Committees (NTC) of each country were held. Below is a timeline detailing the dates of these meetings throughout the Project to the mid-term.

Figure 3. Project milestones



Source: Elaborated by the consulting firm

The Project Schedule with expected dates was presented in the Full Proposal. The following table shows the adjusted dates up to the time of writing of this report.

Table 2. Project schedule

Milestones	Expected dates	Adjusted dates
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<b>Beginning of Program Implementation</b>	August 2019	August 2021 <sup>6</sup>
<b>Mid-term review</b>	February 2022	August 2023
<b>Program closure</b>	July 2023	August 2025
<b>Final evaluation</b>	May 2023	May 2025

Source: Elaborated by the consulting firm

## 2.6. Main actors and stakeholders

The project actions in Uruguay are implemented by the Project Unit of CND, in coordination with the Ministry of Environment. The project is being implemented in Uruguay together with the Intendancies of Artigas, Salto, Paysandú and Río Negro.

In Argentina, the project collaborates with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS<sup>7</sup>), which works closely with the municipalities of Colón, Concordia and Gualeguaychú, the Entre Ríos Province and the National Parks Administration.

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<sup>6</sup> In Uruguay, the start-up workshop began on August 4, 2021 and, in Argentina, it started in December 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Undersecretariat of Environment of the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports – Ministry of Interior



## 3. Results

In general, the progress of results so far is rated as Moderately Satisfactory. There have been some delays in both project initiation due to the global pandemic (COVID-19) and project operations, especially with regard to financial planning.

Regarding the intervention of the Project in the selected areas of the department of Río Negro, Uruguay and province of Entre Ríos, Argentina, it is worth mentioning that in the former, works such as La Esmeralda Park were completed, unlike Argentina, which has not yet been completed. The planned structural measures have been implemented and are awaiting their execution. Regarding joint advances, training related to gender issues and a human rights approach has been carried out, as well as training for the previously relocated population<sup>8</sup> and on the development of labor reconversion projects.

### 3.1. Project strategy

#### 3.1.1. Project design

The project's ultimate objective is to develop resilience in cities and vulnerable coastal ecosystems in the lower reaches of the Uruguay River. In this sense, the expected results are grouped into 4 components: i) territorial planning and risk management, ii) priority measures to increase resilience in flood-prone cities, iii) priority measures for the adaptive conservation of vulnerable coastal ecosystems, and iv) priority measures to increase resilience and reduce social vulnerability.

Regarding the Project's intervention sites, in the case of Uruguay, it focuses on the towns of Bella Unión, Salto, Paysandú, San Javier, Nuevo Berlín and Fray Bentos, including interventions in the Protected Natural Areas of Esteros de Farrapos and Islands of the Uruguay River and Rincón de Franquía; while, in Argentina, the territorial focus was centered on the towns of the Entre Ríos province on the coast of the Uruguay River, including infrastructure works in Colón, Concepción del Uruguay, Concordia and El Palmar National Park.

The Project began its design phase in 2018; and the agreement between CAF and UNDP for its implementation was reached in 2019. The Project's start-up workshop was held in August 2021, where the Project was presented with its products and activities, the management schemes and the entities involved, as well as the main activities for the first year. This led to a complex scenario due to the time lags in starting activities on the territory given the time elapsed from the design stage to the actual start of activities, giving way to the subsequent review of some of the actions planned in the initial design stage.

The design of the Project in Uruguay has focused on the transformation of flood zones into public green spaces, with the aim of redefining these lands and preventing future occupations. These adaptation measures, implemented in Bella Unión, Salto, Paysandú and Fray Bentos, have arisen from local needs.

As for Argentina, the design of the Project contemplates a greater number of infrastructures works and resilience measures against climate change compared to Uruguay. The areas of intervention include Concordia and the El Palmar National Park (PNEP), with a particular emphasis on coastal

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<sup>8</sup> It is important to clarify that, although relocation was not a direct objective of the project, it was a requirement established by the Adaptation Fund (AF) to allow the resignification of the areas involved.

protection and the rehabilitation of the access bridge to the dock. In the interviews conducted, some actors expressed that they consider the project to be well structured and that the implementation of the planned works could be a key enabler for future adaptation actions.

During the design and structuring process of the Project, various perspectives have been considered, in particular those of those who would be directly affected by its decisions, as well as those who can provide valuable information and resources. Thus, the Project has been developed in a participatory manner, with a focus on prevention and the integration of civil society, including a gender and generational perspective. Likewise, the actors and interest groups identified during the design phase have been involved in the implementation process and, to date, continue to actively participate in the activities developed in the territory through different spaces for participation and governance.

However, in the interviews conducted, Uruguay pointed out that some key actors were not identified in the design phase and that the participation of those involved was sometimes fragmented in the activities carried out in the Esteros de Farrapos National e Islas del Río Uruguay Park. On Argentina's part, it was mentioned that strategies for the rural sector were not considered. It would be advisable to review and adjust this part of the process, in order to ensure greater inclusion and coherence in the participation of all relevant actors, thus strengthening the impact and sustainability of the Project.

### **3.1.2. Results Framework Analysis**

The Project's results framework assesses the structure of components and results, based on the indicators specific to each result and the general objective. In general, the framework focuses on obtaining resilient people as a result of the implementation of risk reduction measures and planning on adaptation to climate change, seeking to share lessons learned and good practices regarding the intervention process in areas vulnerable to climate risks in the two countries involved.

Both the objective and the statement of Result 4 are written specifically for the Project's intervention area, explicitly mentioning the Uruguay River. In contrast, the other results are written in a more general way, without making direct reference to a specific place, which allows them to be applied to other projects with similar objectives. The MTE-P, therefore, focuses on the progress and achievements referred to the framework, baselines, goals and indicators explicit in the Full Proposal.

In this context, it is observed that the goals are written in a general way for both countries, without specific distinction between Argentina and Uruguay. This is consistent with the wording of the results, which are also general. However, since this is a binational project, it would have been valuable to be able to analyze the results, indicators and goals in a disaggregated manner by country, in order to more accurately assess the individual progress of each nation. In addition, the indicators have been presented in a global manner, showing that some of them lack SMART qualities, such as temporal limitation and specificity, which in turn limits the understanding of the expected result.

In summary, the results framework is clear and functional in terms of the objectives set for each component of the Project. Although only two of the general results indicators have set medium-term goals, all the results have defined goals to be achieved by the end of the Project. In addition, each result includes specific activities, which also have final goals, so the review was carried out considering these activities.

## 3.2. Progress towards results

The Project is progressing in a moderately satisfactory manner, despite having tight deadlines. It is expected that most of the goals set for the end of the Project will be met, related to the implementation of the early flood warning system in the target population, the redefinition of the remaining spaces and the application of adaptive conservation measures in vulnerable ecosystems.

During the mission in the Department of Río Negro, progress was observed in infrastructure, including the redefinition of the well-known La Esmeralda neighborhood in Fray Bentos, transforming a vacant flood zone into a park, and the repair of the Galpón de Piedra in the Esteros de Farrapos National Park (PNEFIRU). These works represent important progress and provide a valuable space for the community; however, it was observed that part of the infrastructure within the park is having difficulties in its maintenance and therefore may jeopardize the sustainability of the park space over time. It would be beneficial to consider the implementation of sustainability measures to improve and maintain these facilities.

Regarding the consultancy ‘Management plan of PNEFIRU and the project of extension of the protected area’ started in 2022, the active participation of local actors was highlighted in the interviews, although the consultancies could initially be perceived as theoretical due to their duration, it is expected that during the remaining execution the results obtained can be applied both in the PNEFIRU and in other places of the project.

During the mission in the Province of Entre Ríos, more specifically, in Colón and Concordia, it was evident that the consultancy on the mapping of invasion of exotic plants in the El Palmar National Park is going well, but it is being carried out in a period after the mid-term evaluation. On the other hand, regarding the works, the delay in the procedures was mentioned as a limitation for their development along with the financing, for which reason there are still no complete structural measures, their prompt execution is expected for the closure of the Project.

In the area of the training and workshops given, the course 'climate adaptation with land policies in vulnerable coastal territories of the Uruguay River' held in Colón stands out, where it contributed to the strengthening of the governments regarding the incorporation of the ACC perspective in the planning and territorial management instruments. The training provided to educators at INAU Youth Centers in Uruguay on the role played by coastal systems and vulnerable ecosystems in adaptation to climate change is also considered important.

Overall, considering the progress of the Components and Results, the overall progress rating of the Project is established as Moderately Satisfactory (MS). Although there have been delays due to force majeure reasons and the possibility of extending the duration of the Project could be considered, these factors could justify a better outlook in the final evaluation.

### 3.2.1. Analysis of progress towards results

Below is a summary of progress towards the results, detailed in Annex A to this report, indicating the progress to the MTE-P of each outcome, and the respective rating, with 'traffic light' colors

Project Objective:

MS

**Build resilience in the vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the lower Uruguay River, both in Argentinean and Uruguayan territories, by developing instruments, tools and experiences for climate change adaptation planning and implementation as well as climate risk management.**

Target indicator:

**MS**

*Number of people (men and women) protected by improved risk reduction measures, and climate change adaptation planning and implementation in the lower Uruguay River, both in Argentinean and Uruguayan territories.*

In general terms, a delay has been identified in the implementation schedule of the Project with regard to risk reduction in all aspects covered by the Project. However, to date, progress has been made in the construction of a park next to the La Esmeralda stream, with the purpose of redefining an empty area that can be flooded in Fray Bentos, Uruguay. This park benefits directly to approximately 7,000 people who live in the neighborhood of Las Canteras, and indirectly to the entire community of Fray Bentos, which includes about 25,000 people, providing a recreational space and a buffer zone against heavy rains.

In addition, with regard to training, capacity-building workshops, exchange experiences and courses carried out up to the mid-term, around 2,300 people have benefited. Therefore, it is observed that the objective of the Project is progressing in a **Moderately Satisfactory** manner, and it is expected that the final goal will be achieved in the remaining execution time.

**Outcome 1:**

**S**

**National, subnational and local governments have been strengthened by means of developing instruments, exchanging experiences and including climate change in their planning and management instruments.**

Indicator 1.1:

**S**

*Percentage of project area with instruments adjusted to address climate change*

Consultations were carried out to update the territorial ordering and planning instruments in the cities involved in the Project, both in Argentina and Uruguay. Until the midterm of the Project, progress of 67% has been achieved in coverage of the project area with instruments adjusted to address climate change. Although the Full Proposal does not establish a specific goal for the medium term, the final goal of the Project indicates that 100% of the area must be covered by these instruments.

In this sense, significant progress has been observed since the beginning of the Project, qualifying the progress of Outcome 1 as **Satisfactory (S)**.

**Outcome 2:**

**MS**

**Sub-national and local risk management strategies have been strengthened and community-based, early warning systems (EWS) for floods, have been consolidated in a coordinated manner.**

Indicator 2.1:



*Number of staff of targeted institutions that have shared strategies and best practices involving adaptation, climate risk management, territorial planning, territorial policy, housing infrastructure adaptation, recovery of vacant lands.*

Three meetings were held where 277 people from the objective institutions met and although the Full Proposal does not foresee a mid-term goal, it is estimated that it has been achieved given the number of people involved. The different meetings where strategies and best practices were shared were:

- First binational meeting of the project in the town of Concordia, Entre Ríos, Argentina (March 7-9, 2022), had 80 participants in total (49 in person and 31 virtual; 60% women).
- Binational meeting Uruguay River: Fray Bentos, Uruguay (September 12-14, 2022), had 188 participants
- Virtual meeting of the binational group for the control of EEIL (December 2022), had 17 participants

Indicator 2.2:



*Percentage of target population covered by the enhanced Flood Early Warning System*

The Full Proposal does not foresee a mid-term goal for this indicator, but it is estimated that it has not been achieved since there has been no progress in the implementation of this system until the mid-term. It was mentioned that the Consultancy "Technical support for the strengthening and consolidation of the Early Warning System for Floods in the Uruguay River" for Uruguay was in the process of being contracted, so it is expected that the final goal of the Project can be achieved during the remaining execution period.

Indicator 2.3:



*Number of risk management plans and other management instruments reviewed and implemented*

The Full Proposal does not set mid-term goals for this outcome. However, significant progress was observed in the number of plans reviewed and implemented by mid-term, compared to almost half of the plans projected at the end of the Project. In Uruguay, the departmental emergency protocols have been updated in Salto, Paysandú, Río Negro and Artigas, with 4 plans reviewed and it is expected that at the end of the Project there will be 10 plans, considering at least one in each city.

Other advances are identified that contribute to the expected result within the component, such as simulation exercises and drills, training linked to social vulnerability as a basis for assessing risk and departmental emergency protocols for disasters. However, considering that the indicator measures the strategies consolidated with the SAT, the rating is limited to the results of the indicators of the three activities.

Overall, it can be seen that the average progress of Outcome 2 is **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**.

**Outcome 3:**

**MS**

**The resilience of coastal cities has been increased through the implementation of structural and non-structural adaptation measures.**

Indicator 3.1:

**MS**

*M<sup>2</sup> of surface resignified vulnerable vacant lands and number of protections works carried out.*

Although the established mid-term goal was not reached, progress was observed in the area re-signified, and it is expected that the goal will be reached during the remainder of the execution. Regarding the quarterly progress reports presented, the mid-term goal of re-signified area was not met in Paysandú, Salto, and Bella Unión, in Uruguay, or in Colón, in Argentina, with a total of 0 m<sup>2</sup> of re-signified area in these areas. The only progress recorded was 13,800 m<sup>2</sup> in Fray Bentos, Uruguay. There are also 2 protection works carried out up to the mid-term period of the Project.

Indicator 3.2:

**S**

*Number of financial mechanisms ready for scaling-up.*

The Full Proposal does not set mid-term goals for this outcome. The progress of a financial mechanism is acknowledged, being 50% of what is expected for the end of the Project. Regarding the progress of the financial mechanism, the revolving fund was designed for the adaptation of housing in areas of medium risk of flooding, according to the Risk Map, a pilot case in Paysandú. A workshop was also held to include citizen participation in the design of this instrument, but its implementation is still pending.

Overall, it can be seen that the average progress of Outcome 3 is **Moderately Satisfactory (MS)**

**Outcome 4:**

**U**

**Adaptive conservation measures have been implemented in vulnerable ecosystems on both banks of the Uruguay River, including the identification and evaluation of their ecosystem services.**

Indicator 4.1:

**U**

*Hectares of vulnerable ecosystems covered by adaptive conservation measures, including identification and evaluation of their ecosystem services*

The Full Proposal does not foresee a mid-term goal for this indicator, but it is estimated that it has not been reached since there is no progress in hectares covered by conservation measures until the mid-term.

Activity 11.3 ‘Restoration of vulnerable coastal ecosystems through monitoring of exotic species and planting of native species’ contributes to responding to this indicator and its progress showed that, in Uruguay, materials necessary for the implementation of control actions were imported, such as capsules and lances. In addition, preparatory activities for conservation measures were carried out, including the PNEFIRU Tourism Strategy and its action plan, the strategy for the control of exotic plant species, and the guidelines for light infrastructure in protected areas. Meanwhile, in Argentina, the consultancy “Agent-based mapping of invasion of exotic species” in El Palmar National Park is in the process of being contracted.

Therefore, it can be seen that the average progress of Outcome 4 is **Unsatisfactory (U)**.

**Outcome 5:**



**Communities and social organizations increased their resilience in the framework of climate change adaptation and risk management of hydro-climatic disasters.**

Indicator 5.1:



*Number of vulnerability and social perception methodologies designed and tested.*

The Full Proposal does not set mid-term goals for this outcome. It recognizes the progress of a designed methodology, which is half of what was expected by the end of the Project. The identification of local actors and initiatives was carried out for the implementation of the 'methodology for identifying and estimating social perception of risk' that was used in the case of Fray Bentos as a pilot.

Indicator 5.2:



*Number of people (men and women) reached by the awareness raising capacity building activities.*

To date, it has been identified that the goals established for the mid-term period and for the end of the project have been exceeded by a significant percentage. Communication campaigns were carried out targeting local communities in order to raise awareness about the effects of climate change, the importance of adaptation and EWS at the community level, local, national and regional social networks were strengthened on issues such as awareness and sensitivity regarding the role played by coastal systems and vulnerable ecosystems in adaptation to climate change.

Other advances are identified that contribute to the expected result within the component, such as job retraining workshops aimed at the relocated population. However, considering that the indicator measures how communities and social organizations have increased their resilience, the rating is limited to the results of the indicators of the two activities.

Overall, it is seen that the average progress of Outcome 5 is **Satisfactory (S)**.

### 3.2.2. Remaining obstacles to achieve the Project objective

#### *Implementation in the Department of Río Negro (Uruguay)*

One of the main obstacles to achieving the project objective in Uruguay is the complexity of governance. This complexity can make coordination between local and national governments difficult, especially in the components of the project that are local and not binational in nature. Beyond the fact that the beneficiary of the project is considered the Ministry of Environment, the actions are carried out in areas that have cultural specificities and diverse realities in the priorities considered by their local governments. In some cases, it becomes more challenging to orient national priorities with local ones. Likewise, it should be noted that the economic realities of the departmental governments are different and that this can also pose a challenge when it comes to providing a framework for sustainability for the project.

The great challenge of this project is to continue working at the community level so that the communities themselves can also guarantee the sustainability of the actions carried out. For example, on the one hand, by appropriating the re-signified spaces and on the other hand, by demanding local actions that contribute to promoting adaptation to climate change, either with training actions and campaigns for the population, or with activities of responsibility for the re-signified areas, such as commitment to maintaining the green areas generated and extending support and surveillance mechanisms to prevent risky flooding situations for the population in a situation of social vulnerability.

In the interviews carried out with organized civil society, such as youth centers, it is observed that it was a challenge for them to work with the neighbors of the area since the ideas and concepts worked on did not seem to be associated with their daily lives. The neighbors clearly perceive that the river floods their homes, but the association of this phenomenon with climate change is not so clear and how it is necessary to take adaptation measures to increase the resilience of the population, as was commented in some interviews held with representatives of civil society.

#### *Implementation in the Province of Entre Ríos (Argentina)*

The main barrier to achieving the objectives set by the project in Argentina has been time. The restrictions imposed by COVID-19 made mobility difficult during the first half of the Project, which, combined with delays in some works due to changes in their formulation or cancellations, affected the schedule. The approval of these changes by the FA also took time. In addition, changes in the management of the Project in Argentina had a significant impact, since, after the resignation of the national activities' coordinator, the position remained vacant for a considerable time, which complicated communication and the execution of the activities planned in that period.

In the interviews carried out, it was highlighted that many of the actions carried out were possible thanks to the contributions of the municipalities and the regional component, given that the resources available in Argentina were limited, and the funds were not always aligned with the real needs of the Project. It was also mentioned that the four-year period is insufficient to achieve all the proposed goals and results, which suggests a possible overestimation of the Project's capacity to meet these objectives in the stipulated time.



### 3.3. Project Execution and Adaptive Management

#### 3.3.1. Work management and planning arrangements

The construction of some planned works was delayed due to flooding events in the destined areas, these circumstances required adjustments and extensions of the Project.

It was identified that some activities planned from the Project design could not be completed and, therefore, their budget was reassigned to another activity, as was the case of activity 7.2, which, due to the delay in the expropriation procedures and some properties still occupied, the Salto Municipality requested that its funds be directed to activity 7.3. This also occurred with activity 7.5, where the Municipality of Bella Unión and the Municipality of Artigas stated that a larger number of people were relocated than originally planned, and therefore there was no longer a population at high risk of flooding that required evacuation, so it was proposed the resources were reassigned to activity 7.6. Along the same lines, activity 8.1 was noted to already been carried out with resources from the Municipality of Río Negro prior to the start of the Project, so its resources were integrated into activity 7.4.

CAF's participation in the Project is crucial since it is the body designated by the Adaptation Fund. Despite some problems and delays, CAF's monitoring and support of the executing entities has been recognized, reaffirming its importance as an implementing agency; and the need to streamline the financial intermediation processes with the AF has been expressed by the interviewed actors. One of the difficulties mentioned is related to the change that occurred in the project's point person within CAF. This at some point could have made the execution of a project already difficult to manage, due to its own governance, even more complex. Though, once the adjustment period was over, the communication between CAF and the executing entities was considered adequate.

As mentioned above, the Project was designed with the participation of three executing entities: the National Development Corporation (CND), the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS)<sup>9</sup> and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), each operating under different regulations and standards. Although UNDP's participation presented some challenges at the operational level due to differences in procedures and regulations, its technical input was significant, improving Project communication among the actors involved, as mentioned in several interviews. In addition, UNDP played a key role in collecting information on Project activities, ensuring that it was available for the AF verification purposes.

#### 3.3.2. Funding and co-funding

Disbursement management has faced some challenges, mainly due to necessary modifications in certain activities, which required a larger budget than initially planned. This has impacted the start of the works, where it is essential to have a constant cash flow. In this context, the aim is to improve efficiency in communication and access to resources. The recognition of the limitations and internal processes at CAF underlines the importance of coordinating and streamlining financial procedures. Therefore, it would be advisable for the Adaptation Fund (AF) to review the disbursement calendar to closely align it with the schedule for the execution of activities.

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<sup>9</sup> Undersecretariat of Environment of the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports – Ministry of Interior.

Likewise, the different processes and application formats between each country and entity generated delays in obtaining financing. CAF indicated that the adjustments made during the first year do not need to be reported to the AF; however, the modifications made to the indicators and results after that period must be submitted for approval by the AF.

### 3.3.3. Monitoring and evaluation systems

The following table presents a summary of the meetings held until the mid-term of the Project. These spaces have involved the participating institutions in the coordination, management and implementation of the different activities of the Project, with the objective of reporting on their progress, presenting the Annual Operating Plans and Procurement Plans for each country, reviewing the financial status, among other things.

**Table 3. Meetings held up to MTE-P**

Date	Reunion	Objective	Institutions involved
01-12-20	First meeting of the National Project Committee in Argentina	During the meeting, topics such as: - Status of the agreement between CAF and UNDP - Estimated date of the project start workshop - Construction of Argentina's procurement plan and Annual Operating Plan for 2021 were discussed.	- Entre Ríos province - National Parks Administration - MArDS <sup>10</sup> - CAF
09-04-21	Second meeting of the National Technical Committee of Argentina	National Coordination Committee and Team: - Project progress report, components and activities. - Next steps in the project strategy at regional and national level. - Working meeting and common agenda with representatives in the territory for the month of May.	- Intendents - MArDS - Ministry of Production - Entre Ríos Provincial Secretariat of Environment
27-07-21	Third meeting of the National Technical Committee of Argentina	Present the Annual Operating Plan and Procurement Plan for Argentina, year 1.	- MArDS - Entre Ríos Provincial Secretariat of Environment - National Parks Administration
28-07-21	National Technical Committee of Uruguay	Present the Annual Operating Plan and Procurement Plan for Uruguay, year 1.	- CAF - MA - UNDP - CND - Intendencias

<sup>10</sup> Undersecretariat of Environment of the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports – Ministry of Interior.

03-08-21	First meeting of the Binational Technical and Directive Committee	Approval by the Binational Steering Committee of the POA and PA for year 1 of the project, and the budget reallocation proposed by the Uruguay CT for works in the Department of Río Negro between Products 7 and 8.	- CAF - MArDS - MA - UNDP - CND - Entre Ríos Province
17-12-21	Virtual meeting of the Binational Directive Committee and the Binational Technical Committee	Presentation to the Committee of the first quarterly report of the Project prior to the formal presentation of the same to the CAF. The planned acquisitions for year 1 not incorporated in the PA for Year 1 approved by the Committee were also presented.	- MArDS - MA
20-05-22	National Technical Committee of Uruguay	Review the progress of the Project activities in Uruguay, the current status of the planning of the works in each Department and the next steps for the preparation of the POA for Year 2 (Aug-22 to Jul-23).	- CAF - MA - UNDP - CND - Intendencias
18-08-22	National Technical Committee of Uruguay	Review the annual progress of the Project activities in Uruguay and the planning for year 2.	- CAF - MA - UNDP - CND - Intendencias
19-08-22	National Technical Committee of Argentina	Review the financial status, request for the relocation of the work from Concepción del Uruguay and its incorporation into the minutes of the regional committee of August 23.	- MArDS - El Palmar National Park - Entre Ríos Provincial Secretariat of Environment - National team
23-08-22	Binational Technical Directive Committee	Present the annual progress of the project activities in the first year (August 2021-July 2022), the summary of the financial execution of the first year, the activities planned for the second year (August 2022-July 2023), the financial plan for the second year and an update of the project risks and the new risks identified, together with a request for changes in the project activities.	- CAF - MArDS - UNDP - MA - CND - Regional team - Argentine national team
01-09-22	National Technical Committee of Uruguay	Request to cancel Activity 7.2 and reallocate its budget to Activity 7.3 by the Municipality of Salto, request to cancel Activity 7.5 and reallocate its budget to Activity 7.6 by the Municipality of Artigas	- MA - UNDP - Intendencias - CND

12-12-22	Fifth National Committee of Argentina	Approve the quarterly report of the activities carried out by the consultants of the national technical team during the months of August-November 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MArDS</li> <li>- CAF</li> <li>- Entre Ríos Provincial Secretariat of Environment</li> <li>- National Parks Administration</li> <li>- National team</li> </ul>
12-12-22	National Technical Committee of Uruguay	Review the annual progress of the Project activities in Uruguay, the annual progress of the regional components of the Project in Uruguay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CAF</li> <li>- MA</li> <li>- UNDP</li> <li>- Intendencias</li> <li>- CND</li> </ul>
20-12-22	Meeting of the Binational Directive Committee and the Binational Technical Committee	The meeting focused on the presentation of the fourth quarterly report of the Project to the Committee for validation for the purposes of its formal presentation to the CAF. The progress of the activities and the financial execution were detailed globally and for each Executing Entity. The communication campaign “Your Actions Count” and the progress model of the Project Website were also presented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CAF</li> <li>- UNDP</li> <li>- MA</li> <li>- MArDS</li> <li>- CND</li> <li>- Argentine National team</li> <li>- Project regional team</li> </ul>
17-04-23	Sixth National Committee of Argentina	Hold the sixth meeting of the National Committee of Argentina to present the activities and the financial situation corresponding to the period December 2022 - March 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MArDS</li> <li>- CAF</li> <li>- Entre Ríos Provincial Secretariat of Environment</li> <li>- National team</li> <li>- Regional team</li> </ul>
02-05-23	Binational Directive Committee and Binational Technical Committee	Present the quarterly report of the Project corresponding to the period December 22 - March 23 to the Committee for approval, prior to the formal presentation of the same to the CAF. Progress in the project activities and in the financial execution by Product and by Executing Entity was detailed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CAF</li> <li>- UNDP</li> <li>- MA</li> <li>- National team</li> <li>- Regional team</li> <li>- CND</li> </ul>
23-08-23	Seventh National Committee of Argentina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Present the activities and the financial situation corresponding to the period April - July 2023.</li> <li>- Present the planning for year 3 of the Project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MArDS</li> <li>- DAFFYPP</li> <li>- CAF</li> <li>- Entre Ríos Provincial Secretariat of Environment</li> <li>- El Palmar National Park</li> <li>- National team</li> <li>- Regional team</li> </ul>

24-08-23	National Technical Committee of Uruguay	Present the progress of the Project activities in Uruguay, the current status of the works planning, the proposal for POA year 3 and PA year 3, progress of the regional components and the identified risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CAF</li> <li>- MA</li> <li>- UNDP</li> <li>- CND</li> <li>- Intendencias</li> <li>- National team</li> </ul>
31-08-23	Binational Directive Committee and Binational Technical Committee	Present to the Committee the details of the actions carried out in the four-month period April - July 2023, the monitoring of indicators by activity, the actions planned for year 3 of the Project, the identified risks and a summary of the financial execution by product and by EE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CAF</li> <li>- UNDP</li> <li>- MAYDS</li> <li>- MA</li> <li>- CND</li> <li>- Regional team</li> <li>- National team Argentina</li> <li>- National team Uruguay</li> </ul>

### 3.3.4. Stakeholder Engagement

The participation of the Project's stakeholders in both countries is highlighted. State entities, youth centers, municipal networks and non-governmental organizations have been involved in the development of the Project, contributing to the achievement of the proposed objectives. Efforts to include local women in the training provided or workshops offered are also highlighted.

In the case of Uruguay, it was identified that civil society, depending on the activity carried out, usually had greater communication with the National System of Protected Areas (SNAP) or Acción Climática Joven (ACJ), especially in local activities.

It is highlighted that the interested parties are not centralized, but that the responsible entities have a presence in the different selected cities where Project activities are carried out, which strengthens the link between the Project board and the technical organizations that collaborate with the Ministry of Environment of Uruguay.

In interviews with civil society, a general observation was made that some actors in the field might not have been considered, as they were not invited to participate in the events because they were not part of the Specific Advisory Commission (CAE) or were not recognized as referents. Consideration could be given to expanding the mechanisms for convening and participating, ensuring that a broader spectrum of relevant actors is included in future activities, which would help improve communication and make the implementation of the Project more effective.

In the case of Argentina, the Project established a network of strategic partners that included everything from the Undersecretariat of Environment of Entre Ríos to the National Parks Administration. At the time of preparation of this report, the participation of civil society was not achieved in the virtual interviews, so the approach to this group of actors should be strengthened in subsequent deliveries to obtain their corresponding perspective on the execution of the project.

In addition, in interviews with actors in Argentina, it was mentioned that, during the design phase, the participation of key actors was notably fragmented. They mentioned that key stakeholders were not

properly identified, and indigenous communities were not invited, presumably under the mistaken assumption that they did not exist in the area. They highlighted that this omission could be related to the hiring of an external consultant whose experience in the context was limited and lacked solid prior knowledge. Therefore, for future projects, it is recommended that a thorough mapping and active participation of all stakeholders from the beginning, together with the hiring of consultants with relevant local experience and a continuous review of the process.

### **3.3.5. Environmental and social policy and principles of the Adaptation Fund (safeguards)**

In Annex 4 of the Full Proposal, which categorizes the risks, components 1 and 4 are classified as low risk (category C). However, these components involve activities aimed at strengthening capacities at both institutional and community levels, as well as designing policies and plans that must adhere to principles of equity and inclusion, including gender and considerations for vulnerable groups. Given the potentially high environmental and social impact of these activities, it is important to reassess whether the low-risk classification accurately reflects their potential impact.

To enhance the internal coherence of the project, a consultation process has been developed, as detailed in the Environmental-Social and Gender Plans (Annexes 6 and 7, respectively). These plans are comprehensive and outline actions to mitigate identified risks. Therefore, the high relevance of components 1 and 4 seems inconsistent with their classification as low risk (C) in the Full Proposal. This discrepancy may lead to risks related to weakening the project's internal coherence, potentially due to the lack of specific goals regarding the trained population and the projected impacts of the training provided.

Regarding the mitigation measures for social and environmental risks identified in the Annexes, the review of documentation reveals that environmental, social, and gender safeguards reports have been prepared for Argentina and Uruguay during the first two years. Compliance with environmental and social policies has also been reported in the PPRs. Interviews confirmed that mechanisms have been implemented to facilitate women's participation in workshops and address gender equality, suggesting that expected progress is being made and the project can continue effectively.

However, some discrepancies were observed between the Plans and risk evolution documents. It is recommended to establish a stronger connection between the risks evaluated in ANNEX 5 “Evidence-based Identification of Environmental and Social Risks,” ANNEX 6 “Environmental and Social Management Plan, Complaints and Grievances Mechanism, and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Oversight Programme,” and ANNEX 7 “Gender Evaluation and Action Plan,” and those mentioned in the PPR, where risks for each activity are also detailed. This could be addressed by grouping the risks and maintaining consistent risk codes to enhance the internal logic of the plans and project monitoring reports, thereby providing continuity and structure between project design and execution.

### **3.3.6. Knowledge management: information and communications**

The external communication strategy is deployed through various channels, including social media platforms, official website and local media. These channels have been designed with the purpose of connecting with young people and key audiences in an effective way. Information on the project

components and news updates on the website demonstrates a strong commitment to information dissemination and awareness raising.

Up to the development of this MTE, 2 published PRPs were identified. These reports provide valuable information on project management, identified risks, financial progress and progress toward the established goals. However, in some cases the depth of description of progress and challenges does not provide a fully detailed view of project developments. The external communication strategy is deployed through various channels, including social media platforms, official website and local media. These channels have been designed with the purpose of connecting with young people and key audiences in an effective way.

As of the development of this MTE, two published PPRs were identified. These reports provide valuable information on project management, identified risks, financial progress and progress towards established goals. However, in some cases, the depth in the description of progress and challenges does not provide a fully detailed view of the evolution of the project. While the PPRs present data on the progress of each indicator, they do not always detail the activities carried out to achieve these achievements. Although the quarterly progress reports include these activities, it would be advisable to add a similar section in the PPRs. This would provide a more complete overview and allow for easier evaluation of the progress and effectiveness of the strategies.

The external communication strategy is deployed through various channels, including social media platforms, the official website and local media. These channels have been designed with the purpose of connecting with young people and key audiences effectively. The information on the Project components and the news updates on the website demonstrate the firm commitment to the transmission of information and the promotion of awareness.

Regarding the communication of the Project, the effort made in organizing workshops to communicate information about the Project to various audiences is recognized. However, during the interviews and the mission, it was observed that knowledge about the Project by some actors was perceived as limited and diverse. In this regard, it would be beneficial to deepen the communication strategy with key stakeholders at all levels, with particular attention to civil society on the ground, to ensure a more uniform and complete understanding of the Project.

### **3.4. Sustainability of the Project's actions**

#### **3.4.1. Financial risks**

Regarding financial risks, one of the most significant is the fluctuation in funding and disbursements. Bureaucratic processes and the need to coordinate between multiple executing entities, such as UNDP, CND and MAdS<sup>11</sup>, can lead to delays in the release of funds. These delays directly affect cash flow, which is necessary to ensure that project activities are executed on time. Lack of timely funding could compromise the continuity of the project.

Sustainability depends largely on the availability of ongoing budgets to support these initiatives. A budget should be allocated to ensure the continuity of the initiatives, without relying solely on external sources.

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<sup>11</sup> Undersecretariat of Environment of the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports – Ministry of Interior

Economic instability, particularly in Argentina, represents a relevant risk where mitigation strategies could be implemented. Despite inflation and devaluation, which can increase project costs, budgets could be adjusted and financing mechanisms sought to help balance the effects of these economic variations, thus ensuring the financial sustainability of the project.

### **3.4.2. Socioeconomic risks**

The socioeconomic risks in both countries are reflected in the situation of the population that may be affected by the natural phenomena of climate change.

In both Argentina and Uruguay, despite the efforts made to resettle a large part of the population in the flood zones of the Uruguay River, it is crucial to consider the possibility that some resettled inhabitants may return to these areas, which could cause the same damage again. To avoid this situation, it is essential to strengthen awareness-raising actions regarding the risks associated with settling in these areas and to continue promoting safe alternatives for community development, thus ensuring the sustainability of the measures adopted.

### **3.4.3. Institutional and governance risks**

In general, it is recognized that there is a risk in postponing the management of risks related to climate change, both at the national and local levels. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen collaboration with the authorities so that they consider and take advantage of the inputs provided by this Project, allowing them to be integrated in a transversal way into other initiatives linked to climate change.

Compliance with standards and procedures can present challenges, even when there are agreements and conventions between institutions. The coordination and supervision of all the parties involved becomes complex due to the binational nature of the Project and its governance structure.

Likewise, it is identified that the commitment by the government to ensure the continuity of the Project, especially with regard to the sustainability of the infrastructure of the works, could be affected with the end of the Project. Linking the Project with territorial instruments, such as the Regional Climate Change Plan and communal plans, would facilitate its long-term sustainability.

Finally, the sustainability of the Project could be affected by changes in the government, as has occurred in Argentina, which has influenced the development of activities and communication between stakeholders. It would be advisable to develop a strategy that maintains the stability of projects of this nature, even in the face of unexpected changes in the political context. In this sense, training for officials and deepening the link with civil society become relevant.

### **3.4.4. Environmental risks**

Regarding environmental risks, both in Argentina and Uruguay, the importance of continuing with this type of project is stressed in order to be able to face various problems brought about by climate change. Likewise, being able to properly maintain the infrastructure of the works is crucial for their maintenance over time.

For Argentina, one of the most significant risks is the erosion of the river banks, especially in areas such as Concordia, where this erosion is compromising the quality of drinking water by causing the accumulation of debris in the Concordia water treatment plant. Therefore, the Project proposed a work



to protect the coastal area and stop the continuous erosive process that has been evident for 25 years; the work is currently underway.

In Uruguay, the risks include recurring flooding in cities such as Salto, Paysandú, Fray Bentos and Bella Unión, which affects thousands of people and threatens protected areas. A critical example is the erosion in Bella Unión, which endangers access to the Rincón de Franquía Departmental Reserve, potentially isolating it. In this context, the importance of better management by governments, both at national and local levels, is highlighted to continue addressing these situations.

## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

### 4.1. Conclusions

- Project design and formulation

The Project's intervention is relevant, as it addresses the broader issue of climate change impacts on the Uruguay River, particularly the increased frequency of floods, which gives the Project a regional significance. Additionally, the objectives outlined are aligned with local needs. For example, the proposed measures include repurposing areas in cities that frequently experience flooding, restoring vacant land from resettlement, developing sustainable urban infrastructure, and designing and implementing financial mechanisms to enhance resilience in these areas. Furthermore, it is important to note that various perspectives have been considered, especially those of individuals directly affected by the interventions.

- Progress towards results

The progress of the Project is advancing in line with regulatory aspects and resource availability. Notably, the component focused on implementing priority measures to increase resilience and reduce social vulnerability has made significant strides, including communication campaigns targeting local communities to raise awareness about the effects of climate change, as well as socio-labor training. However, in the component related to territorial planning and risk management, the early flood warning system has not yet been implemented and is currently in the consultancy phase. Its implementation is expected to occur within the remaining timeframe of the Project, along with the works proposed in the component aimed at increasing resilience in flood-prone cities.

- Project execution and adaptive management

The Project has encountered governance challenges due to the complexity of coordinating multiple entities in a binational context, which has impacted the smoothness of coordination. However, the intervention by UNDP is noteworthy for significantly improving communication among the involved actors. Additionally, CAF's monitoring and support of the executing entities are acknowledged. The collaboration of SINAIE, DINAVI, DINAGUA, the National Parks Administration of Argentina, and other key stakeholders in the Project's development is also important to highlight.

The Project is progressing at a moderately satisfactory pace, with satisfactory progress noted for half of the indicators, while progress on some indicators remains limited. Effective management of deadlines is crucial for timely execution. Recognizing the importance of adjusting deadlines to account for contextual issues in both countries—particularly in Argentina due to governmental changes—will be essential for successful completion.

- Sustainability of the Project's actions

Several risks have been identified that could threaten the sustainability of the Project. From an institutional perspective, it is crucial to focus efforts on involving national, regional, and local governments to ensure the maintenance and investment in the Project's promoted activities.

In terms of socioeconomic risks, there is a possibility that some resettled inhabitants may return to previously affected areas, potentially causing similar damage. Therefore, it is essential to emphasize

awareness-raising initiatives about the risks associated with settling in these areas and continue to promote safe alternatives for community development.

Financial risks include economic instability, particularly in Argentina, which could delay activities and hinder communication between institutions and involved stakeholders.

Finally, regarding environmental risks, flooding and coastal erosion pose ongoing threats that affect thousands of people and endanger protected areas. It is imperative to preserve the infrastructure planned under this Project and highlight the need for improved management by governments at both national and local levels to continue addressing these critical issues.

## 4.2. Recommendations

Based on the points evaluated in the MTE-P, the following recommendations are made:

- About the implementation strategy

Although the project design phase has already concluded, it is crucial to identify all key stakeholders from the beginning to ensure their participation is planned in a comprehensive and coherent manner. This approach helps avoid fragmentations that may weaken the process and contributes to a greater impact and sustainability of the project by ensuring that the needs and perspectives of all involved are considered from the outset.

On the other hand, regarding the design strategy related to the results framework, it is recommended to review the Project Results Framework to improve the specificity and usefulness of the indicators and goals. Specifically, disaggregating the results, indicators, and goals by country (Argentina and Uruguay) would better reflect the individual progress and specific challenges of each nation.

Additionally, it is suggested to reassess the indicators in the Results Framework, focusing on the goals and prioritizing those with a higher likelihood of achievement within the remaining project time.

Finally, it is advisable to establish clear and consistent intermediate goals for all results, not just for some. This approach will allow for more effective ongoing monitoring and facilitate necessary adjustments to project implementation, ensuring compliance with the final objectives.

- About the progress towards results

It is recommended to establish stronger coordination mechanisms between local and national governments in Uruguay, particularly for components of the project that are local in nature. Additionally, developing a flexible framework that allows project actions to be adjusted to local specificities, while maintaining alignment with national objectives, could improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

Regarding community participation, it is suggested to implement community education and awareness programs in the intervention areas, focusing on the relationship between the flooding of the Uruguay River and climate change. These programs should aim to enhance understanding of the need for adaptation measures. Involving communities in the management and maintenance of re-signified areas can further reinforce the long-term sustainability of the project.

In light of the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and other unforeseen events during the first half of the project, it is recommended to conduct a detailed analysis of the project schedule. This analysis should aim to identify and prioritize critical activities that can be completed within the remaining time frame. Considering an extension of the project or a readjustment of goals may be necessary to ensure the fulfillment of objectives.

Finally, it is suggested to improve the planning of financial resources to ensure that funds are aligned with the project's real needs. Establishing more agile communication with the Adaptation Fund and thoroughly understanding its regulations in advance could help avoid future delays in approving changes and ensure smoother project execution.

Although follow-up meetings are currently held every four months and reports are issued in accordance with the project governance, with the participation of all entities involved in the design, it is necessary to continue strengthening internal and external communication. More frequent reports and additional meetings could help keep all stakeholders even more informed and aligned with the project objectives, ensuring better coordination and visibility of progress.

- About the Project execution and adaptive management

Given the need for adjustments and expansions due to unforeseen events such as floods, it is recommended to formalize an adaptive management approach. This should include the creation of a rapid response protocol that enables the agile reallocation of funds and resources when delays or changes in the priorities of various activities are identified. Additionally, it is advisable to conduct periodic assessments to anticipate possible contingencies, facilitating proactive planning.

Furthermore, regarding stakeholder participation, it is recommended to expand the convening mechanisms to ensure that a broader spectrum of relevant actors, including those not part of the Specific Advisory Commission (CAE) or not recognized as formal stakeholders, have the opportunity to engage in project activities. This can be achieved through the use of more inclusive communication tools and the organization of open forums within communities to identify and involve important local actors who may have been previously overlooked.

- About the sustainability of the Project's actions

It is essential to actively involve local communities throughout all phases of the project—design, implementation, and monitoring. Long-term sustainability largely depends on local ownership of actions and results. Therefore, it is recommended to strengthen the development of education and training programs for community members to manage and maintain the infrastructures and processes introduced by the project, thus promoting resilience and autonomy.

Additionally, it is suggested to enhance partnerships with local governments, NGOs, the private sector, and other relevant institutions to create collaborative networks that can support the project's sustainability beyond the end of external funding. These partnerships should include clear agreements on long-term accountability and financing to ensure that the project's benefits are maintained and expanded in the future.

Moreover, strengthening the continuous monitoring and evaluation system is crucial for identifying and quickly addressing any emerging risks and ensuring that interventions are achieving the desired results. It is recommended to establish specific sustainability indicators and conduct periodic

evaluations to measure progress and make necessary adjustments in real time. Involving local actors in this process can enhance the accuracy and relevance of the evaluations.

## Annexes

### Annex A. Matrix of progress towards the analysis of results

Project strategy	Indicator	Baseline	Level at PPR 1	Level at PPR 2	Mid-term goal	Final goal	Mid-term level and evaluation	Achievement ranking	Justification
<b>Project objective: build resilience in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the lower Uruguay River, both in Argentinean and Uruguayan territories, by developing instruments, tools and experiences for climate change adaptation planning and implementation as well as climate risk management.</b>	Number of people (men and women) protected by improved risk-reduction measures and climate change adaptation planning and implementation in the lower Uruguay river, both in Argentinean and Uruguayan territory.	0	0	0	N.A.	By the end of the project, at least 600,000 vulnerable people in the project area will benefit from the proposed activities to cope with climate change and vulnerability.	To date, progress has been made in building a park next to La Esmeralda stream, with the aim of redefining a vacant flood zone in Fray Bentos, Uruguay. This park directly benefits approximately 7,000 people who live in the Las Canteras neighborhood, and indirectly the entire Fray Bentos community, which comprises around 25,000 people, by providing a recreational space and a buffer area against heavy rains.  In addition, with regard to the training, capacity-building workshops, exchange experiences and courses carried out up to mid-term, around 2,300 people have benefited.	<b>MS</b>	The Project objective is progressing in a Moderately Satisfactory manner, and it is expected that the final goal will be achieved in the remaining execution time.
<b>Outcome 1: National, subnational and local governments have been</b>	% of project area with instruments	0	0	67% (6/9 cities)	N.A.	By the end of the project, 100% of the project area is covered by the	In Argentina, different documents such as land use ordinances are currently	<b>S</b>	Consultancies were carried out to update the land use and planning instruments in

strengthened by means of the development of instruments, the exchange of experiences and the inclusion of climate change in their planning and management instruments	adjusted to address climate change					adjusted instruments to address climate change.	being reviewed and analyzed for updating them with a focus on addressing climate change.  In Uruguay, progress has been made with planned consultancies for updating land use planning instruments.		the cities involved in the Project, both in Argentina and Uruguay. By the mid-term of the Project, 67% progress has been made in covering the project area with instruments tailored to address climate change. Although the Full Proposal does not establish a specific mid-term goal, progress is evident with respect to the final goal of the Project.
<b>Outcome 2: Subnational and local risk management strategies have been strengthened and community-based, early warning systems (EWS) for floods, have been consolidated in a coordinated manner</b>	1. Number of staff of targeted institutions that have shared strategies and best practices involving adaptation, climate risk management, territorial planning, territorial policy, housing infrastructure adaptation, recovery of vacant lands	0	36	274 people (128 women)	N.A.	At the end of the project, 20 institutions will have shared strategies and best practices (11 local governments, and 9 national institutions of the two countries, including Administration National Parks, CTM- Salto Grande, CARU, Civil Defenses).	Different meetings were held where strategies and best practices were shared:  - First binational meeting of the project in the town of Concordia, Entre Ríos, Argentina (March 7 and 9, 2022), with 80 participants in total (49 in person and 31 virtual; 60% women).  - Binational meeting Uruguay River: Fray Bentos, Uruguay (September 12-14, 2022), with 188 participants  - Virtual meeting of the binational group for the control of EEIL (December 2022), with 17 participants  Cumulative: 277 people	S	There were 3 meetings where 277 people from the objective institutions met and although the Full Proposal does not foresee a mid-term goal, it is estimated that it has been achieved given the number of people involved.

	2. Percentage of target population covered by the enhanced Flood Early Warning System	0	0	0	N.A.	At the end of the project, 100% of the target population is covered by the enhanced Flood Early Warning System.  - Progress: 0%	The process of contracting a consultancy is underway for “Technical support for strengthening and consolidating the Early Warning System for Floods in the Uruguay River” for Uruguay.	U	The Full Proposal does not foresee a mid-term goal for this indicator, but it is estimated that it has not been achieved. This because no progress has been made in the implementation of this system until the mid-term.
	3. Number of risk management plans and other management instruments reviewed and implemented	0	0	4	N.A.	At the end of the project, at least 10 risk management plans and other management instruments are reviewed and implemented (at least one in each city).	In Uruguay, the departmental emergency protocols have been updated in Salto, Paysandú, Río Negro and Artigas  - Progress: 4 plans	S	The Full Proposal does not establish mid-term goals for this result. However, significant progress was observed in the number of plans reviewed and implemented until the mid-term, compared to almost half of the plans projected at the end of the Project.
Outcome 3: The resilience of coastal cities has been increased through the implementation of structural and non-structural adaptation measures	1. M² of surface resignified vulnerable vacant lands  Number of protection works carried out	0	Activity 7.4 in progress  0 protection works carried out	20.800 m²  2 protection works carried out	49.000 m²	113.000 m² of vulnerable vacant lands resignified  11 works carried out	The mid-term goal for re-signified surface areas in Paysandú, Salto, Bella Unión, by Uruguay and in Colón by Argentina was not met. (0 m² of re-signified surface area).	MS	Although the established mid-term goal was not achieved, progress was observed in the re-signified surface area and it is expected that the goal will be achieved during the remaining execution period.
	2. Number of financial mechanisms ready for scaling-up	0	0	1	N.A.	2	The resignified surface area in Fray Bentos, Uruguay was 13,800 m².	S	The Full Proposal does not set mid-term goals for this outcome. Progress is recognized on a financial mechanism, which is 50% of



									what is expected by the end of the Project.
<b>Outcome 4: Adaptive conservation measures have been implemented in vulnerable ecosystems on both banks of the Uruguay River, including the identification and evaluation of their ecosystem services</b>	1. Hectares of vulnerable ecosystems covered by adaptive conservation measures, including identification and assessment of their ecosystem services	While some progress has been made in identifying ecosystem services, no comprehensive approach has been implemented across both margins.	0	0	N.A.	3.500 ha	In Uruguay, the importation of materials necessary for the implementation of control actions is underway.  In Argentina, the consultancy "Agent-based mapping of exotic invasions" in El Palmar National Park is in the process of being contracted.	U	The Full Proposal does not foresee a mid-term goal for this indicator, but it is estimated that it has not been achieved since no progress is presented in hectares covered by conservation measures until the mid-term.
<b>Outcome 5: Communities and social organizations increased their resilience in the framework of climate change adaptation and hydro-climatic disasters.</b>	1. Number of vulnerability and social perception methodologies designed and tested	0	0	1	N.A.	2	Local actors and initiatives were identified for the implementation of the methodology for identifying and estimating social perception of risk that was used in the case of Fray Bentos as a pilot.	S	The Full Proposal does not set mid-term goals for this outcome. Progress is recognized on a designed methodology, which is half of what is expected by the end of the Project.
	2. Number of people (men and women) reached by awareness raising capacity building activities	0	400 (61% women)	1.966 (at least 694 women, 35%)	200 (50% women)	500 (50% women)	Communication campaigns were conducted targeting local communities in order to raise awareness about the effects of climate change, the importance of adaptation and EWS at the community level. Local, national and regional social	AS	To date, it has been identified that the goals established for the mid-term period and for the end of the project have been exceeded by a significant percentage.

						networks were strengthened on issues such as awareness and sensitivity regarding the role played by coastal systems and vulnerable ecosystems in adaptation to climate change.		
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Key evaluation indicator

Green	Yellow	Red
Objective achieved	Objective in progress	Objective non-achieved

## Annex B. Project Results Rating Table

Progress ratings towards results: (one rating for each result and for the objective)		
6	Highly satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to meet or exceed all of its goals by the end of the project, with no major shortfalls. Progress toward the objective/outcome can be presented as "good practice."
5	Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to meet most of its goals by the end of the project, with only minor shortfalls.
4	Moderately satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to meet most of its goals by the end of the project, but with major shortfalls.
3	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	The objective/outcome is expected to meet its goals by the end of the project with major shortfalls.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The objective/outcome is expected to fail to meet most of its goals by the end of the project.
1	Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome has not met its medium-term goals, and is not expected to meet any of its goals by the end of the project.

Ratings for project execution and adaptive management: (one overall rating)		
6	Highly satisfactory (HS)	The implementation of the seven components - management arrangements, work planning, financing and co-financing, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting and communications - is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as a "good practice".
5	Satisfactory (S)	The implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, except for a few that are subject to corrective measures.

# Mid Term Evaluation of the Project Regional Argentina – Uruguay: “Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River”

## Product 3. Final Evaluation Report

4	Moderately satisfactory (MS)	The implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, while some components require corrective measures.
3	Moderately unsatisfactory (MU)	The implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, and most of the components require corrective measures.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly unsatisfactory (HU)	The implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Sustainability ratings: (one overall rating)		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, as key results are on track to be achieved by project closure and are expected to continue for the foreseeable future
3	Moderately likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but at least some results are expected to be sustained due to progress on mid-term review results
2	Moderately unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key results will not continue after project closure, although some outputs and activities should continue
1	Unlikely (U)	Serious risks that project results and key outputs will not be sustained

## Annex C. Evaluation Matrix

Assessment Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<b>Project strategy and design:</b> <b>To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best path to intended outcomes?</b>			
<p><b>Do you consider that the project design and its components have been relevant to the problems and risks that arise in the cities and coastal ecosystems of the lower stretch of the Uruguay River?</b></p> <p><b>Does the Project fit into the national and subnational development priorities and plans of the country, or of the participating countries in the area of risk management? How has the contribution been made by the public and private sectors and the population?</b></p> <p><b>Do you consider that the implementation strategy used has been adequate (relevant) to achieve the expected results?</b></p> <p><b>Have lessons from other similar projects been incorporated into the project design?</b></p> <p><b>Have the perspectives of those potentially affected, as well as those who could affect the achievement of the results, by Project decisions been taken into account?</b></p> <p><b>Are gender issues included in the project document based on the territory to be intervened (for example, the impact of the project on gender equality in the program country, the participation of women's groups, the participation of women in project activities)?</b></p> <p><b>Is the project budget design adequate to achieve the expected results?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relations with beneficiary population</li> <li>- Coherence with sectoral development plans</li> <li>- Number of project activities where gender issues have been considered</li> <li>- Number of analogous projects considered for the development of the project design</li> <li>- Diversity of stakeholders involved</li> <li>- Evaluation of the degree to which actual expenditures conform to the planned budget</li> <li>- Evaluation of the coherence and interrelation between the different components of the project</li> <li>- Degree of compliance with S.M.A.R.T. standards in the design of indicators</li> <li>- Number of specific indicators formulated for the monitoring of development-related benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project proposal document</li> <li>- Minutes of coordination meetings and decisions</li> <li>- Web references to similar projects in Latin America and in the country.</li> <li>- Other data and indirect information collected during the Evaluation Mission and preparation of reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comparative analysis of the Project documents among themselves, and in relation to national and regional policies, strategies, plans and projects.</li> <li>- Analysis of coherence and consistency of the components and expected results, with the activities developed and the progress to date.</li> <li>- Specific questions in the semi-structured interviews by type of actor; systematization of responses, and analysis of consistency or differences in perceptions and opinions by groups of actors and evaluation topics.</li> </ul>

Assessment Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<p>Are there other important areas of concern to recommend improvements in the project design?</p> <p>Are the objectives, components and results clear, practical, and feasible within their time frame?</p> <p>Are the objectives and indicators of the project's logical framework consistent with the S.M.A.R.T standard?</p> <p>Has it been considered whether the progress of the project could generate future development benefits (in relation to income generation, gender equality, women's empowerment, improved governance and adaptation, among others) that should be included in the results framework and monitored annually?</p> <p>Have monitoring indicators been included for development aspects and gender issues?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of specific indicators formulated for the monitoring of gender inclusion</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Progress towards results:</b></p> <p><b>To what extent have the project's intended results and objectives been achieved so far?</b></p>			
<p><b>To what extent have the project's intended outcomes and objectives been achieved so far?</b></p> <p><b>Has progress been measured according to the AF monitoring tool and against the baseline and its update?</b></p> <p><b>Have barriers and other factors limiting progress towards the expected outcomes been identified? Have questions on these issues been included in interviews, and have recommendations for adaptive action been obtained?</b></p> <p>Have ways been identified in which the project can further expand the benefits achieved so far?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Estimated progress percentage by result, activity and product.</li> <li>- Number of specific barriers in reports or follow-up meetings</li> <li>- Percentage of recommendations implemented</li> <li>- Number of initiatives proposed and adopted in the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project proposal document</li> <li>- Progress reports on the execution of the Project</li> <li>- Responses on the subject in interviews with officials and directors of the Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comparative analysis of the Project documents among themselves, and in relation to national and regional policies, strategies, plans and projects.</li> <li>- Analysis of coherence and consistency of the components and expected results, with the activities developed and the progress to date.</li> <li>- Questions in the interviews, by type of actor; systematization of responses, and analysis of consistency or differences in perceptions and opinions by groups of actors and evaluation topics.</li> </ul>

Assessment Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<b>Project execution and adaptive management:</b>			
<p>- Has the project been implemented efficiently and cost-effectively, and has it been able to adapt to any changing conditions so far? Is project management effective in terms of the results it is achieving? Are changes being introduced to improve it? Are there delays in implementation that require decisive action?</p> <p>- To what extent do the project's monitoring and evaluation systems, reports and communications support project implementation? Are sufficient resources allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources allocated effectively? Are monitoring tools considered adequate and efficient?</p> <p>- To what extent has there been progress in the implementation of social and environmental management measures? Is the assessment of environmental and social risks adequate? Have social and environmental management measures been adopted to address these risks? What has been the outcome of these?</p> <p>- Are the responsibilities and internal lines of communication clear for articulating administrative, financial and technical issues? Is decision-making by the project's governance levels effective, timely and clear? Based on what has been identified, recommend areas for improvement.</p> <p>- Do local and national governments have an active role in project decision-making, aimed at the effective and efficient fulfillment of objectives?</p> <p>- Have there been changes in the overall risk rating of the project and/or in the types of risks identified in the approval phase of the general director? Have the risks identified during the design phase</p>	<p>- Progress and levels of stakeholder participation in the project implementation process</p> <p>- Number of social and environmental management measures implemented</p> <p>- Evaluation recommendations implemented to improve project effectiveness</p> <p>- Percentage of women involved in project implementation</p> <p>- Frequency and quality of financial reports submitted</p> <p>- Perception of stakeholder satisfaction regarding the effectiveness of monitoring tools</p> <p>- Evaluation of the effectiveness of allocated resources in terms of achieving monitoring and evaluation objectives</p> <p>- Level of active stakeholder participation in project activities</p> <p>- Degree of involvement of local and national government</p>	<p>- Project proposal document</p> <p>- Review of minutes and internal documents of modifications to indicators, results and products</p> <p>- Responses on the subject in interviews with officials and directors of the Project</p>	<p>- Comparative analysis of the Project documents among themselves, and in relation to national and regional policies, strategies, plans and projects.</p> <p>- Analysis of coherence and consistency of the components and expected results, with the activities developed and the progress to date according to the PIR and other reports.</p> <p>- Questions in the interviews, by type of actor; systematization of responses, and analysis of consistency or differences in perceptions and opinions by groups of actors and evaluation topics.</p>

Assessment Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<p>materialized? Have there been changes in the overall risk rating of the project and/or in the types of risks identified in the approval phase of the general director?</p> <p>- Have women been involved in the governance and execution of the project? How?</p> <p>- Does the project have adequate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow the timely flow of funds?</p> <p>- Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?</p> <p>- To what extent has stakeholder engagement and public awareness-raising contributed to the progress and achievement of project objectives?</p> <p>- How have girls and women been involved in the project? Are there constraints that prevent gender-balanced participation in the project? What measures can be incorporated to improve gender benefits? Are there gender gaps that may be exacerbated by impacts associated with climate change?</p> <p>- Has communication between project coordination and the Steering Committee been effective?</p> <p>- Does reporting comply with AF reporting guidelines?</p> <p>- How has the presentation of lessons from the adaptive management process been documented? With whom have they been shared?</p>	<p>representatives in project decision-making meetings</p> <p>- Number of measures or strategies implemented to increase women's participation in the project</p> <p>- Analysis of women's perception of possible limitations that hinder their participation in the project</p> <p>- Number of social and environmental management measures implemented in response to identified risks</p> <p>- Frequency and quality of communication between project coordination and the Steering Committee</p> <p>- Evaluation of consistency and accuracy of reports submitted</p> <p>- Documentation of lessons learned and their availability for consultation</p> <p>- Inclusion of all stakeholders in communication processes</p> <p>- Perception of external stakeholders regarding the transparency and accessibility of information on project progress</p>		



Assessment Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
<p>- Is internal project communication clear, regular and effective? Are all stakeholders involved? Are there feedback mechanisms based on the communications made? Does this communication help stakeholders to be aware of the project's results and activities and to invest in the sustainability of its results?</p> <p>How has the project's external communication been carried out for the publication of progress?</p>			
<b>Sustainability:</b> <b>To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic and/or environmental risks to maintaining project outcomes over the long term?</b>			
<b>Financial sustainability</b>			
What is the likelihood that financial and economic resources will not be available once Adaptation Fund assistance ends? Has the option of considering a country-owned approach to ensure future solvency once Adaptation Fund funding ends been assessed?	- Analysis of post-project financing prospects or commitments (co-financing compliance, spending capacity, involvement of private financing)	- Project Document (Progress Reports, <i>Project Performance Report</i> or PPR) - Official documents, financial and economic reports	Analysis of coincidence of opinions and documents among key actors.
<b>Socioeconomic sustainability</b>			
<p><b>Are there social or political risks that could jeopardize the sustainability of project results?</b></p> <p><b>Is a lack of stakeholder ownership likely to affect the sustainability of project results/benefits?</b></p> <p>Is public awareness of stakeholders sufficient to support the long-term project objectives? Are they interested in maintaining the benefits of the project in the future?</p> <p>Does the publication and transfer of lessons learned promote the replication and expansion of the project in the future?</p>	<p>- Implementation of mitigation measures to address identified risks</p> <p>- Implementation of strategies to promote stakeholder ownership and ongoing engagement with project outcomes</p>	<p>- Project Document and Annexes</p> <p>- Responses on the topic in interviews with Project officials and managers</p>	Analysis of coincidence of opinions and documents among key actors.
<b>Institutional sustainability</b>			
Do legal frameworks, policies, structures and governance processes pose risks that may jeopardize the maintenance of project benefits?	-Analysis of the coherence between the project objectives and national or regional development strategies and policies.	- Official documents and institutional reports	Analysis of coincidence of opinions and documents among key actors.
<b>Environmental sustainability</b>			
Are there environmental risks that could jeopardize the maintenance of the project results?	Analysis of potential threats to natural resources and ecosystems	<p>- Project Document</p> <p>- Climate diagnostics</p>	Analysis of coincidence of opinions and documents among key actors.

Assessment Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
	present in the project's area of influence		

## Annex D. Code of Conduct for Intermediate Examination Assessors/Consultants<sup>12</sup>

### Independent Evaluator Consulting Team:

Must present full and fair information in their assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well-founded.

Must disclose the full set of assessment results together with information about their limitations and make it accessible to all those affected by the assessment with an express legal right to receive the results.

Must protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. Must provide maximum advance notice, minimize time demands and respect the right of individuals not to participate. Evaluators must respect the right of individuals to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced back to its source. Evaluators are not expected to assess individuals, and must balance the assessment of management functions with this general principle.

Sometimes indications of wrongdoing are discovered when conducting assessments. Such instances should be reported discreetly to the relevant investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about whether and how to report issues.

They should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs, and act with integrity and honesty in their dealings with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators should be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-esteem of those they come into contact with in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that the evaluation may adversely affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the dignity and self-esteem of stakeholders.

They are accountable for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of the study's limitations, results and recommendations.

It should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in the use of evaluation resources.

They must ensure that the evaluation's independent judgement is maintained and that its conclusions and recommendations are presented independently.

They must confirm that they have not participated in the design, execution or advice of the project being evaluated.

### MTE-P Consulting Agreement Form

<sup>12</sup> Annex D signed by the evaluators is sent as a separate document.

Agreement to abide by the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of consultants: Natalia Mamberto, Jaime Parada, Eric Muller

Name of the consulting firm (if applicable): Deuman

We confirm that we have received and understood the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation and that we will abide by it.

Signed in Santiago, Chile on August 12th, 2023

Signatures:

Natalia Mamberto

Jaime Parada

Eric Muller

## Annex F. Interview questionnaire applied

KEY QUESTIONS				
Type of actor <sup>13</sup>				Introduction and general opening questions
A	B	C	D	
				[Introduction of the interviewers, thanks for their willingness; purpose of the interview and the evaluation; name, contact and position of the interviewee] [Confidentiality and ethics in the treatment of the information provided; authorization to record the session or take notes] [Length of the interview and possible alternation of questions with other interviewers]
				1. What is your current relationship, or role and functions, in relation to the implementation of the Project?
				2. How familiar are you with the Project and its objectives? How much do you know about its design, formulation and implementation?
				3. Did you participate in the design of the Project and the formulation of the implementation strategy?
				4. What is your general opinion of the design of the Project, its objectives and expected results?
				5. Would you say that the Project has been designed on a participatory basis with the actors and beneficiaries involved? Were the perspectives of those affected, those involved and resources considered during the design of the Project? How were human rights issues addressed with local populations in that process?
				6. How does the Project support national and subnational policies?
				7. Were gender issues addressed in the territory, such as the impact on gender equality and the participation of women in the project? Do you think that gender issues have been appropriately considered in the design of the Project?
				8. If the Project could be redesigned, what changes would you make or what provisions would you include for its best result?
Moving towards results				
				9. What do you think is the level of progress registered within the Project? Do you think that the progress so far will allow the goals and beneficial impacts foreseen in the remaining execution of the Project to be achieved?
				10. What aspects of the Project have been successful so far? How can the achievements made be further expanded?
				11. What alliances have been established for the execution of the project? What has been the result of these so far?
				12. Do you think that national and/or subnational planning and management instruments have been strengthened around adaptation since the beginning of the project? How?
				13. What structural and non-structural adaptation measures have been implemented in your city?
				14. Have you participated in any activity for the identification and evaluation of ecosystem services? What have you learned from this experience?

<sup>13</sup> Where A refers to actors at the executing level (implementing agency, executing agency, and direct management unit), B, to national and subnational government officials (regional and local), C, to partners and allies of the Project and D, to representatives of the beneficiary population.

				15. What are the main barriers or problems that prevent or limit the achievement of the expected results?
				16. How have you personally benefited from this project?
				17. How do the Adaptation Fund's core indicators at baseline compare with those achieved so far? What conclusions can be drawn from analyzing these advances in relation to the Project's objectives?
				18. Do you consider that the indicators and objectives of the Project's logical framework are S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound)? Do you have any suggestions for specific modifications in this regard?
On Project Implementation and Adaptive Management				
				19. Has it been necessary to make changes or amendments to the Full Proposal, operational plans and budgets to adapt to unforeseen situations? Have effective changes been made to ensure greater clarity in roles and responsibilities, lines of communication and information, and transparent and timely decision-making?
				20. To what extent has the Project been affected in its technical and operational implementation by Covid-19? What measures were adopted?
				21. How do you evaluate, in general, the effectiveness of the Project management? Do you identify areas for improvement?
				22. Do you think that the Project has convened and worked with all relevant stakeholders? Do you feel that the Project has been understood and has sparked the interest of stakeholders?
				23. Was there a history of joint work between municipalities in both Uruguay and Argentina? Or is this the first milestone? 24. Do you consider that a gender balance has been achieved in the Project staff as well as in the participation of the different events held? What measures have been taken to ensure a gender balance in the management of the Project?
				24. Do you consider that a gender balance has been achieved in the Project staff as well as in the participation of the different events held? What measures have been taken to ensure a gender balance in the management of the Project?
				25. What monitoring and evaluation systems have been used to monitor the Project activities? Is the financial progress of the Project and its consistency with the physical and technical progress periodically reviewed? Are sufficient technical and financial resources allocated for the monitoring and evaluation of the Project? To what extent have gender issues been incorporated into the monitoring systems? Do you think that improvements are required in the decision-making process?
				26. How do you perceive the support of the CAF in the Project execution process? Do you have any suggestions in this regard?
				27. How do you perceive the role of UNDP and the Project technical team in the execution process? Do you have any suggestions in this regard?
				28. Do the stakeholders and the government actively support the Project objectives? Do they have a role in decision-making? Are there social, cultural or religious limitations to the participation or inclusion of gender, youth or other groups?
				29. Does the Project have systems or mechanisms for regular and timely communication that allow stakeholders to learn about the Project's results and activities and to encourage their commitment to the sustainability of the results?
				30. Are training activities carried out or knowledge products developed?
				31. Are there public means of communication about the Project's progress and expected impact? (Web or other media dissemination, awareness campaigns for the population, and others)

## Mid Term Evaluation of the Project Regional Argentina – Uruguay: “Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River”

### Product 3. Final Evaluation Report

				32. How have Project changes been communicated by the Coordination, and how have they been shared with CAF, UNDP, and government actors, especially the Adaptation Fund focal point?
				33. Are the Adaptation Fund's reporting requirements met? In the case of poorly rated PPRs (Project Preparation Plans), how has the situation been addressed?
				34. How have lessons learned from the adaptive management process been documented? Have these lessons been shared with and internalized by key partners?
				35. How do you perceive the future sustainability of the Project's results and impact achieved to date?
				36. What are the main risks to the Project's continuity? Are they linked to the Project's own activities and management or are they external factors?
				37. Do you consider that there are environmental risks that could jeopardize the maintenance of the Project's results?
				38. Are agents (individual, in government or in civil society) being involved who are capable of promoting the Project's sustainability?
				39. What changes or modifications do you think would be favorable to the Project's sustainability, including legal, financial, institutional, economic, environmental or social provisions in the short, medium and long term?
				40. What lessons learned, from your personal point of view, do you think are derived from the execution of the Project to date?

## Annex G. Mid-Term Evaluation Activity schedule

Activities	Start	End	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5
			April	May	June	July	August
Stage 0: Planning							
Contract signing	17-apr-24	17-apr-24					
Kickoff pre-meeting	22-apr-24	22-apr-24					
Kickoff meeting	10-may-24	10-may-24					
Kick Off meeting with Executing Entities	29-may-24	29-may-24					
Stage 1: Building of the MTE initial report							
Document review	25-apr-24	2-may-24					
Identification and characterization	8-may-24	10-may-24					
Initial report elaboration	10-may-24	16-may-24					
E1: Delivery of MTE initial report	17-may-24	17-may-24					
Stage 2: Data collection, interviews, field visits and first results							
Interview logistics	3-jun-2024	7-jun-2024					
Remote interviews	26-jun-2024	5-aug-2024					
Mission: meetings and field visits	15-jul-24	26-jul-2024					
First results presentation	25-jul-2024	25-jul-2024					
Stage 3: Elaboration of the MTE draft report							
Mid-term evaluation of results progress	15-jul-2024	19-jul-2024					

Project execution evaluation	22-jul-2024	2-aug-2024					
Sustainability management	30-jul-24	9-aug-2024					
Conclusions y recommendations	5-aug-2024	12-aug-2024					
MTE-P draft report	12-aug-2024	12-aug-2024					
Stage 4: Audit trail and MTE final report							
MTE-P draft report review	12-aug-2024	16-aug-2024					
Comment resolution	19-aug-2024	30-aug-2024					
Executive summary	28-aug-2024	30-aug-2024					
Audit	28-aug-2024	30-aug-2024					
MTE-P final report	30-aug-2024	30-aug-2024					
Final presentation	6-sep-2024	6-sep-2024					

## Annex H. List of interviewed actors

### B. Interviewees in Argentina

Sector	Entity	Representative	Role	Interview
Project Operational Team	Argentina Government Undersecretariat of Environment	Laureano Corvalán	National Coordinator Argentina	Virtual
		Patricia Lanasa	National Specialist in Environmental and Social Safeguards	Virtual
		Héctor Bazzani	National Specialist in Climate Change Adaptation	Virtual
Project partners	Entre Rios Provincial Secretariat of Environment	Valeria González	Referent to Provincial Sub-Executive Unit	Virtual
	National Parks Administration of Argentina	Aristóbulo Maranta	PNEP Manager	Virtual
	National Parks Administration of Argentina	Facundo Alcalde	PNEP Manager	Face-to-face
	National Parks Administration of Argentina	Pablo Gallicet		Face-to-face
	Municipality of Concordia	Constanza Montoreano	Municipal Environment Undersecretary	Face-to-face
	Municipality of Concordia	Mariana Costa	Environmental education	Face-to-face



## Mid Term Evaluation of the Project Regional Argentina – Uruguay: “Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River”

Product 3. Final Evaluation Report

	Municipality of Concordia	Héctor Rivero	Environmental Unit (UDAAPA)	Face-to-face
	Municipality of Concordia	Santiago Maredo	Environment Secretariat Administrative	Face-to-face
	Municipality of Concordia	Marcos De Martínez	Project works engineer	Face-to-face
	Municipality of Colón	José Luis Walser	Municipal Mayor	Face-to-face
	Municipality of Colón	Roberto Bergara	Environmental Directorate of Colón	Face-to-face
	Municipality of Colón	Raúl Acuña	Architecture and Planning officer	Face-to-face

### C. Interviewees in Uruguay

Sector	Entity	Representative	Role	Interview
<b>Regional Operational Team</b>	UNDP	Myrna Campoleoni	Regional Activities Coordinator	Virtual
		Analia Marino	Regional UNDP Specialist	Virtual
<b>Project Operational Team</b>	Ministry of Environment	Mariana Kasprzik	Advisor to the Climate Change Directorate	Virtual
	CND	Luciana López	Coordinator of Environmental Programs	Virtual
	UNDP Uruguay	Gabriel Bottino	Deputy Representative Uruguay	Virtual
		Magdalena Preve	Program Analyst	Virtual
	Project coordinators	Natalia García	Coordinator of national activities in Uruguay	Virtual
<b>Project partners</b>	Municipality of Bella Unión	William Cresseri	Mayor of Bella Unión	Virtual
		María del Rosario Cervini	Technical Advisor to the Municipality	Virtual
	DINAGUA	Adriana Piperno	Technician for Floods and Storm Drainage	Virtual
	SINAE	Walter Morroni	Head of the Planning Area	Virtual
		Natalia Curto	Planning Area	Virtual
	Rio Negro Departmental Intendancy	Hugo Hornos	Director of Works	Face-to-face
	Rio Negro Departmental Intendancy	Viviana Fiorelli	Director of Territorial Planning and Housing	Face-to-face

## Mid Term Evaluation of the Project Regional Argentina – Uruguay: “Climate Change adaptation in vulnerable coastal cities and ecosystems of the Uruguay River”

Product 3. Final Evaluation Report

Civil society	Rio Negro Departmental Intendancy	Adrián Stagi	Director of the Environment	Face-to-face
	Esteros de Farrapos e Islas del Río Uruguay National Park	Gabriela Bentancur-Viglione	Coordinator of Adaptation Activities	Face-to-face
	Municipality of San Javier	Washington Laco	Mayor of San Javier	Face-to-face
	NGO Amba	Inti Carro	Organization representative	Virtual
	Estrella del Sur Youth Center (Paysandú)	Claudia Alvez	Coordinator of the youth center	Virtual
	Don Atilio/Saladero Youth Center (Salto)	Guillermo Macedo	Coordinator of the youth center	Virtual
		Pedro	Coordinator of the youth center	Virtual
		Irene	Coordinator of the youth center	Virtual

### D. Implementing team

Sector	Entity	Representative	Role	Interview
Implementing Agency	CAF	Carolina Cortés	Sustainability Direction	Virtual
	CAF	Angélica Pino	AF Project Monitoring Support Specialist	Virtual
	CAF	Óscar Guevara	Climate Change Management	Virtual

## Annex I. List of documents

1. Regional Programme Proposal (AF)
2. Annex 1. Acronyms and abbreviations
3. Annex 2. Bibliography
4. Annex 3. Project Description Sheet
5. Annex 4. Consultation Process
6. Annex 5. Evidence-based identification of environmental and social risks
7. Annex 6. Environmental and social management Plan, complaints and grievances mechanism, and monitoring, evaluation, and oversight programme
8. Annex 7. Gender Evaluation and Action Plan
9. Annex 8. Cost – Benefit Analysis
10. Annex 9. Climate change vulnerability, adaptive capacity and risk analysis
11. Annex 10. Overview cities climate risk profiles
12. Annex 11. Vulnerability Analysis of Coastal Ecosystems
13. Annex 12. Terms of Reference for Executing Entities
14. Execution agreement between the Andean Development Corporation, the National Development Corporation and the Ministry of Environment of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.
15. Execution agreement between the Andean Development Corporation and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).
16. Execution agreement between the Andean Development Corporation and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS<sup>14</sup>) of Argentina.
17. Inception Workshop report
18. Procurement Plan. Year 1-2
19. Operational Plan. Year 1-2
20. Meeting Minutes of the National Technical Committee of Uruguay
21. Meeting Minutes of the National Technical Committee of Argentina
22. Meeting Minutes of Technical Committee and Binational Directive
23. Project Execution Quarterly Reports
24. Annex. Environmental, Social and Gender Safeguards Evidence Report – Argentina. Year 1-2
25. Annex. Environmental, Social and Gender Safeguards Evidence Report – Uruguay. Year 1-2
26. PPR 1 and PPR 2

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<sup>14</sup> Undersecretariat of Environment of the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports – Ministry of Interior.

## Annex J. Uruguay mission report

### A. Face-to-face interviews agenda

Date	Full name	Institution	Role
Tuesday, July 16th	Hugo Hornos	Rio Negro Intendancy – Direction of Works	Works Director
Tuesday, July 16th	Viviana Fiorelli	Rio Negro Intendancy – Direction of Works	Territorial Planning and Housing Director
Tuesday, July 16th	Adrián Stagi	Rio Negro Intendancy – Direction of Environment	Environment Director
Tuesday, July 16th	Gabriela Bentancur-Viglione	Esteros de Farrapos e Islas National Park - Uruguay	Adaptation activities Coordinator
Wednesday, July 17th	Washington Laco	Municipality of San Javier	Mayor of San Javier

### B. Field visit schedule

Activity	Date	Time
Kickoff meeting in CAF Representative Office	Monday, July 15th	9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Lunch		12:00 a.m.
Trip to Rio Negro, Fray Bentos (Team, UNDP, CND, Uruguay evaluator, CAF)		2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (4h)
Spend the night in Fray Bentos (“La posada del Fraile y Plaza”)		
Check-out from Fray Bentos stay	Tuesday, July 16th	7:30 a.m.
Interviews with actors in the Intendancy of Rio Negro: Hugo Hornos – Director of Works Viviana Fiorelli - Director of Territorial Planning and Housing Adrián Stagi - Director of Environment		8:00 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Visit to the Housing Complex Park La Esmeralda - Fray Bentos, along with CAF		11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Lunch		12:00 p.m.
Trip to San Javier		12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (1h 30min)
Visit to <i>Galpón de Piedra</i> in the Esteros de Farrapos e Islas National Park in Uruguay, along with CAF		1:30 p.m.
Visit to Esteros de Farrapos e Islas National Park in Uruguay (PNEFIRU), along with CAF		1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Interview with Gabriela Betancur (Adaptation Activities coordinator of Esteros de Farrapo NP)		4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Spend the night in Paysandú		6:00 p.m. (45 min)
Trip from Paysandú stay to San Javier Town Hall	Wednesday, July 17th	8:00 a.m. (45 min)
Interview with Washington Laco (Mayor of San Javier)		9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
Lunch		12:00 p.m.
Visit to the access bridge to the dock and coastal areas of San Javier, along with CAF		2:00 p.m.
Return to Montevideo		3:00 p.m.

### C. Mission report

- Level of knowledge of the project by the interviewees

A disparity was identified in the level of information and participation of the interviewed actors, influenced by their time in office and their area of action. In some cases, "the project" was identified with specific works in urban areas, while in others it was related to interventions in protected areas. Some actors, with greater experience and knowledge of the local context, demonstrated a deeper understanding, while others, new to their roles, presented limited knowledge.

- Political party dimension and times of governance

It was observed that the periods of government and the political affiliation of the rulers influence the transfer of information and the continuity of the initiatives. Río Negro stands out for having a division dedicated to environmental issues, aligned with the recent creation of the Ministry of Environment. However, there are tensions between conservation and other possible uses of the river, such as tourism and commercial navigation.

- Gender focus

The interviewees' responses on gender equality were mostly generic, affirming equality without evidencing concrete actions. Furthermore, it was observed that most of the management and representative positions are occupied by men, which could influence the perception and practice of gender equity in the project.

- Cultural changes

Local residents have shown a gradual adaptation to the stricter conservation standards in protected areas, although there are concerns about the sustainability of these changes after the completion of the project and possible changes in management. In certain areas, the lack of control and supervision has led to acts of vandalism, which highlights the importance of proper management and maintenance to prevent the deterioration of facilities and ensure the continuity of conservation objectives.

### D. Photographic records of the mission

**Figure 4. Visit to the completed work in La Esmeralda Park – Fray Bentos**



**Figure 5. Poor state of the public services infrastructure of the La Esmeralda complex – Fray Bentos**



**Figure 6. Visit to the Esteros de Farrapos e Islas del Río Uruguay National Park**



**Figure 7. Progress of the work on the Arroyo La Esmeralda basin**



## Annex K. Argentina mission report

### A. Face-to-face interviews agenda

Date	Full name	Institution	Role
Tuesday, July 23rd	Constanza Montoreano	Municipality de Concordia	Municipality's Undersecretary of Environment
Tuesday, July 23rd	Mariana Costa	Municipality de Concordia	Environmental education
Tuesday, July 23rd	Héctor Rivero	Municipality de Concordia	Environment Unit (UDAAPA)
Tuesday, July 23rd	Santiago Maredo	Municipality de Concordia	Secretariat of Environment administrative
Tuesday, July 23rd	Marcos De Martínez	Municipality de Concordia	Project works engineer
Wednesday, July 24th	José Luis Walser	Municipality de Colón	Municipal Mayor
Wednesday, July 24th	Roberto Bergara	Municipality de Colón	Environment Direction of Colón
Wednesday, July 24th	Raúl Acuña	Municipality de Colón	Architecture and Planning manager
Wednesday, July 24th	Facundo Alcalde	National Parks Administration of Argentina	PNEP Manager
Wednesday, July 24th	Pablo Gallicet	National Parks Administration of Argentina	

### B. Field visit schedule

Activity	Date	Time
Road transportation to Concordia (Undersecretariat team, Argentina evaluator, CAF) Spend the night	Monday, July 22nd	2:00 p.m.
Interviews – Municipality of Concordia - Constanza Montoreano (Municipality's Undersecretariat of Environment) - Héctor Rivero (Environmental Unit (UDAAPA) of Concordia Municipality) - Mariana Costa (Responsible for Environmental Education) - Santiago Maredo (Secretariat of Environment administrative) - Marcos De Martínez (Project works engineer)	Tuesday, July 23rd	9:00 a.m.
Visit to the coastal work of the water purification plant in the city of Concordia		1:00 p.m.
Trip to Colón and spend the night		3:00 p.m.
Interviews - Municipality of Colón: - José Luis Walser (Municipal Mayor) - Roberto Bergara (Environment Direction) - Raúl Acuña (Architecture - Planning)	Wednesday, July 24th	9:00 a.m.
Lunch		12:00 p.m.

Visit to El Palmar National Park		1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Interview with Ricardo Guerra		2:30 pm.
Return to Buenos Aires		4:00 p.m.
Closure reunion with CAF's Representative Office in Argentina Mission presentation, participation of ODR CAF and Government representatives and Project coordinators	Thursday, July 25th	9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

## C. Mission Report

- Governance and Management

The project is characterized by a complex governance and management structure, based on a tripartite and binational approach. Despite this complexity, it has demonstrated effective management and fluid coordination between the actors involved, which exemplifies a solid organizational competence.

- Design and Relevance

The project has been designed in an integrated manner, involving numerous actors around a specific problem that is not being addressed by other initiatives in the region. The relevance of the project has been underlined by the recent climatic events that have affected the Uruguay River basin. The infrastructures built so far, such as the coastal defense in Concordia, have proven their effectiveness in resisting the flood events and fulfilling their protective function.

- Flexibility and Adaptability

The project has shown a remarkable capacity to adapt to changes in the unfavorable economic and political context in Argentina. This flexibility has required adjustments in the scope of the works, the prioritization of certain activities and the cancellation of others. Although these adjustments have created an environment of constant stress for the team, they have been essential to maintaining the continuity and effectiveness of the project.

- Impact of Institutional Instability

The instability in the payroll of officials of the Undersecretariat of Environment has affected the execution of the project. In addition, the particular conditions of the Uruguay River have had an additional impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the intervention. These factors have contributed to significant delays, especially in the planned physical works, affecting the overall pace of the project.

- Current Situation and Perspectives

The project is at a critical stage, with a tight time horizon and limited resources. Although it faces significant challenges, the existence of available resources and the commitment of the actors involved offer a basis for moving forward. It is crucial that the project team coordinate with all actors to plan the final steps and maximize the use of available resources. The willingness of the executing entity is a positive factor in facing these challenges and continuing with its development.

## D. Photographic records of the mission



**Figure 8. Visit of the CAF, UNDP and Environment Undersecretariat teams to the PNEP**



**Figure 9. Visit of the CAF, UNDP and Environment Undersecretariat teams to the materials collection area for the works in the Municipality of Colón**

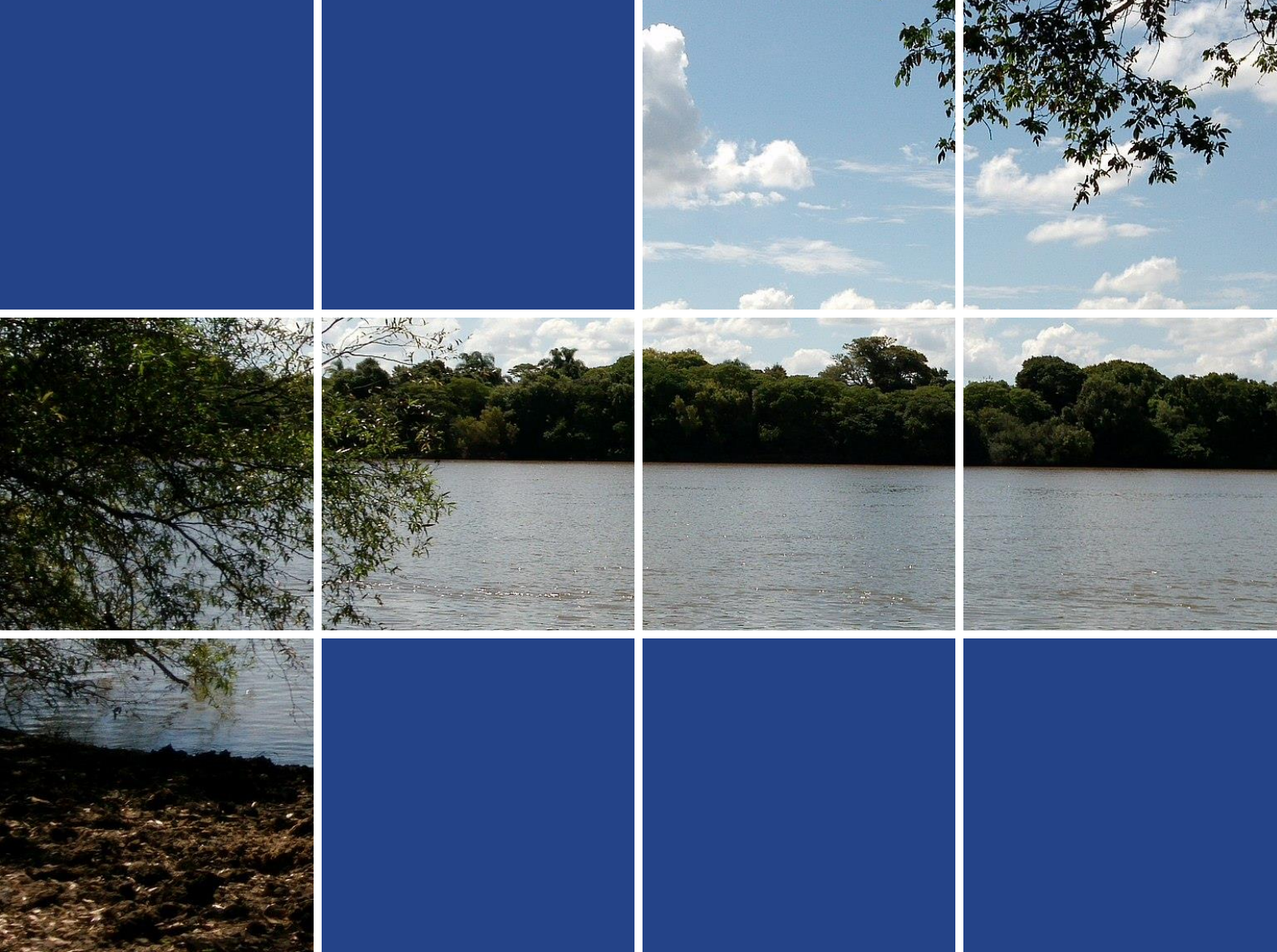


**Figure 10. Visit to the coastal works of the water treatment plant in the city of Concordia**



**Figure 11. Tour to El Palmar National Park**





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