

Technical Panel Meeting Minutes May 28, 2020

Duration: 17:00 – 18:30 CET

Participants: Michael Dutschke (MD, minutes), Gianluca Gondolinie (GG), Kaysara Khatun (KK), Peter Schlesinger (PS), Eder Zanetti (EZ)

Topics

- 1 Discussion on 015 CR CCT PIN for the Atlantic Coast Umbrella Project
- 2 Approval of the CCT Atlantic Coast Umbrella Project
- 3 Miscellaneous
- 4 Next TP meeting

1 Discussion on 015 CR CCT PIN for the Atlantic Coast Umbrella Project

On 9 March, the [Centro Científico Tropical](#) submitted a PIN covering the three Conservation Areas (1) Arenal Huetar Norte, (2) La Amistad Caribe and (3) Tortuguero, which was accepted by the TP on 20 March 2020.

Usually, after acceptance, the TP would send two experts for a validation mission to the project area. On their return, they would prepare an Assessment Report to be presented to the TP. If the project is found to follow GCS rules and principles, the TP would then approve the project.

During the current Covid19 pandemics situation, the mission cannot take place. In order for the project to go ahead nevertheless and receive funding, it was decided on the last TP Meeting to modify the procedure for this particular PIN, given the trust in the project proponent and the project participants.

As a result of his thorough review of the PIN, EZ gave a presentation on all aspects of the planned project. He had also produced an estimate for the CCUs to be expected on each of the three sub-areas (delineated along the administrative units *Área de Conservación*). He noted that he had to introduce own estimates on the actual vegetation cover and its degree of degradation, because the SINAC data are not grouped along the same criteria. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

During the discussion, the following issues were raised:

1. Should we additionally use local vegetation and carbon density data from Costa Rica specific reporting?
 - a. The CCU Spreadsheet models carbon data based on international default data as recommended by the IPCC. This is the first proxy applied by GCS Methodology 1, before project-based carbon monitoring is put in place. Also, in this case of not fully compatible data and no in-situ validation, this discount conservatively reflects the error margin.
 - b. When the GCS started, it was expected that carbon monitoring would form part under most conservation projects, e.g. under what was to become REDD+, and GCS would piggyback on these project-specific data, once they become available. Today, project carbon monitoring is no longer a standard

procedure. The GCS will not insist in costly procedures, as long as there are other indicators to prove that no relevant portion of protected vegetation has been lost.

- c. If however national measured data for individual core protected areas are available, these will be used, once CCUs from these areas are being offered to investors/donors. This way, areas funded may be monitored to a higher precision level than the overall project, which will allow avoiding for these areas the 40% discount applied in the first-year clause under Methodology 1.
 - d. As the price of CCUs on every particular area is based on investor's willingness to pay, the absolute number of CCUs is not of an essence. Willingness to pay depends on other priorities, like e.g. biodiversity indicators or proximity of the protected area to the investor's place of operation.
2. In order to prioritize the sale of CCUs, the TP recommends to apply indicators like High Biodiversity Value or risk-prone areas to invasion.
 3. Biodiversity corridors are not automatically core protected areas as defined under the GCS, but patches within them do comply with this criterion.

2 Approval of the CCT Atlantic Coast Umbrella Project

The TP unanimously approves the Project 015 CR CCT under the condition that it will be validated on site on the next available opportunity. Depending on the coronavirus situation, this may be in one year from now.

3 Miscellaneous

As a spin-off of the debate, the following issues were raised:

1. MD: The GCS was founded with the intention to create a credible system that avoids unnecessary upfront costs for new projects. The validation usually required is a relevant cost for new projects. In the case project partners and their procedures are familiar to the GCS administration, a Conditional Approval may also be granted on other occasions, so that the respective project is able to raise funds for the validation process during its first year of existence. – tbd
2. PS: Strengthening the GCS administration: The TP should be enhanced by new members. Preference should be given to Costa-Rican female experts, in order to reflect our geographic focus and to improve gender balance. MD to produce draft Terms of Reference. All current TP members are asked to turn in recommendations for persons to address (**this will be done by the GCS Secretariat – please do not contact the experts to be proposed by you as of now**).
3. GG: The TP should meet more frequently, preferably in regular intervals. – tbd

On the FUNDECODES umbrella project, MD informs that the Ristic donation contract has still not been served for the last two years. This is a problem particularly for the ongoing mangrove restoration, but it also opens a gap in GCS accounts. The Secretariats together with a commercial partner is currently taking appropriate measures.

4 Next TP meeting

No meeting date has yet been agreed upon. MD will address the TP on the earliest occasion to address issue 2 above (Strengthening the CGS administration).