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**INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANCY FOR THE FINAL  
EVALUATION OF THE PROYECT FMAM PIMS 4151 –  
PNUD 71841 “STRENGTHENING THE FINANCIAL  
SUSTAINABILITY AND OPERATIONAL  
EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VENEZUELAN NATIONAL  
PARKS SYSTEM”**

**Final Report**

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Abbreviation	Significance
AUSMAR	Areas Under Special Management Regimes
PA	Protected area
CO	Country Office
VFSR	Venezuelan Foundation of Seismological Research
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIVSB	Geographic Institute of Venezuela Simon Bolivar
NIAS	National Institute of Aquatic Spaces
INPARQUES	National Institute of Parks
SOINFIA	Socialist Institute of Fishing and Aquaculture
INMAST	Institute of Marine Science and Technology
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MINEMEW	Ministry of Popular Power for the Environment, now the Ministry of Popular Power for Ecosocialism and Water
MINTOUR	Ministry of Popular Power for Tourism
MPPD	Ministry of Popular Power for the defense
MPPPF	Ministry of Popular Power for Planning and Finance
MPPHH	Ministry of Popular Power for Housing and Habitat
PDVSA	Petroleum of Venezuela
NM	Natural Monuments
NP	National Parks
PPRU	Plans Planning and Regulation of Use
PIF	Project Identification Form
AOP	Annual Operational Plan
PIR	Project Implementation Review
VPS	Venezuelan Parks System

### Technical details of the project

<b>Region</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>Country</b>	Venezuela
<b>GEF Operational Area</b>	Biodiversity
<b>Strategic Program</b>	<b>No. 2:</b> Increased Representation of Effectively Managed Protected Areas in Protected Area Systems
<b>Implementing Agency</b>	PNUD
<b>Executing Agency</b>	INPARQUES

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project is implemented by PNUD under national execution of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela represented by the National Parks Institute (INPARQUES). It officially started in July 2009 and ended in July 2014. It is intended to allocated \$ 23 '912.700, of which US \$ 7'272. 730 is a donation of the GEF and \$ 16'640. 000 are co-financed. Upon completion of the project 14% of the FMAM donation was executed.

The main objective to be address by the project is to strengthen the capacity of INPARQUES to face threats to the conservation of protected areas, in particular the limited financial resources available for the administration of PA, which implies that INPARQUES does not have access to personnel, equipment and logistical support it needs. This ultimate goal sought through the following results:

Result 1: Increased support from the Government for the Venezuela Park System (VPS).

Result 2: Better operational effectiveness of the administration of the PA and cost effectiveness of resources invested

Result 3: Diversification of income available to management of PAs.

Result 4: Co-management arrangements to finance the administrative costs of the PA.

Result 5: Establishment of monitoring processes, learning, adaptive feedback and evaluation.

As for the design of the project, a high level participation of INPARQUES at technical and political levels is highlighted. Actors interviewed confirmed that the project was relevant and appropriate for the institution, responding to major national political and institutional priorities of INPARQUES. Among the weaknesses identified it is considered that the complexity of the processes was underestimated, in particularly the precise management of change necessary for successful implementation of the project. The PRODOC does not present a clear implementation strategy, and does not provide sufficient political and institutional reading about the risks and barriers related to the use of tools such as the economic valuation of environmental services. On the other hand, it is sensitive for other projects financed by GEF to propose changes and modifications on national legislation. The objective related to an increase in the number and/or surface of PA seems lose and does not respond to a programmatic logic.

With regards to the project implementation, a low level of compliance with planned activities and products, both in the logical framework and annual operating plans, was recognized. As a reflection of this performance, the annual budget implementation during the period 2010 - 2012, bordered on average 25%. Among the main causes of this result, interviewed people mentioned the following:

- Teams that attended this first planning stage and shaped the project document hardly participated in the following project phases. This might have delayed the starting processes, especially due to an unclear implementation strategy that result of a shared reading between the involved designing, executing and implementing agency. Much time was lost for example, to define whether it was necessary to operate through consultants or the staff of INPARQUES. This despite the fact that two workshops took place starting on November 11, 2009 and February 14, 2012, in which measures were agreed to achieve a shared reading of the project.
- For various reasons explained in detail in Chapter 4,2, the PEU failed to consolidate a team with exclusive dedication, and technical profiles with experience and expertise in the areas of focus of the project. Instead the execution was managed from an operating unit with 3 persons, responsible for monitoring the results that were delegated to different directors INPARQUES. Even if the directors in charge have at their disposal technical teams formed by professionals in various disciplines, these were not exclusively working for the project, and had under their responsibility other tasks and priorities. The management did not get the expected results, and the directors were unable to devote the time and commitment needed to get their products.
- Incompatibility in administrative processes, and to some extent in the institutional culture of the executing and implementing agency. This is verified through multiple testimonies from both sides, which attest difficulties in the development and adoption of AOPS, ToR, and other steps necessary for implementing the project. This result in a perception of widespread slowness, waiting times eroded the confidence, motivation and enthusiasm of the teams involved.

Faced with these difficulties some adaptive management efforts and attempts to strengthen the link between executing and implementing agency were recorded, which tried to steer the project out of inertia and channel it to a suitable pace of implementation. In the opinion of some respondents, the difficulties encountered could have been served on time, if the midterm evaluation had not been postponed. INPARQUES intend to move the start of the evaluation,

due to their own expectations of enhanced results to show, considering that constraints within the learning curve and project takeoff, faced during the first years of the project. This assessment effectively detected problems in the implementation and proposed alternative solutions, but arrived too late.

The level of execution of all activities originally planned is low. However it is interesting to note that the results at the overall objective are met, even though they cannot be directly attributable to the project. The processes of institutional induction in financial sustainability can be replicated and staggered through own initiatives of INPARQUES as well as other projects within the GEF portfolio, which have exclusive components for financial sustainability.

Rather than developing entirely new financing mechanisms, the project prioritized the reactivation of those who were underutilized. A high potential for replication was found in the results obtained at the level of improved revenue collection of self-management by activities such as automatic ticketing, registration of tour operators, verification of concessions and antenna system. INPARQUES recognizes and values the experience gained throughout this process and mentions it has achieved committing public resources to further automate different access protected areas.

The project has two key conditions for sustainability, 1) expanded institutional capacities through lessons learned; 2) executed activities that met the expected results and therefore reasonably offer the following opportunities for replication and scaling:

- Automatized vehicle access to Morrocoy and other PA with a high visitation rate.
- Community companies to provide maintenance services and waste recollection.
- Benefits to local vulnerable populations through concessions and other opportunities to strengthen local economies through the PA system.
- Systematized concessions, boat and tour operators, etc.
- General review of fees and tariffs in force, at least the inflation adjustment.
- Economic valuation to strengthen INPARQUES political positioning in higher levels.
- Coastal and Marine GEF project and its financial sustainability component.
- Expansion of state actors with roles in the management of Pas.

INPARQUES can celebrate the accomplishment of the projects major objectives, although these cannot be directly traced to the project implementation. This suggests that a sound implementation of the project according to its original objectives might have placed INPARQUES in a much stronger position to take advantage of the opportunities and political priority demonstrated by the government.

Indeed, during the past year INPARQUES registered a major increase in the regular and extraordinary budget. This increase is reflected especially in the addition of 500 new rangers, and the availability of extra resources for the acquisition of equipment, adequacy of civil infrastructure and staff training. Also INPARQUES now has a Superior Body that facilitates direct dialogue and leverage with the most relevant political actors in the country. This has multiplied actors within the PA management, incorporating the National Guard, firefighters, police, governors and community councils.

The project allowed the positioning of the financial sustainability as an issue within INPARQUES, leading to the formation of a special projects unit within the institution. The project is most relevant to INPARQUES today than when it was originally designed. Budget availability associated with fluctuations in the international price of its main export, present a more favorable panorama to diversify sources of income and strengthen the financial muscle of national institutions. On the other hand, a greater political positioning of INPARQUES, in turn demands greater proactive capabilities as well as tools to mobilize new sources of funding, and actors PA conservation.



**Table 1. Project Overview**

<b>Title of the project:</b>	<b>STRENGTHENING THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VENEZUELAN NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM</b>			
<b>Identification of the FMAM Project:</b>	4151		<i>At the time of approbation (millions of USD)</i>	<i>At the time of finalization (millions of USD)</i>
<b>Identification of the PNUD project:</b>	71841	FMAM financing:	7.175.866,00	7.175.866,00
<b>Country:</b>	Venezuela	IA y EA have:	520.000,00	520.000,00
<b>Region:</b>	Latin-America	Government:	20.645.000,00	20.645.000,00
<b>Area of interest:</b>	BD	Other: AECID	1.950.000,00	1.950.000,00
<b>Operation System:</b>	SO1 – OP1/OP3	Total Co financing:	30.290.866,00	30.290.866,00
<b>Executing Agency</b>	INPARQUES	Total project expenditures:	0.00	1030.599,40
<b>Other partners involved:</b>	MINAMB MPPPF	Signing the project document (project start):		27.07.2009
		Closing date (Operative):	Proposed 30.06.14	Real: 31.10.14

**Table 2. Scale of the evaluation**

<b>Grades of results, effectiveness, efficiency, S&amp;E and implementing of A&amp;E</b>		<b>Grades of sustainability</b>		<b>Grades of relevance</b>		<b>Grades of impact</b>	
<b>6</b>	Very satisfactory: did not present deficiencies	<b>4</b>	Probable: negligible risks to sustainability.	<b>2</b>	Relevant	<b>3</b>	Significant
<b>5</b>	Satisfactory: minor deficiencies	<b>3</b>	Somewhat likely : moderate risks.	<b>1</b>	Not Relevant	<b>2</b>	Minimum
<b>4</b>	Something satisfying	<b>2</b>	Improbable: Significant risks.			<b>1</b>	Negligible
<b>3</b>	Somewhat unsatisfactory : significant deficiencies	<b>1</b>	Improbable (I): Serious risks.				
<b>2</b>	Unsatisfactory : significant deficiencies						
<b>1</b>	Very unsatisfactory : serious deficiencies						
	Additional qualifications where appropriate:	Not applicable You cannot assess					

Fuente: Términos de referencia de esta evaluación

Table 3. Final grade of the project.

<b>Rating of the project performance</b>			
<b>1. Formulation / Project design</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2. Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Concept / Design	AI	S&E design	S
National appropriation	S	S&E plan execution	AI
Participation of stakeholders in the design	S	Overall quality of S&E	AI
Replicability	S		
<b>3. Execution of IA y EA</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>4. Evaluation of results</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Implementation approach	AI		
PNUD application quality	AI	Relevance	R
Quality of performance: implementing agency	AI	Effectiveness	I
Overall quality of implementation and enforcement	AS	Efficiency	AI
Stakeholder participation	AI	Overall rating of the project results	AI
Financial planning	I		
<b>5. Sustainability</b>	<b>Grade</b>		
Financial resources	PA		
Socio-political	AI		
Institutional framework and governance	AI		
Environmental	AI		
Overall probability of sustainability	AI		

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Evaluation Purpose**

This document is the draft of the Final Report in accordance with the terms of reference of the "INTERNATIONAL CONSULTING FOR THE FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION GEF PIMS 4151 - PNUD 71841 "STRENGTHENING THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VENEZUELAN NATIONAL PARKS SYSTEM". The evaluation will be conducted according to the guidelines, rules and procedures established by PNUD and GEF, as established in the PNUD Evaluation Guide for Projects Financed by the GEF. This draft final report presents the initial version of the assessment, according to the contents and methodology adopted by the contractor in the first product of this consultancy.

Assessment is understood as the systematic collection and analysis of information on the characteristics and results of projects, which provide the basis for improving its efficiency and make informed decisions about current and future programming. In this case, it is a final evaluation with a focus on the results set and achieved, which will serve to highlight the achievements of the project in meeting its objectives and to highlight best practices and lessons learned in the design and implementation of the project.

The overall objective of the evaluation is to provide a review of the progress of the project implementation, review the achievements in the realization of its products, its results achieved and lessons learned. The specific objectives of this evaluation process are:

- Assess the level of achievement of the expected results in the implementation period, and the relevance of the intervention within the framework of the strategy of the GEF, PNUD Assistance Framework in Venezuela and public policy of the country.
- Analyze the sustainability of the effects generated by the project, and where appropriate, the potential impact of the intervention in the medium and long term.
- Assess the design and implementation of intervention: coherence between activities outputs and achievement of the specific objective.
- Assessing the activities carried out, the pace of implementation, its contribution to achieving the results and optimization of the resources used to carry them out.

## **2.2 Scope and Methodology**

The consultant is governed strictly by the standards of good evaluations of utility, feasibility, accuracy and neutrality. Likewise, it confirms that the working methods were oriented in a highly participatory process with stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project. Throughout the process the consultant generated a close relationship and active interaction with the PNUD Office in the country, the project team, the Regional Technical Advisor of GEF / PNUD, directors, coordinators and project consultants, and other interested parties, with the goal to expedite the evaluation process and enable timely feedback of the findings.

A first key task of the evaluation was the review of project documentation delivered by the contractor and the implementing partners, which included, but was not limited, to project documents, project reports, including annual progress reports (APR) and others reports, reviews of the project budget, mid-term evaluation, monitoring tools for GEF areas of interest, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and other documents raised relating to the project.

Based on the project description and analysis of the logical framework an evaluation framework was established in the second step of the process, combining the guiding questions for the five key evaluation criteria (formulation and project design, project execution, monitoring and evaluation and results). This initial exercise defines the scope and qualitative and quantitative indicators that are essential for assessing the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

For the information gathering stage, the consultant based its work mainly on three methods work with data triangulation, ensuring the validity and reliability of results. On the one hand, all the documents submitted by the contractor and the implementing partners, mentioned above were reviewed in detail. Unfortunately for the evaluation the updated results of the METT Scorecard and the Financial Sustainability Scorecard were not available. On the other hand, in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the project at national and local level. Finally, field visits were made to the project implementation sites and pilot projects. This also helped the consultant to get a first-hand impression of the effectiveness of activities in different parts of the project.

The findings obtained during the mission in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela were presented to the strategic committee of the project and to the PNUD CO for informational purposes and to receive feedback. Based on the results, the consultant will highlight transferable good practices and lessons learned from the project.

The evaluation of the project was implemented in three stages of the project life cycle for the four components of the project results:

- a) Planning: Development of the project including the logical framework, assumptions, risks, indicators, budget, country context, country ownership, participation of stakeholders in the design, replication, among others.
- b) Implementation of project: implementation approach, stakeholder participation, quality of implementation by each institution involved and overall financial planning, monitoring and evaluation during implementation
- c) Results: Effects, impact, catalytic effect of the results, its integration with other PNUD priorities such as poverty reduction, better management, prevention and recovery from natural disasters and gender, as well as their sustainability in terms financial resources, socio-political, the institutional framework, governance and environmental.

For the evaluation of each project phase, the consultant will focus on the following questions as they are developed in the terms of reference to guide interviews with key stakeholders and assessing all project activities:

Relevance: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the GEF focal area and the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national level?

Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected results and objectives been achieved?

Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently in accordance with international and national standards?

- Sustainability
- Were the precepts and concepts contained in the project internalized and appropriated by the institutions associated with the implementation of the initiative?
- Are there any evidence of a behavioral change in organizations and local institutions in relation to the conservation of biodiversity and the contribution of the environment in maintaining and improving the living conditions and equitable human development?
- Impact:
- Is there evidence that the project has helped reducing environmental stress or improve the ecological status, or has allowed progress toward those results?
- Has there been a maintenance or increase in forest areas, patches of connectivity and undisturbed areas within the project area of focus?
- Has there been an established sustainable mechanism for participation and inclusive decision-making in planning land use, zoning and management of the productive landscape?
- Has the project succeeded in demonstrating the benefits of the implementation of biodiversity-friendly practices in the economic, environmental and social spheres?
- Has there been a strengthening of policies, planning frameworks and financial mechanisms to support biodiversity friendly production systems?
- Has there been success in implementing pilot experiences that could be scalable and replicable at the municipal level?

Finally, the consultant evaluates the potential catalytic role of the project, integration with other PNUD priorities and the influence of external factors and context (new threats and opportunities for biodiversity conservation, local and national politics, evolution economic, etc.) in the project results to support the development of conclusions and recommendations.

According to the methodological guidelines of the GEF, the final assessment summarizes the analysis through a qualification of the projects relevance, effectiveness and efficiency as well as quality monitoring and evaluation systems.

### **2.3 Structure of the evaluation report**

The document is structured in three stages. It begins with an analysis and description of the project including the problem encompasses its objectives, its components, and context. Then it continues with a description of the main findings of the evaluation, focused on the different stages of the project life cycle, and finally concludes with a series of lessons learned and recommendations.

### **3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AND CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT**

The project implemented by PNUD under national execution by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela represented by the National Parks Institute (INPARQUES), officially started in July 2009 and is still in progress (see note above). Originally it was estimated that the activities proposed in the project could be implemented in a period of 60 months.

The intended budget for the project were US \$ 23'912.700, of which US \$ 7'272.730 came from a GEF donation (US \$ 93.400 donation for the project preparation and US \$ 7'175.866 for its execution) and US \$ 16'640.000 of co-financing. The mid-term evaluation was carried out in July 2013, until then 12.7% of the budget had been executed.

#### **3.1 Problems that the projects sought to address**

Venezuela is one of 17 countries considered to be highly diverse in the world; in fact, it has been located in the ninth place. Venezuela has a wide range of regions that are home to a variety of ecosystems, with at least 117.000 species registered (9 percent) of all described species on the face of the earth. Of these more than 1.400 are birds, 345 are reptiles, 290 are amphibians, and 1.800 are fish. This rich biodiversity is an important national asset and has potential to generate sustainable wealth to the country.

Much of the extraordinary biodiversity of this country is protected in its VPS. Venezuela's protected areas provide very important environmental services to the population, for example, it reports that it generates water for 80% of the population, just as it is a source of water for hydropower generation, or serves as a buffer against possible natural disasters.

Since the creation of the first (Henry Pittier) National Park in 1937, Venezuela has declared 400 Areas under Special Administration Regime (AUSMAR) throughout the entire national territory with different categories of protection and use. The management of different categories is the responsibility of various national institutions. Several of these categories would be related to the protection of biodiversity. Strict protection, scientific, educational and recreational occupying an important area of its territory: 43 national parks (13 million ha.), 36 natural monuments (4.2 million ha.), 7 wildlife refuges (251 000 ha) 1 Wildlife Sanctuary (35 ha). Of these categories, national parks and national monuments are those with the highest level of legal protection. These are under the jurisdiction of INPARQUES. Others with protection objective but with



regulated use as wildlife reserves, Areas for Environmental Protection and Recovery, Area of tourist interest and Biosphere Reserves are handled by other institutions - including the Ministry of Popular Power for Eco-socialism and Waters (former name MINEMEW).

According to the project document, the main problem which is to be attended is to strengthen the capacity of INPARQUES to address threats to the conservation of protected areas, in particular the limited level of financial resources available for the administration of the PA, implying that INPARQUES does not have access to personnel, equipment and logistical support it needs.

The management of protected areas and conservation of biodiversity in Venezuela presents serious difficulties that threaten this important national and world heritage, which in turn could be an important source of income due to the many goods and services they generate. This project focuses on protected areas relevant for conservation and managed by INPARQUES - National Parks and Natural Monuments - distributed throughout the national territory of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The territory of the 43 national parks covers 13 million ha. and the 36 natural monuments 4.2 million ha. The categories of NP and NM are protected areas are more important and highly significant for conservation.

### **3.2 Immediate objectives and development of the project**

This five-year project received funding under the premise of establishing the conditions for the operation and financial sustainability of the 20 million hectares of the Park System of Venezuela. The project focuses on: i) increasing government support for protected areas, in order to increase the operational and administrative capacity of the National Parks Institute, diversifying income sources and promoting partnerships with other stakeholders of the PA; ii) learning through pilot projects of co administration to generation alternative sources of income for the PA (e.g. waste management.); iii) declare several new areas to establish links between PAs that are currently scattered promoting thereby cost effectiveness.

The overall project objective is to conserve biodiversity of global significance in Venezuela. The proposed strategy (overview) is that this goal would be achieved through institutional and financial strengthening of INPARQUES: "By June 2014, Venezuela has implemented an efficient operational and financial framework ensuring long-term protected area (PA) sustainability, key throughout the country "(institutional and financial strengthening of the NP).

### **3.3 Expected Results**

This ultimate goal is sought through partial results:

Result 1: Increased support from the Government for the Venezuela Park System (VPS).

Result 2: Better operational effectiveness of the administration of the PA and cost effectiveness of resources invested

Result 3: Diversification of income available to management of PAs.

Result 4: Co-management arrangements to finance the administrative costs of the PA.

Result 5: Establishment of monitoring processes, learning, adaptive feedback and evaluation.

## **4. FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Design and development of the project**

Overall it is considered that the design of the project has significant shortcomings, particularly in terms of understanding the issue of financial sustainability, and implementation approach for the case of Venezuelan. Virtually the complexity of changes and institutional reforms, which often involve pioneering processes and technical profiles, which are not normally found in institutions dedicated to the conservation of biodiversity, is underestimated.

The logical framework on a general objective level which poses a goal of raising additional resources, is relatively modest, considering the important operational and financial gap that records INPARQUES to adequately address a complex and expensive system of conservation, covering over 17 million hectares. It is also considered modest, due to the favorable economic context that Venezuela had during the years of the project, thanks to high oil prices. Since 2010 budgets dedicated to conservation of national systems of protected areas they have increased within the Andean region by several orders of magnitude; 300% in the case of Peru and 450% in Ecuador.

The second indicator on an overall objective level is proposed to measure the project's success in terms of strengthening institutional and national capacity, through the application of the Financial Sustainability Scorecard for PA. This tool is used globally, covering three areas of focus (legal and institutional framework, effective cost management and new financing mechanisms). Each of these components presents a series of activities and processes that can improve the scores, the same which are almost literally recreated within the logical framework and project outputs. There is no understanding of them, a logical sequence, or an analysis of the real possibility of implementing them in Venezuela.

Planning considers the implementation of linear products would be enough to improve the overall score and meet the overall project objective. A major weakness of the project design is the lack of a clearly specified project path towards achieving global conservation objectives. There is no clear direction on how to achievement of the results will allow to obtain this overall result, and the conditions that must be incurred to obtain the final desired impact.

Overall indicators do not realize the process of change and evolution in institutional performance. Practically the same indicators are repeated along the logical framework, about the increase of resources and the scores of tracking tools. The indicator related to increased coverage PA through the declaration of new areas of connectivity is not related to the logic of the project. While at the time this objective had the support of the authorities of INPARQUES, the institution decided not to promote the creation of new PAs, as long as the care and operation of those who are currently part of the VPS, is not improved.

#### **4.2 Assumptions and risks**

The risk analysis is generally weak and inadequate for the type of project being proposed. Indeed the PRODOC does not collected sufficient documentation and analysis about critical aspects for the success of the project, such as the political sensitivity to the use of instruments for economic valuation of biodiversity, or expected changes to the regulatory and institutional frameworks. At the time of the design they were not considered as risks since the authorities of INPARQUES were clearly committed to this type of tools and institutional reforms.

The major change and transformation that normally accompanies such projects which propose to install a capacity, is the resistance to change, and the process of paradigm shift required to guide the process at the level of officials and authorities to decide to do things differently.

The main risk described in the logical framework eventually did not occur. INPARQUES finally achieved a major support from the government to increase its budget, but unfortunately the consultant has no official information to verify the increase in real terms in the period minus the differential exchange rate and inflation. Furthermore, the political commitment to conservation is strengthened in September 2014 with the creation of the High Authority for the Integrated Management of National Parks and Natural Monuments, agency which gathers multiple institutional actors and mobilizes attention and priority over the PA under the leadership of the Vice President for Socialism Territorial Development.

A core risk for the low implementation of the project was the high turnover of key technical staff in INPARQUES. Although this risk was identified in the PRODOC, the expected outputs raised within the results do not clearly show the connection and sequence between them to achieve the desired result. To some extent there is a limitation in the clarification of the actions to follow. The constant change of personnel has made it clear that it would have been desirable to have

more information on the methodologies to be followed and/or the path to realize the proposed actions.

#### **4.3 Relevance and participation of stakeholders**

The project is consistent with the overall objectives and priorities of the “Convention on Biological Diversity”, particularly in improving management efficiency and the sustainability of National Protected Area Systems. On the other hand it fulfills the mandate of the GEF to strengthen the institutions responsible for the management of protected areas as a strategy for achieving global conservation objectives of these areas.

Clearly the project had during the design a high relevance, and responded to a serious aspiration of institutional strengthening of INPARQUES. As proof of this, according to interviewees, the process of formulating the project had a high involvement of INPARQUES and MINEMEW. With the support of PNUD, these actors were actively involved from the generation of the Project Idea to the joint development of PIF and PRODOC. Throughout the entire design process a joint effort mobilized different institutions on political and technical levels, demonstrating an adequate level of appropriation and positioning of the project.

With all the changes at the institutional level and rotation of key personnel, changes are perceived on the level of ownership of the same Project Document, which happened to be run by different people who wrote it, which further could also influence the criterion of relevance. Indeed, with the change in the direction of INPARQUES a humanist emphasis was printed on the priorities and institutional approach towards the welfare of the communities living in and on the fringes of the PA. Certain key activities within the project, such as the economic evaluation of benefits generated by the PA, generated resistance and raised ideological questions at different times. These were recorded in the mid-term review, but for the final evaluation it was noted more openness, recognizing for example that it is necessary to value economically; the problem is not within the assessment tools, but with the use and interpretation of the results for the process of decision making and public policy.

Also, the expectation of the project to modify legislation and institutional frameworks to facilitate the funding of VPS, could affect their questioning the relevance of these activities within the framework of a project of international cooperation. Two examples realize key aspects of project design whose relevance was questioned at the time by INPARQUES, and led to changes in the

original design. On the one hand the selection of protected areas to intervene; finally the project attended a different group that was originally proposed. Secondly, the objective related to the creation of new PAs, which as indicated at the time bears no clear relationship with the project, and subsequently verified as irrelevant by INPARQUES as they argue that they first should focus on serving well existing PA, before including new PA in the system.

Despite having a strong national ownership in its early stages, the mid-term evaluation recommended validate the relevance of the project, since no evidence was found that there is a clear relevance of the project with the official position of entities in charge of handling Protected Areas.

### **Repeat approach**

Highlight best practices employed to generate the PIF, in particular the ability to manage a participatory process involving technicians and authorities from different institutions.

#### **4.4 PNUD comparative advantage**

PNUD's comparative advantage lies in the ability to set up the implementing agency to position the issue of financial sustainability within national agencies of biodiversity conservation and PA. This is demonstrated in the development of methodological tools and the scorecard of financial sustainability, and regional publications that generated attention and priority in the governments of the region. Also, other projects of PNUD GEF portfolio such as the Marine Coastal have components that provide opportunities for complementarily and cost-effective arrangements.

This has enabled PNUD to implement several projects with similar approach in different countries of the region (Uruguay, Chile, Ecuador, Jamaica, etc), almost simultaneously to the project being evaluated in this document. Indeed, this should speed up the learning curve and approaches to implement the products. Unfortunately no exchanges or opportunities for different teams to share their learning, products, or resources as specialists in different areas of concentration were recorded.

## 5. PROJECT EXECUTION

The implementation of the project is marked by a series of milestones, which allows chronologically demonstrate the different key moments of the project:

- Funds for the preparatory phase are approved in 2006 and executed in 2007.
- Letter of approval of the project from GEF PNUD in February 2009.
- Delegation of authority to the UNDP in July 2009.
- Signature Project in July 2009 with the first coordinator.
- First AOP December 2009.
- Workshop project start in February 2010.
- March 2010 PNUD reports approval of AOP.
- In 2010, there was no execution.
- At the end of 2010 new coordinator and director defined, re-send the same AOP for the following year.
- 2011 AOP approved in January 2011, the first disbursement in February 2011.
- AOP is reviewed in May 2011 because it was not running.
- A new change in the team in October 2011, the first implementation strategy is defined and the need for a Special Project Unit is identified.
- At the end of 2011 a new start up workshop was given in despite that the original team was not in the institution any more.

- Execution 2011 was aimed almost exclusively for field trips.
- 2012 AOP is sent in December 2011, was finally approved in May 2012.
- In May 2012 PNUD office is reduced from 35 to 7 persons, of which only 3 were serving the programs.
- A new change within the team leader occurs in November 2012, Maria Abad takes office, who remains until the end of the project. It was agreed to seek the support of consultants.
- In June 2013 INPARQUES developed 20 ToR to support the implementation of the products; for different reasons, these are not approved and the contracts are not achieved.
- In September 2013 the midterm assessment is performed.
- With the appointment of Marelvis Bastos as the GEF focal point, communication is centralized in the Ministry of Popular Power for the Environment and the thread of the fluid and technical relationship is lost.
- During 2014 almost no activities were carried out.
- In May 2015 the final evaluation is hired.

### **5.1 Customization Management**

As shown by chronological description of some key milestones in the life of the project, the first thing that strikes the eye is the long period of realization of the project. Between the preparation phase and the first disbursement almost four years passed; from the signing of the project to the implementation of the first disbursement they spent 20 months. These delays generate the risk of losing the political momentum for the implementation of the project; the decision-makers who bet on the project are no longer in the institution, or to register significant change in the assumptions that originally motivated the project.



A second obvious aspect is the instability of the coordinators of the project, especially during the first two years four different coordinators and five Directors of Special Projects Unit which depends on the project (Table 3) were recorded. Since the appointment of Maria Abad, coordination has maintained continuity and has consolidated a team. However due to the different responsibilities in charge of the Special Projects Unit, the coordinator does not have exclusive dedication to the project.

In addition to the instability of staff and key personnel, it should be noted that throughout the life of the project, coordination did not have specialized profiles in the project theme. Almost a year into the project, it went from the Directive of Protected Areas which was conceived at the Projects Unit, which was the body created specifically for implementation reporting directly to the President of INPARQUES.

**Table 4. Change of Directors and General Coordinator of the Project**

	<b>General project director / Director of the National Parks</b>	<b>Project coordinador</b>
<b>July 2009 - August 2010 Directive of Parks</b>	Hilda Angel	Roberto Gruber
Creation UPE	<b>Director of UPE / Project director</b>	
<b>August 2010 – April 2011</b>	Lorena Lugo	Mario Urrea
<b>May / June / July 2011</b>	María Elena Berrios	
<b>August 2011 – Sept 2012</b>	Roigard López	Jesús Salazar
<b>September 2012 - November 2012</b>	Mario Urrea (Only he signed but not present)	
<b>November 2012 - September 2014</b>	Maria Eugenia Abad	Luz Marina Salinas

Source: Mid term evaluation

The third important aspect of chronological analysis is the unusually long time for approval of AOPS, or in the specific case of the 20 ToR which were required to strengthen the technical

team. From the perspective of the implementing agency, they argue the low quality of products and a weakness to argue and justify their needs in the formats and procedures PNUD. INPARQUES meanwhile argues slow processes, lack of flexibility to seek practical solutions on the ongoing processes, without stopping the process at all. Finally, the implementing agency and executor did not finish in building up a team, constant changes in key personnel and to some extent an incompatibility between institutional cultures, limited a more fluid and positive relationship.

An important aspect in terms of adaptive approach is related to the implementation arrangements. Since in early 2012 the implementing agency (PNUD) experienced a drastic downsizing, it tried to change its administrative management towards a full implementation by the implementing agency; however, this initiative did not take off. Skills assessments to determine an administrator was performed, but the process eventually continued through assisted national execution.

As for the adaptive approach, it stands out that it was intended to change the implementation strategy of the project and seek the support of external consultants for the institution to push through the various products. This after the low response obtained when ordering the leadership of the results to different directors within INPARQUES, who by their many occupations could not spend enough time to develop the products they were in charge. Flexibility is also demonstrated in protected areas which were originally selected to prioritize investments, such as the completion of the pilot to optimize vehicular access in Generalissimo Francisco Miranda.

Changes were recorded in the relevance of certain results of the project, such as creating new PAs, or the selection of PAs where pilot projects were developed. Also, the mid-term review mentions that critical aspects of the implementation and the relevance and economic valuation approach were questioned. However throughout the project implementation, there is no formally recorded justification or application for a review of the PRODOC or logical framework. Likewise, despite the low effectiveness in the implementation of the AOP, it is recorded very little variation in the content of the AOPS from year to year, meaning a low level of adaptation and finding new approaches. This is mentioned by the implementing agency as one of the main reasons that generated significant delays in the approval of these planning tools.

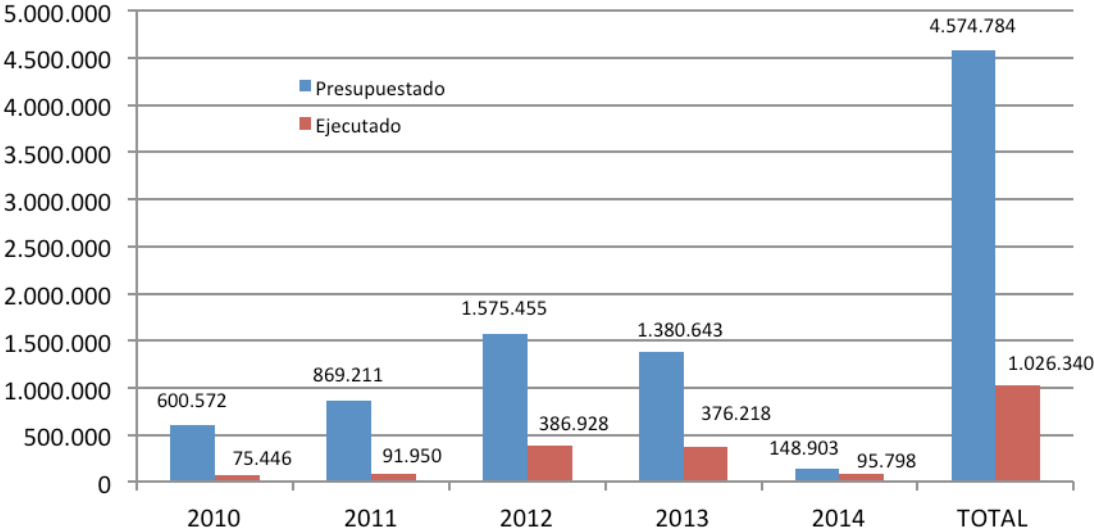
Since the midterm assessment mission, activities declined sharply, recording a performance that borders USD 100,000. Unfortunately, far from generating the expected effect, the midterm evaluation alienated the parties even further and did not inspire a rapid reaction to take forward the project. Even by postponing the timing of this review to demonstrate adaptability to the application of INPARQUES, the decision worked against the project since the results of the assessment were handed in too late and failed to build trust between executing and implementing agency.

**5.2 Project Financing**

The project was originally funded by four partners: 1) the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with USD 7,175,866; 2) the PNUD USD 520.000; 3) the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID) with USD 1,950,000; and 4) the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela with USD 20.645 million. The contribution of INPARQUES over the five years is valued at a total of USD 4,930,035.27.

At the end of the 5 years, of the USD 7.15 million available in the budget for the AOPS, only USD 4.5 million reached the various components; however only USD 1.02634 million were implemented, which means an execution of 14% of the GEF donation resources (Figure 1).

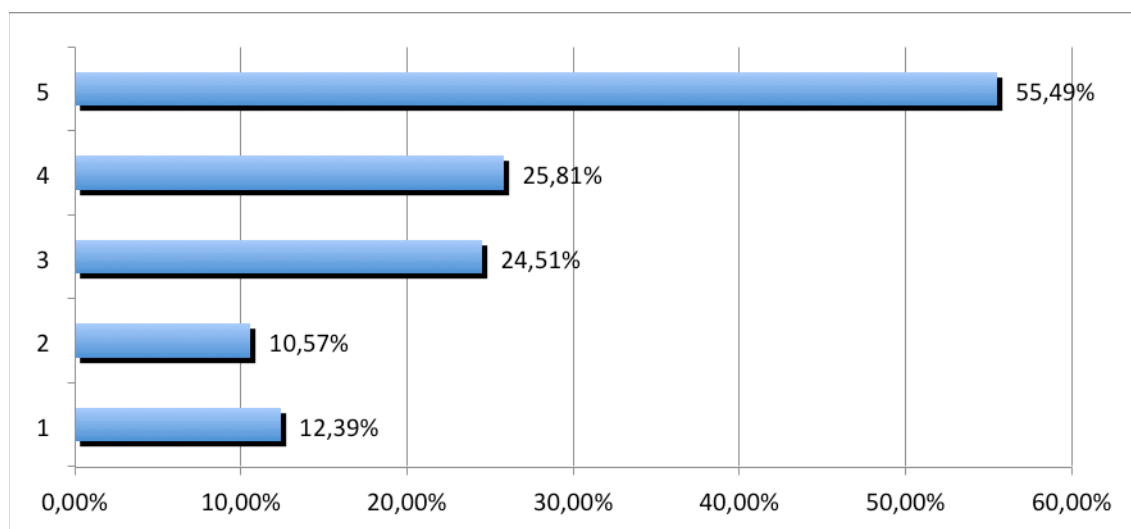
**Figure 1. Amount budgeted vs. Amount executed per year (2010 - 2014)**



**Source: Reportes elaborados por INPARQUES**

As shown in Figure 2, the executed amount maintained below 24% for the first 3 years and only during the last year of implementation reached a 55.49%.

**Figure 2. Percentage of the budget executed annually**



**Source: Reportes elaborados por INPARQUES**

The following table summarizes the different sources of co-financing the project, as they have been officially reported by the executing and implementing agency.

**Table 5. Summary of co-financing**

Co-financing (type / source)	UNDP's own funding (million USD)		Government (million USD)		Partner agency (million USD)		Total (million USD)	
	Planned	Real	Planned	Real	Planned	Real	Planned	Real
<b>subsidies</b>								
<b>Loans / grants</b>								
• <b>Help in kinds</b>	520.000	520.000	20.645.000	20.645.000				
• <b>Others</b>					1.950.000	1.950.000		
<b>Total</b>	520.000	520.000	20.645.000	20.645.000	1.950.000	1.950.000	30.290.866	30.290.866

### **5.3 Cost-efficiency of the project**

The financial management of the project grant funds has been inefficient considering the elapsed time and the low amounts used. While it is preferable not to spend than spend the wrong way, in practice a grant not running represents an opportunity cost for the country as they could devote those resources to other priorities, or even to other countries in which the financial sustainability is an explicit challenge.

### **5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation**

There has been no implementation of an information system for monitoring and analyzing project progress indicators. Instead there was a development of a manually tracking system based on an Excel matrix, for use within INPARQUES. In general terms the monitoring and evaluation system is considered partially fulfilled and particularly weak considering monitoring basic information to monitor key indicators of the project. At project completion, for example, the METT Sheets and those for the Financial Sustainability were not updated, tools clearly identified as measures to verify the success.

As for the elements identified in the PRODOC for monitoring and evaluation, the following developments regarding the information could not be verified by the consultant during the mission to Caracas.

- The report of the kick off workshop is not presented, even if the event took place.
- No quarterly project reports are presented for the years 2011, 2012 and 2013
- No technical reports on studies and consultancies provided are presented.
- No records of the meetings of the Steering Committee are presented.

These observations are consistent with the findings of the mid-term report, which does not necessarily imply that these reports do not exist, but at least could not be verified personally by the evaluators. It should be clarified that both INPARQUES and the Ministry of People's Power and Water for Ecosocialism confirm the existence of the APR 2012, and quarterly reports also were sent promptly to PNUD. As for the meetings of the Steering Committee, it was said that they were documented whose backup are at INPARQUES headquarters and headquarters of the Ministry of Popular Power for Ecosocialism and Water.

Among the reasons found for this performance, again the high turnover of staff is mentioned, but it is also true that the monitoring and evaluation management as described in the PRODOC carries some experience and installed capacity in the executor. As an example it is mentioned the lack of thoroughness in the compilation of key documents from the M & E, such as the backup of meetings (initial workshop and Steering Committee) and evidence. Finally, the Steering Committee had no participation as established in the PRODOC, both the frequency established for meetings, and fulfilling its role in the General Directorate of Project.

## **6. PROJECT RESULTS**

### **6.1 Overall results (achievement of objectives)**

"INPARQUES can celebrate the achievement of the project objectives to the overall objective level; unfortunately the results achieved are not necessarily attributable to the project management. Despite this, there is a clear benefit from capacity building generated, as the case of the Special Projects Unit and the overall positioning of financial sustainability obtained thanks to the project. Few products were completed, which have clear intervention logic, and are developed according to the expectations of the PRODOC. However it is interesting to note that as a whole, the sum of different experiences has contributed to an institutional capacity of response, which has allowed INPARQUES to be in a better position to seize opportunities. For this reason it is complex to assess to what extent the significant progress made by the institution in meeting the objective level indicators would be attributable to the project, particularly with regard to state support for the system of protected areas.

This is how the results achieved at the level of communication, vehicle access control, and particularly the investment in PA missions to gather information about concessions and economic activities as a whole has contributed to a first approximation to the complexity and understanding of the need to work consistently on the financial sustainability of the VPS.

### **6.2 Relevance**

INPARQUES can celebrate the achievement of the project objectives on an overall objective level; unfortunately the results achieved are not necessarily attributable to project management. This suggests that if the project had been executed according to the original objectives, INPARQUES could have been in a much stronger position to seize opportunities and existing political will in the government. It was possible to feel some frustration during the interviews since the project activities did not take off and a widespread perception of missed opportunity was present.

In general terms there is a state commitment to significantly increase the annual amount of resources available for the PA under the administration of INPARQUES, although the consultant has no official information to verify its impact in real terms considering the inflation and exchange rate. To proof this, the presidential decree of October 2014 was reviewed, which

enables extra resources for recruitment, training and equipping of 500 new rangers; this is a significant increase considering that in 2009 the PRODOC reported just 383 rangers throughout the system. This specific information in terms of a budgetary increase is not available to the evaluator, but during the field trip to the National Park Morrocoy it was possible to confirm a doubling of the availability of investment resources for infrastructure and basic equipment in this park staffing during the first months of 2015.

After reviewing the PIR 2014, it was possible to register an increase of nearly 40 million bolivars in resources available to the PA, the most important step consisted in an increase of almost 400% in self-management resources, in part due to the project efforts of optimizing access and concessions records in different PA. However it is necessary to relativize the budget increase in real terms, by the depreciation of the bolivar from base year 2009. Moreover, it is noteworthy the diversification and growth of other funding sources that represent nearly 14 million bolivars; only in the PA intervened by the project, INPARQUES presents projects bordering 25 million bolivars financed by CAF and the Federal Council of Government. Furthermore the improved in budget execution draws attention, which went from 39% in 2009 to 87% in 2014.

Unfortunately, the consultant did not receive financial information from INPARQUES updated to 2014 or 2015, for comparing in real terms the increase in resources available for according to the baseline of the PRODOC. The latest financial information corresponding to the PIR 2014 with information cut in June 2014, meaning that the last year was practically not recorded.

As the first result of the project, related to increased government support for the park system of Venezuela (VPS), INPARQUES now has a higher body for the integrated management of the National Park System, which mobilizes over 20 ministries and public institutions under the leadership of the Vice President for Territorial Development Socialism. This coordination body established in September 2014 provides a direct dialogue and leverage with the most relevant political actors in the country. This has allowed multiplying actors within the PA management, incorporating the National Guard, firefighters, police, governors and community councils. As an example of this strengthened interagency coordination capacity, the assessor could observe in the Morrocoy National Park that the National Guard has actually set up an operation and has staff assigned and helps complement staff INPARQUES and collaborates in meeting management objectives area.



Table 4 presents a summary of the main activities of the project, including details of where resources were executed differentiating between PA and activities at the system level.

**Table 6. Main activities of the projects**

Construction sites	Activities and investments
<b>1. National Park Morrocoy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment: Expenses, transfers to INPARQUES personnel; Cost awareness workshops and strengthening of community boards for the provision of services that improve community involvement in the management of PA is also covered.</li> <li>• The funds allowed the registration and regulation of dealers, boaters, and cell phone antennas aimed at increasing revenue, order the tourist activity, generating a record of vessels;</li> </ul>
<b>2. PR Generalissmio Miranda</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment: vehicular access control; dissemination material and workshops.</li> <li>• Activity: more sophisticated revenue management through an automated vehicle access to optimize the box office; environmental education and promotion;</li> </ul>
<b>3. Lake “La Restinga”</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment: Expenses, transfers to INPARQUES personnel; provision of office supplies including computers; community workshops; awareness, education.</li> <li>• Activity: Supplement to environmental sanitation project and construction of socialist eco houses;</li> </ul>
<b>4. System PA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distributed 800 INPARQUES agendas;</li> <li>• Diagnosis and manual administrative and financial procedures were developed.</li> <li>• Plan community tourism: Morrocoy NP, NP Culata, Lake La Restinga, NP Canaima, NP Mochima</li> <li>• Two project vehicles, which are used in INPARQUES headquarters were purchased;</li> <li>• Restructuring Proposal INPARQUES.</li> <li>• Development of operational and financial plans of INPARQUES.</li> <li>• Management plan with an instrument of Popular Power for the Socio-Environmental Management of National Parks and Natural Monuments.</li> <li>• Informative and deployable Kit for Generalissimo Francisco de Miranda Recreational Park: Biodiversity, Aviary, Humboldt Planetarium, Terrarium, Recycling, Global Warming and Leander Boat Freedom.</li> <li>• Creation and dissemination of nine (09) audiovisual spots.</li> <li>• Installation of the Situation Room (Command Post).</li> </ul>

Source: Entrevistas y documentos del proyecto.

### **6.3 Impact**

The project allowed positioning the issue of financial sustainability within INPARQUES, leading to the formation of a special unit within the institution projects. Possibly the most important project for INPARQUES today than when it was originally designed. Budget availability associated with the fall in oil prices presents a more open macroeconomic outlook to diversify sources of income and strengthen the financial muscle of state institutions. Greater political positioning of INPARQUES was achieved through the Upper Body, in turn greater demand of proactive capabilities, and tools to mobilize new sources of funding, and actors in the conservation of PA.

The main impact of the project is the experience and capabilities generated within INPARQUES for the future management of programs and projects of international cooperation. In this sense, the impact could have been much higher had if the initial implementation strategy would have been revised in time, which considered that the project could be developed exclusively by INPARQUES personnel. Although it was justified as a mechanism for institutional strengthening, it definitely limited the opportunity for the INPARQUES to shorten their learning curve and leverage the project to acquire new skills in specialists and technicians outside the institution.

### **6.4 Sustainability**

The processes of capacity building and institutional financial sustainability induction can be replicated and staggered through INPARQUES own initiatives, as well as other GEF projects portfolio with unique components for financial sustainability.

Rather than developing entirely new financing mechanisms, the project prioritized the reactivation of those who were underutilized. It was possible to verify a high potential for replication in the results obtained at the level of improved revenue collection of self-management by automating activities such as ticket offices, registration of tour operators, concessions and antenna system. INPARQUES recognizes and values the experience gained throughout this process and mentions it has achieved to commit public resources to automate entrances in different protected areas.

The project has two key conditions for sustainability, 1) expanded institutional capacities through lessons learned; 2) executed activities that met the expected results and therefore reasonably offer the following opportunities for replication and scaling:

- Automatized vehicle access to Morrocoy and other PA with a high visitation rate
- Community companies to provide maintenance services and waste recollection
- Benefits to local vulnerable populations through concessions and other opportunities to strengthen local economies through the PA
- Systematized concessions, boat and tour operators, etc.
- General review of fees and tariffs in force, at least the inflation adjustment
- Economic valuation to strengthen INPARQUES speech before the high authority of PA
- Coastal and Marine GEF project and its financial sustainability component
- Expansion of state actors with roles in the management of Pas

## **7. CONCLUSIONS; RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS**

The overall conclusion of the evaluation regrets the missed opportunity for INPARQUES and the VPS, which is reflected in a low rate of execution throughout the entire project, resulting in only 14% implementation of the GEF donation. This performance is not solely attributable to the project being evaluated in this document, but broadly reflects a systemic difficulty executing GEF resources in Venezuela, whose portfolio is often complex, requires specialized technical levels and managerial capacities to implement products with high levels of uncertainty. While among the final or partial products are important results which in turn could have helped achieve the partial results and the overall objective of the project, there were significant limitations on the effectiveness of the project. Among the issues that led to this performance the following are mentioned:

- High turnover of key project staff, authorities and counterparts.
- Technical skills and learning curve for project implementation were underestimated.
- Lack of an implementation strategy, and dedicated technical team.
- The implementing agency had a drastic reduction in staff, which affected its ability to support the team, tracking and monitoring the progress of the project.
- Implementing structural deficiency of resources, slow administrative procedures.
- No team among implementing partners was generated, despite all the efforts and the willingness shown by the parties.
- The mid-term evaluation was too late, and did not prompt a positive response to boost the project again.

Among the positive aspects of the project, it is mentioned that important achievements in the pursuit of counterpart resources were obtained, surpassing the original goal. Finally more own resources were executed than those from the GEF, although it is not clear if the type of activities funded contribute to the global environmental objectives. Another positive aspect, which is recognized as an acquired ability by INPARQUES is the formulation and implementation of projects, including the structuring of equipment and sophisticated management systems. During the lifespan of the project, two external financial audits were passed, which were successfully

overcome. In relation to the implementing agency, they recognize that they always received support and assistance when requested, particularly regarding induction against the constant changes in key personnel.

The relationship with other projects in the GEF portfolio was very low; only one meeting at which the coordinators of both teams had the opportunity to exchange general project information is recorded. Even though the Marine Coastal project has a component of financial sustainability which could clearly present opportunities of mutual benefit, and even potential for duplication of activities.

### **7.1 Lessons learned**

- When environmental projects are designed, political and philosophical context requires a broader analysis of the specific reality of each country, especially in terms of analyzing actors, institutions and capacities. The risk matrix should consider a deeper reading of the economic, political instability and staff turnover, not just of the counterpart but also in the environment. The task of prior intelligence should be much more rigorous.
- The complexity of the planned activities demanded adequate and timely combination of existing talent in the institution and external support from national and international experts; particularly in areas such as economic valuation, financial planning and design of financing mechanisms.
- It is necessary that the PRODOC provide sufficient clarity about implementation arrangements, the options for running resources, installed capacity needed for the implementation of products in topics where conservation agencies usually are not particularly strong.
- Despite difficulties in implementing, no joint exercise to review the logical framework, its assumptions and overall relevance of the results and products was conducted. If the executor or resistance doubts remained as to objectives such as the creation of new PAs, it had to raise it in due course. Likewise, the implementing agency could act with greater determination to encourage the review and formalize the changes that were necessary to the PRODOC.

- The low implementation suggests a need for adequate tools to dictate the early closure of the project. It is not a unilateral decision of an implementing agency but should be evaluated in conjunction with the executor, beneficiaries and the country office. It is necessary to detect early whether the expected results of a project are or are not considered relevant by the executors, since if they are not fully appropriated and motivated to achieve the objectives, the chances of success of a project are reduced.
- The midterm evaluation needs to be performed early enough so that the project has time to make the necessary adjustments. This knowledge is especially important for projects that have problems of progress in implementation.
- The midterm evaluation could be approached in a more strategic way. It is possible that beyond an assessment of project performance, it was perceived as an overall assessment of the performance of INPARQUES, on behalf of the donor. Far from achieving a positive response that mobilizes the parties to generate quick solutions to rescue the project, evaluation virtually accelerated the closure of the operations.

## **7.2 Recommended**

As noted in several chapters of this assessment, the project may be more relevant today than when it was originally conceived. Therefore it is essential that the lessons learned and reflections generated in this process are disseminated and capitalized through a clear strategy of completing this project. On one hand and since the execution was not successful, the idea is good and remains relevant, particularly facing the financial sustainability component of the Coastal Marine Project.

As noted in the relevant chapter, there is sufficient evidence to suggest the sustainability of certain activities and replication of good practices such as automation driveways. The new GEF project portfolio could consistently develop components of financial sustainability; which under clearer parameters of implementation will follow up on the most promising activities.

On the other hand, given the relevance of the GEF project within the PNUD portfolio in Venezuela, there are enough reasons to incorporate the lessons learned and best practices from the earliest stages of design of the new portfolio. It would be favorable to develop a set of assessments and evaluations of GEF's experience in Venezuela, as a tool for strategic

positioning mechanism and as a gesture of building trust between the implementing agency, the GEF focal point and different project implementer's exercise is proposed.

## 8. ANNEXES

### 8.1 ToR attached in form of a PDF document

### 8.2 List of interviewed persons

Name	Institution	Position
Benito Gutiérrez	Morrocoy National Park Dealer	Boat captain
Charles Giuseppe	Ministry of Ecosocialism and Water	General Director Management and International Cooperation
Clemencia Vela	Consultant	Consultant for midterm evaluation
Damaris Briceño	INPARQUES	Project Manager
José Troya	PNUD	Regional Technical Advisor
Janin Mendoza	PNUD	Environment Officer
Jesús Alexander Cegarra	INPARQUES	Former President
Lila Gil	GEF Project Specialist	Independent Consultant
Luby Echeverría	Ministry of Ecosocialism and Water	Technical Coordinator GEF project to Strengthen Coastal Marine PA System
María Eugenia Abad	INPARQUES	Director of Special Projects and Responsible Result
Maritza Reechinti	Ministry of Ecosocialism and Water	Management Specialist and International Cooperation
Noely Díaz	INPARQUES	Technical specialist in research and monitoring Morrocoy National Park

Sr. Guanipa	INPARQUES	Morrocoy National Park ranger
Sr. Peña	INPARQUES	Morrocoy National Park ranger
Yamel Pérez	PNUD	Programme Officer
Yorlandis Chiquito	Ministry of Ecosocialism and Water	Management Specialist and International Cooperation
Yorwin Reyes	INPARQUES	Director Morrocoy National Park

### 8.3 List of documents reviewed

- Clemencia Vela, 2013. Evaluación de Medio Término del Proyecto (FMAM 3609 PNUD 4151) “Fortaleciendo la sostenibilidad financiera y la eficacia operacional del Sistema de Parques Nacionales de Venezuela”.
- GEF 2011, 2013. GEF Biodiversity tracking tool.
- INPARQUES 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013. Informe anual de gestión del proyecto.
- INPARQUES, 2014. Informe final del PROYECTO “Fortaleciendo la Sostenibilidad Financiera y la eficacia operacional del Sistema Nacional de Parques de Venezuela”.
- PNUD 2009. PMIS 3609 / PIMS 4151 Fortaleciendo la sostenibilidad financiera y la eficacia operacional del Sistema de Parques de Venezuela.
- PNUD 2009. Documento de Proyecto PNUD / Gobierno de Venezuela Fortaleciendo la sostenibilidad financiera y la eficacia operacional del Sistema de Parques Nacionales de Venezuela.
- APR 2012, 2013, 2014
- PIR 2012, 2013, 2014



- AOP 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014

#### 8.4 Summary of field visits

Two field visits were conducted to see firsthand the activities and investments made by the project.

The first visit took place in the Generalissimo Francisco de Miranda Park Santander, on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Automated parking payment system was inspected and interviews were held to those people responsible for collection.

The second visit was made to Morrocoy National Park, on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>th</sup> of May. Various activities such as interviews with various users and protected area authorities were made. Visit to the protected area to learn about the about the activities of monitoring, control and surveillance of the area.

#### 8.5 Matrix evaluation questions

Logging table of investments in PA

sites proposed for construction activities (please indicate whether a site matches for the two projects)	Mention activity (e.g. Construction, community work, etc ...)
1. National Park....	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

## 8.6 Interview form

General Questions: Context	
<u>Information on the political, social, institutional context:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you give a brief overview of the main features of the project?</li> <li>• Start and project duration</li> <li>• Problems that the project seeks to address</li> <li>• Immediate and development objectives of the project</li> <li>• Actors</li> <li>• What is the history of the project? How it started and evolved over time?</li> <li>• Could you describe the strategy of the PRODOC?</li> </ul>	
<b>Analysis by topic</b>	<b>Verification</b>
<b>National appropriation</b>	
Participation of stakeholders in the design: Who wrote the draft? What was the process?	
Is there national appropriation at the moment?	
<b>Analysis by topic</b>	<b>Verification</b>
<b>Relevance</b>	
<p>Are the activities and results of the project consistent with focal area AI of the GEF?</p> <p>Are the activities and results of the project consistent with the country's National Plan / Strategic Plan INPARQUES?</p> <p>Attitude of the government towards the Strategy of the PRODOC?</p>	
<b>Effectiveness</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key results of the project to date, examples?</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the results of the project proportional to the expected results (such as described in the project document) and the problems that the project aimed to address (ex. original or modified project objectives)?</li> <li>• How effective are the results / products to achieve global benefits at the same time as local benefits?</li> <li>• What are the main results within the generation processes (individual / institutional capacity building, policy influence, expertise and learning processes generation)</li> <li>• To what extent the effects of the project are aimed at generating global benefits?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there examples of replication of results? How is replication understood?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the positive / negative (political, social, cultural, environmental, economic) factors that could affect results?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have there been conflicts between global and national / local objectives?</li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Generating unexpected results</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have there been or are there potential unintended results?</li> </ul>	
<p>Efficiency</p> <p>How was the financial implementation of the project? Ejection level. Is it possible to find elements to define the cost / project-efficiency?</p> <p>How effective was PNUD in:</p> <p>The process planning / approval of AOP?</p> <p>In the accompaniment: induction process procedures, reporting / PIRS / ToR?</p> <p>Disbursements?</p> <p>Induction processes of procurement procedures?</p> <p>How efficient was INPARQUES in:</p>	

<p>The planning process / approval AOP?  Induction processes of internal procedures, reporting / PIRS / ToR?</p> <p>To what extent has it succeeded in implementing co-financing? Effective actions with a global effect?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Tools for M&amp;E</u></p> <p>How is the internal tracking process organized?</p> <p>Is there a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan? Is there an institutional Monitoring and Evaluation Plan? They are connected?</p> <p>Is there evidence adaptive management existed, such as the systematic development of comprehensive and realistic work plans and / or changes in management arrangements to improve implementation management?</p> <p>Where there any use of electronic information technologies to support implementation, participation and monitoring, as well as other project activities?</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Management efficiency</u></p> <p>How efficient are the management arrangements?</p> <p>How much time, effort (human resource) is used in the project?</p> <p>Do team members have clear roles and responsibilities and the resources and the authority to implement the project activities?</p> <p>Technical capacities associated with the project and its role in the development, management and project achievements?</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Participation of Actors</u></p> <p>What kind of actors participated in the management?</p>	

<p>How was the production and dissemination of information generated by the project in the first phase?</p> <p>What involvement did local users in project implementation and decision making have? Analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the approach taken by the project in this topic.</p> <p>Operational relations between participating institutions and others and how these relationships have contributed to effective implementation and the achievement of project objectives:</p> <p>Have you generated alliances and cooperative relations between the project and local, national and international entities and what effects did they had on the project implementation so far?</p> <p>How has the participation of government institutions in the implementation of the project, the degree of government support for the project?</p>	
<p><u>Programmatic / Synergy efficiency</u></p> <p>Coordination with other GEF projects?</p> <p>Does the project respond to a program planning?</p>	
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p><b>Verification</b></p>
<p>Is there a vision based on results / long term impact</p>	
<p>Measures have been put to the sustainability of global benefits have been achieved or are seeking to achieve? Are there conditions for global benefits continue after the project ends?</p>	